



Received: 14-06-2026  
Accepted: 24-07-2026

## International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

### The Influence of Parental Care Strategies on Enhancing Moral Values in Youth in Dodoma Municipality, Tanzania

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#### Abstract

In the modern world, the immorality, particularly among youth has become a major problem which overwhelms human societies worldwide. This study investigated the influence of parental care strategies on enhancing moral values among youth in Dodoma Municipality, Tanzania. The researcher employed a mixed-methods approach with a convergent design. The study was guided by a single objective and a single research question. The research involved 114 respondents selected using the stratum method for teachers, the purposive technique for heads of schools and religious ministers, and simple random sampling for students and parents. Semi-structured interview guide, Focused group discussion and Questionnaires were employed in data collection. The data were analyzed by Cronbach's Alpha in the Statistical Package for Social

Sciences, version 20 for quantitative data, and the thematic analysis method for qualitative data. The findings reveal that youth often disregard their parents' cultural norms, a situation greatly contributed to by parents' irresponsibility towards youth and their own shortcomings, which lead to a failure to foreshadow moral life examples in their daily lives. The study recommended the application of Parental Care Strategies which emphasize on moral exemplification and the fulfillment of one's duties among parents, and the respect for parents' guidance among youth, and the need for establishment of government policy in provision of moral values among youth in schools, and employing adequate qualified moral and religious teachers to deliver relevant teachings for enhancing moral values in youth.

**Keywords:** Moral Values, Parents, Youth, Parental Care Strategies

#### Introduction

Moral values are considered good practices that guide one's behaviour and choices, Wilbum (2020). For those who enhance MV, virtuous practices are ever seen and they help them to choose the right deeds and avoid the wrong ones. Kant (1993) <sup>[18]</sup> portrays the qualities of the individual with MV devotes in good practices and avoiding evils. Thus, good morals are highly respected across various human communities and are preserved as a precious treasure of life in the society from one generation to the next. All of these demonstrate the significance of good morals for every human being and are expected to be passed down from one generation to the next. By this fact, the parents are the fundamental figures in laying the foundation of good morals in their infants and ensuring their moral development through the youth stage. Thus, this study portrays Parental Care Strategies (PCSs) as a particular method of enhancing Moral Values (MV) in Youth, who, according to this study, are corrupt and victims of immoral practices within the family and society.

In Dodoma Municipality, the concept of MV, in terms of language use, fidelity, empathy, honesty, responsibility, decent dress, God's reverence, and other virtuous aspects, is considered an expression of one's good behaviour. In previous times, cultural norms, moral values, and life skills in youth were imparted at the family and societal levels. Boys and girls were practically applying what they had learnt. For instance, the boys' responsibilities included pasturing their family's domestic animals, participating in agricultural activities, and creating weapons and furniture. The girls were fetching water, cooking, caring for babies, molding domestic utensils like pots, and covering all domestic activities. All these were conveyed to the youth by family members and elders in society under the firm supervision of parents, the key figures in laying a moral foundation in their youth's behaviour. The closeness of parents and society to the youth facilitated the effective instillation of moral values in them.

However, due to technological advancements, lifestyles worldwide have changed, including in the Dodoma Municipality, where cultural methods of imparting MV to the youth are no longer practised as they were previously. Sanga (2022) <sup>[29]</sup> reveals why parents and youth do not spend a day together doing their daily activities. Thus, all these are done in schools where the youth learn various moral aspects in accordance with their cultural norms.

### Statement of the Problem

In Dodoma Municipality, there is an increase in moral violations across various areas, which intensifies the urgent need to rescue youth from falling into immoral practices. Most youth aged 14-20 years portray various deviant behaviours in schools, in their families, and in society, including ignoring their parents' orders and instructions, unconventional dressing styles, engaging in unacceptable relationships, using taboo words and insults, and being stubborn. These behaviours are driven by peer groups, social media, and the lifestyles of the people around them. Consequently, they consider their parents' stand against them illegitimate, so they feel more comfortable with their new way of life than with their parents.

However, the moral decadence among youth is caused by parents' irresponsibility towards them, as they are no longer accountable for providing moral guidance and the essential needs of their youth, including sufficient food, adequate shelter, proper clothing, adequate health services, and school requirements. Additionally, the parents fail to provide MV through life guidance and by serving as moral models. On the contrary, the parents are involved in immoral practices, including alcoholism, negligence and many others (Shitindi *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[31]</sup>. As a result, the parents demonstrate significant weaknesses in imparting MV to their youth and in setting immoral exemplars for them. Thus, this study provides PCSs as the methods for imparting and promoting MV in youth.

### Research Question

What is the influence of parental care strategies on enhancing moral values in youths?

### Theoretical Framework

This study applied Kant's (1993) <sup>[18]</sup> Deontology, which stresses the achievement of moral quality through the fulfilment of one's duty. According to Kant, the good practices of the individual stem from goodwill, which portrays one's goodness. The will leads one's actions to be intended from the conscious. Therefore, the goodwill demands that one do what is right and ignore what is evil for one's own benefit and for others. This theory emphasizes the individuals to act ethically and avoid evil. It also guides one to fulfil one's duty with goodwill. In this way, the theory aligns with this study in emphasizing the parents, teachers, and guardians entrusted to foster the youths' lives and fulfil their responsibilities with goodwill.

The study regards the parents as the key figures in laying a moral foundation for their children, who guide the youth in recognizing their moral support and the provision of materials, life skills, and protection. These aspects promote their personality and good relationships with others. In this way, the theory fosters an affectionate relationship between parents and their offspring. However, Johnson and Cureton (2022) <sup>[16]</sup> challenge this theory because it fails to

distinguish the circumstances under which wrong uttering can be morally justified in achieving a positive outcome, by avoiding the great harm.

### Empirical Review

This study drew on Scripture, documents, and articles by various authors to develop a broader understanding and generate new ideas related to the study topic. The researcher values the other researchers' study findings, which demonstrate the problem's existence in various contexts and justify the contextual dimensions of this study topic worldwide, given the previously presented research findings internationally, nationally, regionally, and locally.

According to Aldafas (2021) <sup>[3]</sup>, Parent refers to a biological father or mother who begets a child, or an individual who plays the role of parent, including step-parent, foster-parent, guardian or adoptive parent. However, this study defines a parent as any mature male or female individual who nurtures a child's overall well-being. This includes biological parents, foster parents, teachers and religious guardians. All these have the opportunity to influence youth in attaining moral values. This particular study regards Parental Care Strategies (PCS) as the suggested techniques for instilling morals in their youth, including Religious Moral Teachings (RMTs), which highlight what is right and wrong. Also, there is Parent-youth Attachment (PyA), which focuses on strengthening the parent-youth relationship. Additionally, Nurturing and Fostering Aspects (NFA) are suggested to provide moral exemplars, life guidance, and support for youth. Furthermore, Parenting Styles (PS) include parental authority, characterized by the correction of youth's misbehaviour, monitoring, moral guidance, and the provision of material support.

Religious Moral Teachings (RMTs) are effective strategies for instilling moral values in youth and guiding them to identify what is right and what is wrong. For example, the Muslim, as presented by Muhammad (2024) <sup>[22]</sup>, emphasizes crucial values such as compassion, justice, and ethical conduct that should be applied in light of the teachings of the Quran and Hadiths. Additionally, Tan and Maizura *et al.* (2021) recommend that parents provide RMTs for instilling MV in their youth. In Poland, Absattorov (2022) <sup>[2]</sup> asserts the importance of RMTs in shaping individuals' morality, leading to spiritual growth characterized by moral virtues such as reliability and honesty. Miasto (2024) suggests training the youth in the correct moral aspects through RMTs. Furthermore, Turemuratova (2023) <sup>[35]</sup> highlights the importance of RMTs to all members of society, who insist on moral practices for shaping youth behaviour.

In Africa, cultural norms guide members' moral behaviour. For instance, in Uganda, Nabunya *et al.* (2024) <sup>[24]</sup> portray that the society's cultural beliefs are transmitted to the youth to prohibit them from evil practices, including abstinence from sexual relationships among youth. The serious restriction was particularly for girls in order to rescue them from evil practices, which can embarrass them and their parents.

In Tanzania, Kashinje and Amos (2024) <sup>[19]</sup> emphasize that the learning and application of RMTs among youth in schools should be guided by teachers, and the same applies at home under the supervision of parents. They additionally insist that parents have enough time to spend with their youth reading and explaining the Holy Scriptures, including

the Bible and the Quran, which provide moral guidance towards youth. On the other hand, the Bible instructs parents to be strict, patient and responsible towards their youths' behaviour. For instance, Eli in the Bible failed to guide his sons (1 Sam 2:12-17, 22-25, 4:17-18), and consequently, both were doomed. On the other hand, the Bible portrays that parents are the first teachers to their children in the family. (Proverb 22:6, 23:13, Col 3:20-21, Eph 6:1-4). Given this context, the parents are obliged to lay the MV foundation at an early age through PCS, which they can always refer to as a source of moral guidance, and the youth are also required to be obedient to their parents' moral instructions.

Parent-youth Attachment is a suggested strategy which can be applied to attain MV in youth. The distinguished immoral practices are the outcome of a deficiency of parental affection in youth. This is identified by Gorla *et al.* (2024)<sup>[15]</sup>, who assert the significance of the parent-youth relationship for strengthening the affection bond between.

In attaining MV among youth, PyA facilitates the creation of good relationships between parents and youth. Wouter (2024)<sup>[37]</sup> in the Netherlands promotes this idea by insisting on the creation of a firm parent-youth relationship, which can help youth feel close to their parents and access moral guidance and material support. This finding aligns with Bowlby's (1969)<sup>[6]</sup> theory of "Attachment," which emphasizes parent-child attachment and posits the pain of separation in an affectionate bond. Stroebe (2021)<sup>[32]</sup> adds that such attachment is connected to the relational models the children receive from their parents.

In the U.S.A., Thompson *et al.* (2022)<sup>[34]</sup> reveal the effects of weak affection between parent and youth on the youth's moral development, and how it can be difficult or even impossible to cultivate later. On the other hand, Abreu *et al.* (2023)<sup>[1]</sup> highlight the significance of the firm Parent-youth Attachment (PyA) as a method that parents in the USA use to protect youth from circumstances related to sexual harassment.

The situation in Africa, for instance, in Nigeria, as presented by Taofeek and Joshua (2023), shows the effects of weak communication with their parents, leading the youth to lack direction in overcoming moral challenges. Fernandes *et al.* (2024)<sup>[12]</sup> in Uganda explain that youth need parental guidance on reproductive health skills. In Mwanza, Tanzania, Alsager *et al.* (2024)<sup>[5]</sup> indicate that paternal parenting practices are weak, thereby weakening their attachment to their children and omitting the quality of becoming "good fathers". In Dodoma and Dar es Salaam, Shitindi *et al.* (2023)<sup>[31]</sup> report that parents do not provide essential needs for their children, leading them to live on the streets. Given these contexts, this study focuses on guiding parents through PCSs to be attentive and responsible in nurturing and fostering their youth. To achieve this, it requires the active involvement of parents and institutions in parenting responsibilities, which raises awareness among youth that there are individuals who support them in building their MV. In Malaysia, Maizura *et al.* (2021) emphasize that parents should nurture and foster MV in their youth by providing them with the essentials of life, including food, clothing, shelter, and health services. This demonstrates that Nurturing and Fostering Aspects (NFA) from parents are required for promoting their moral behaviour.

Additionally, in the African context, the moral values are

essentially communicated by parents to their offspring in the family. Richmond and Augustine (2022)<sup>[27]</sup> in Ghana remind parents to pay more attention to youth in imparting MV for their welfare. Christopher and Sanga (2023)<sup>[9]</sup> assert the contrary facets towards parents in Tanzania by revealing their irresponsibility in educating and disciplining their children. They think that teachers are the most responsible figures in shaping the youths' behaviour because they spend a lot of time with them in schools. Seni and Onyango (2021)<sup>[30]</sup> portray that the parents have less participation in the academic progress of their children and they provide inadequate subsistence to them.

Nevertheless, Parenting Styles (PS) are the methods that parents choose and apply for developing MV in their offspring. The PS are essential aspects for influencing youths' moral development. The Bible portrays parenting failure through Eli. In 1Sam 2:24-25, the Bible explains Eli's failure to shape his sons' behaviour by failing to give them adequate attention and seriousness. He indirectly allowed his sons to do what they wished.

In Nigeria, Cynthia (2021)<sup>[11]</sup> identifies three types of parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. In Belgium, Lamprianidou *et al.* (2025)<sup>[20]</sup> emphasise the authoritative parenting style, which involves both parents in supporting their youth's moral development.

### Knowledge Gap

In Tanzania, the research works, including Mwarabu *et al.* (2021), Innocent (2022), and Christopher and Sanga (2023)<sup>[9]</sup>, focus on moral decadence among youth in secondary schools. Another related research work by Gibson and Mwamzanya (2021)<sup>[14]</sup> emphasizes the importance of promoting acceptable morals among youth, aligned with suitable parenting styles that support the development of MV towards youth. Mtweve (2023) and Adam and Mukadi (2021) assert the effects of Single-parenting style on the academic progress of youth in secondary schools. In different ways, these works in general focus on identifying moral decadence among youth and its negative impact on their families and society. This shows that there is no research that examines the source of moral decadence and offers solutions to promote moral values among youth. Therefore, this study fills this gap by identifying the influence of Parental Care Strategies for Enhancing Moral Values in Youth. Thus, this study outlines the sources of immorality among youth and provides strategies to activate parental responsibility for promoting moral values among youth, thereby reducing immoral practices and restoring moral quality in the family, institutions, and the whole society of Tanzania.

### Methodology of the Study

This study employed a convergent research design that integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell & Creswell, 2022)<sup>[10]</sup>. The quantitative research approach provides the researcher with a clearer understanding of the problem, and the qualitative research approach helps in acquiring a deeper understanding of the complex human behaviours the researcher expects to find in the particular area of study.

This study targeted the population of 4 heads of schools, 98 teachers, and 991 students from 4 different schools, which accommodated boys and girls in the ordinary level and single-sex students in the advanced level. The required

students were in form II-VI, aged 14 to 20 years. Additionally, 40 parents and 4 religious leaders were also targeted. The total number of the targeted population became 1,137. For sample size, stratum sampling techniques were used to identify groups of respondents, after which simple random sampling was applied to obtain the required number of 20 parents, 30 teachers, and 60 students. In addition, purposive sampling was used to recruit 2 heads of schools and 2 religious leaders, resulting in a sample size of 114. The data were collected through questionnaires for teachers and students, a focus group discussion (FGD) for parents and a semi-structured interview guide (SI) for heads of schools and religious leaders. Both research methods' instruments were checked by two experts to assess their effectiveness in collecting the

required results. Reliability was measured using a pilot test, as suggested by Orodho (2012) [25]. The quantitative data were assessed using Cronbach's Alpha in SPSS version 20, and the qualitative data were assessed using the member checking method to ensure the credibility of the information, as instructed by Creswell and Creswell (2022) [10].

### Findings and Discussions

The data analysis of quantitative data was done through descriptive statistical data analysis, which included frequency, percentage and mean in the aid of SPSS version 20, and presented in the table, while the qualitative data was analyzed through thematic data analysis based on the main theme of the particular research objective as presented in the table below.

**Table 1:** Teachers' and Students' responses on the influence of Parental care strategies on enhancing moral values in youth (n=90)

| S. No | Statement                                                                | Respondents | Responses in Frequency (%) |          |          |           |           | Mean |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|------|
|       |                                                                          |             | SD                         | D        | U        | A         | SA        |      |
| 1     | The RMTs shape the youth's moral behavior                                | Teachers    | 0 (0.0)                    | 0 (0.0)  | 2 (6.7)  | 11 (36.7) | 17 (56.7) | 4.50 |
|       |                                                                          | Students    | 2 (3.3)                    | 0 (0.0)  | 1 (1.7)  | 22 (36.7) | 35 (58.3) | 4.47 |
| 2     | The youth need both fathers' and mothers' care for their MV development  | Teachers    | 0 (0.0)                    | 0 (0.0)  | 0 (0.0)  | 16 (53.3) | 14 (46.7) | 4.47 |
|       |                                                                          | Students    | 0 (0.0)                    | 2 (3.3)  | 0 (0.0)  | 8 (13.3)  | 50 (83.3) | 4.77 |
| 3     | The teachers in schools exhibit noble behaviour to their students        | Teachers    | 0 (0.0)                    | 0 (0.0)  | 1 (3.3)  | 20 (66.7) | 9 (30.0)  | 4.27 |
|       |                                                                          | Students    | 1 (1.7)                    | 1 (1.7)  | 3 (5.0)  | 44 (73.3) | 11 (18.3) | 4.00 |
| 4     | The parents cooperate in fostering their youth's moral behavior          | Teachers    | 0 (0.0)                    | 1 (3.3)  | 2 (6.7)  | 17 (56.7) | 10 (33.3) | 4.20 |
|       |                                                                          | Students    | 0 (0.0)                    | 4 (6.7)  | 2 (3.3)  | 32 (53.3) | 22 (36.7) | 4.13 |
| 5     | The religious moral teachings help youth to avoid evil acts              | Teachers    | 1 (3.3)                    | 3 (10.0) | 0 (0.0)  | 12 (40.0) | 14 (46.7) | 4.17 |
|       |                                                                          | Students    | 1 (1.7)                    | 0 (0.0)  | 1 (1.7)  | 28 (46.7) | 30 (50.0) | 4.43 |
| 6     | The youth should refrain from the improper use of social media           | Teachers    | 0 (0.0)                    | 0 (0.0)  | 0 (0.0)  | 13 (43.3) | 17 (56.7) | 4.57 |
|       |                                                                          | Students    | 3 (5.0)                    | 4 (6.7)  | 2 (3.3)  | 16 (26.7) | 35 (58.3) | 4.27 |
| 7     | The youth communicate with their parents                                 | Teachers    | 3 (10.0)                   | 3 (10.0) | 4 (13.3) | 13 (43.3) | 7 (23.3)  | 3.60 |
|       |                                                                          | Students    | 9 (15.0)                   | 9 (15.0) | 0 (0.0)  | 24 (40.0) | 18 (30.0) | 3.55 |
| 8     | The government should focus on inserting RMTs at all levels of education | Teachers    | 0 (0.0)                    | 0 (0.0)  | 0 (0.0)  | 12 (40.0) | 18 (60.0) | 4.60 |
|       |                                                                          | Students    | 3 (5.0)                    | 3 (5.0)  | 7 (11.7) | 27 (45.5) | 20 (33.3) | 3.97 |
| 9     | The youth need parental guidance in attaining Moral Values in their life | Teachers    | 0 (0.0)                    | 0 (0.0)  | 1 (3.3)  | 11 (36.7) | 18 (60.0) | 4.57 |
|       |                                                                          | Students    | 0 (0.0)                    | 0 (0.0)  | 1 (1.7)  | 22 (36.7) | 37 (61.7) | 4.60 |
| 10    | The participation of society helps to shape the youth's moral behavior   | Teachers    | 0 (0.0)                    | 0 (0.0)  | 1 (3.3)  | 10 (33.3) | 19 (63.3) | 4.60 |
|       |                                                                          | Students    | 1 (1.7)                    | 1 (1.7)  | 0 (0.0)  | 26 (43.3) | 32 (53.3) | 4.45 |

Source: Field Data (2025)

Key: SD =Strongly Disagree, D =Disagree, U = Undecided, A =Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, F =Frequency.

### Religious Moral Teachings

The data in Table 1 indicate that 11 (36.7%) of teachers and 22 (36.7%) of students agreed, and 17 (56.7%) of teachers and 35 (58.3%) of students strongly agreed that: "The RMTs shape the youth's moral behaviour". The results scored at a high mean of 4.50 for teachers and 4.47 for students. This data suggests that both teachers and students recognize the important role of RMTs in shaping youth behaviour. The statement also corresponds with another one which states: "Religious moral teachings help youth avoid evil acts". According to this statement, the data show that 12 (40.0%) of teachers and 28 (46.7%) of students agreed. Additionally, 14 (46.7%) of teachers and 30 (50.0%) of students strongly agreed. The majority of responses denote the agreement on the statement that the RMT has the crucial role in shaping moral values in youth, which corresponds to the role of parents in the group of PA2, who explained the significant role of RMTs to the youth by saying:

*"The RMTs give confidence in youth to face the authenticity, even in difficult situations. They foster fairness, selflessness, honesty, truthfulness, faithfulness, and hard work, and encourage*

*interaction with others and living in harmony with people of different religions, beliefs, traditions, or races. Additionally, the RMTs activate the spirit of service to their family and government"* (FGD, PA2, 30 March 2025)

Due to this necessity, the PA1 suggested:

*"The RMTs should be provided in churches, Mosques, and schools effectively, and the youth must be encouraged to attend these spiritual services to learn their RMTs according to their religious beliefs. The RMTs might be offered within their peer groups so that each can benefit from appropriate teachings. By maintaining RMTs in schools, the youth can be well prepared to be active, faithful in their religions and good citizens in their country who are motivated to do good for their own benefit and for others."* (FGD, PA1, 29 March 2025)

These findings demonstrate that the RMTs aim to activate and develop the sense of responsibility among youth. This step should be facilitated by the responsible parents,



teachers, spiritual guardians and society through the provision of parental care towards youth. The RMTs foster spiritual maturity in youth, building community bonds that connect them despite their various differences. By promoting RMTs among youth, society can instill moral values in youth, which can positively influence their families, society, country, and all human communities to do what is right and avoid wrong practices.

However, a small number of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. This shows that there is a minority of youth who do not benefit from RMTs, though they attend the sessions, but they cannot refrain from evil acts, since they do not practice what they learn. In this context, Miasto (2024) states that individuals can learn and understand the RMTs but can fail to implement them. This perspective is promoted by PR1, who asserted:

*“The current situation demonstrates that some youth are members of a certain religion, and attend the RMTs of their religion, but are still involved in evil acts. This implies that to behave morally depends on one’s spiritual maturity with an active conscience, which guides one to act morally.”* (SI, PR1, 29 March 2025)

The findings emphasize the effective learning and clear understanding of the Holy Books of the particular religion (Bible and Qur’an) and put them into practice in learners’ daily lives. This information demonstrates the important role played by RMTs in instilling ethical values and moral behaviour, which originated in religious Texts. For those who cheat, it signifies the misunderstanding or carelessness towards one’s spiritual teachings.

On the other hand, some students in schools are not interested in RMTs and consider them a waste of time because they have no exam credit or impact on their final study results. To them, there is no need for RMTs sessions in schools. However, Absattorov (2022) <sup>[2]</sup> highlights that RMTs are society and personal problem solvers; they embody responsibility and mould good behaviour. So, neglecting the RMTs results in a loss of their benefits and signifies a spiritual disposition in society; thus, this study emphasizes a clear understanding and application of the RMTs among youth.

### Parents’ Parenting Role

Moreover, the data in Table 1 shows that 16 (53.3%) teachers and 8 (13.3%) students agreed that the youth need both fathers’ and mothers’ care for their Moral Values development. Also, 14 (46.7%) teachers and 50 (83.3%) students strongly agreed with the statement. The mean for teachers was 4.47, and for students was 4.77. Regarding the students’ opinion, the data states that 2 (3.3%) disagreed. This statement is similar to this: “The youth need parental guidance in attaining MV in their life”, on which, both teachers and students categorized at 1 (3.3%) and 1 (1.7%) were undecided. Furthermore, 11 (36.7%) of teachers and 22 (36.7%) of students agreed, and 18 (60.0%) of teachers and 37 (61.7%) of students strongly agreed, with a mean of 4.57 for teachers and 4.60 for students.

According to this data, both teachers and students strongly support the statement, implying that effective moral enhancement among youth requires the fostering aspects of both parents, necessitating parental guidance, even if they

are not their biological parents. Bowlby (1969) <sup>[6]</sup> stresses the parent-child affectional bond, regardless of biological relationship. This information is supported by Turemuratova (2023) <sup>[35]</sup>, who explains that the molding of youth’s behaviour is well-grounded in the family under the guidance of parents and other elder members. This exposes the reality that everything stems from family, both good and bad behaviours, as demonstrated by the youngsters in society. Thus, the parents and all caregivers are expected to be attentive to their parenting duties, as this is their fundamental role in the lives of youth. This implication goes hand in hand with the HS1, who said:

*“The parents are the initiators of moral education in the family and society. If they miss a single step in their parenting role, the offspring become morally corrupt. The parents should stay together and stand firm on their position as the pillars of good morals for their children, which provides a great impact on their future lives.”* (SI, HS1, 26 March 2025).

This data indicates that parents are the first teachers in homeschool. If they engage in immoral practices in their daily lives, they cannot effectively impart MV to their offspring, but when they demonstrate good behaviour, they can easily mould their children’s behaviour. Kant (1969) instructs parents and all individuals to fulfil their crucial role in the family and in society. This means they should demonstrate noble behaviour and guide the youth to behave morally for a successful life.

In Tanzania, Gibson and Mwamzanya (2021) <sup>[14]</sup> give advice on setting rules in providing moral guidance and supervising their implementation among youth. This aligns with the study’s focus on parental care strategies to enhance the MV through appropriate parenting styles, which can help foster noble character in youth. The research findings of Shitindi *et al.* (2023) <sup>[31]</sup> in Dodoma indicate that parents are careless towards their children and apply inappropriate parenting styles, such as permissive parenting, which is unfavourable for youth moral development. This indicates parents’ carelessness towards their youth and a parental failure to fulfil the parenting responsibilities.

Additionally, the data in Table 1 indicate a contradiction: a minority of respondents disagree or fall into the undecided category for the statement. This represents youth who are cared for in single-parent families, where they don’t experience the care of both parents. Rubamande *et al.* (2021) <sup>[28]</sup> explain the difficulties that single parents face in fulfilling their responsibilities to their offspring while remaining firm in both the father’s and the mother’s positions. Mtweve (2023) highlights that parents are the principal moral educators in the family, and each parent has a gender role to play in raising the offspring, so a single parent faces a significant challenge in fulfilling both roles. For instance, a female parent cannot satisfactorily instruct a male adolescent in moral behaviour. The same applies to the male parent, who may not provide appropriate moral guidance to the female adolescent or adequately meet all her requirements. This signifies that, in one accord, parents are the fundamental figures in creating and developing the acceptable MV, which moulds the personalities of youth.

However, this reality is often violated when parents live separately. The youth miss some gender aspects that are contributed only by the missing side of the parents. In 2015,

Pope Francis encouraged parents to prioritize their children's success despite their differences. The Holy Scriptures provide the example of Mary and Joseph (Luke 2:22), who cared for their son Jesus by providing him with spiritual and moral guidance, and they stand as moral models for him. From this example, the parents are reminded to practice what they teach and to fulfill their duty as parents to their offspring. For instance, if the parents insist that the youth pray, they should teach them to pray by gathering for prayer at home, and the children can see and imitate it. If they have never seen such practices at home, it can take time for them to be convinced by words alone.

### Teachers' Parenting Role

In the context of teachers' parenting role, the statement states: "The teachers demonstrate noble values as moral models to the youth" The data in Table 1 display that 1 (3.3%) teacher and 3 (5.0%) students were undecided. While 20 (66.7%) teachers and 44 (73.3%) students agreed with the statement, 9 (30.0%) teachers and 11 (18.3%) students strongly agreed. However, 1 (1.7%) teacher strongly disagreed, and 1 (1.7%) student disagreed. This resulted in a mean of 4.27 for teachers and 4.00 for students. The result indicates that the responsible teachers are imbued with a hearty sense of responsibility in instilling moral values among youth. This finding is supported by Miasto (2024), who notes that teachers are the second moral molders of youth after parents and are therefore expected to behave morally and provide positive life examples for their students. This goes wider in dignifying the notion of morality by expressing noble values among youth.

This finding is closely related to the information conveyed by HS1 (SI 26 March 2025), who explains that, in his school, the first priority is to develop moral values among students under the supervision of teachers who are obligated to demonstrate moral behaviour and to instill them in their students. The information portrays teachers as role models for their students and holds them responsible for imparting good morals.

On the same point, some student participants' opinions were contrary. This indicates opposition, meaning the teachers do not demonstrate noble values to them. This reveals the reality of some teachers who do not care about their students' moral behaviour, by dressing inappropriately, using offensive language, and sometimes even engaging in unacceptable relationships with their students. In this way, they fail to become moral exemplars to their students. Mahmudulhassan *et al.* (2024) <sup>[21]</sup> suggest that teachers should be well-trained in ethical education to teach good behaviour to youth. This signifies that teachers' immoral behaviour affects students' behaviour as well, and the outcome harms society as a whole. Thus, there is a great need for teachers to be morally trained in moral aspects to meet the requirement of instilling moral values in youth.

In Table 1, the same concept is reiterated in the statement, "Teachers participate in promoting their students' moral behaviour." 1 (3.3%) teacher and 4 (6.7%) students disagreed; on the other hand, 17 (56.7%) teachers and 32 (53.3%) students agreed, and 10 (33.3%) of teachers and 22 (36.7%) students strongly agreed—however, 2 (6.7%) of teachers and 2 (3.3%) of undecided students. The mean of these results ranges from 4.20 for teachers to 4.43 for students.

Regarding this result, respondents who agreed with the statement scored the highest percentage, indicating teachers' active participation in instilling moral values among their students. Raxmonova (2021) <sup>[26]</sup> clarifies that teachers have a great influence and authority in imparting moral education to their students. This fact reveals that teachers can use their authority to shape students' behaviour and influence them through teaching and their ways of life.

However, some respondents disagreed with the statement, which suggests that teachers do not provide moral support to their students. This discloses the irresponsibility of some teachers in shaping their students' moral behaviour, for they do not care whether they behave well or not; the moral aspects are none of their business; they are only responsible for academic matters. About this point, the PA1 explained:

*".... the parents and society expect teachers to behave morally and be capable of accomplishing the parenting role to their students. They always stand as parents towards students, with the authority to teach, guide, instruct, and even punish those who consistently misbehave. Teachers have to be in a parental relationship with their students, which can facilitate the instillation of MV to them"* (FGD, PA1, 29 March 2025).

The information from PA1 indicates that some teachers are not very involved in helping their students develop good moral behaviour, which is contrary to parents' and society's expectations. The finding suggests that teachers are morally capable of enhancing MV in their students. The parents, society, and the government entrusted to them the whole young generation to guide them on their educational journey and moral development. Thus, this study regards teachers as the primary professional personnel in educating youth at all levels of academic matters and promoting good morals.

### Communication

On the statement about youth's open communication with their parents, the participants were less supported it. As it is indicated in table 1 that, 3 (10.0%) of teachers and 9 (15.0%) of students were strongly disagreed, 3 (10.0%) teachers and 9 (15.0%) students disagreed, 4 (13.3%) teachers were undecided, 13 (43.3%) of teachers and 24 (40.0%) students agreed on the other hand, 7 (23.3%) of teachers and 18 (30.0%) of students were strongly agreed. The mean for teachers was 3.60, and for students was 3.55.

These results indicate that parents often lack satisfactory communication with their children. The youth face difficulties when their parents lack effective communication and provide no life instruction. Unfortunately, when youth find the internet, they consider it the sure way of life that bridges the gap between them and their parents. Taofeek and Joshua (2023) advise parents to stay connected with their youth through communication. This raises the alarm that if parents cannot communicate with their youth, the youth can easily seek instruction from an internet source, which is dangerous for the parent-child relationship and for the youth's moral development.

In this context, one of the PA2 said that, in some situations, the parents play their role satisfactorily, but the youth become rebellious against them. This reveals that some parents are strict in disciplining their children. They teach

them proper life skills and moral teachings, but the youth are stubborn. Therefore, it is time for parents to reflect on this situation, identify their role and take serious measures to rectify it.

Regarding the statement that youth should refrain from improper use of social media in shaping their moral behaviour, the data show that 13 (43.3%) of teachers and 16 (26.7%) of students responded in the Agree category. 17 (56.7%) of teachers and 35 (58.3%) responded in the Strong Agree category. Additionally, 4 (6.7%) of the students disagreed, and 3 (5.0%) strongly disagreed, while 2 (3.3%) were undecided. The mean for teachers was 4.57, and for students, 4.27.

These results demonstrate the high level of support from both teachers and students, indicating that they agree that, in shaping youth behaviour, they should refrain from improper use of social media. The participants' responses indicate that the improper utilization of social media has a negative impact on youth, as it undermines MV. Chen and Xiao (2022) <sup>[8]</sup> reveal that young people are not very interested in electronic media such as television, radio and newspapers, and they do not communicate effectively with their parents when seeking guidance or advice. On the contrary, they are very interested in social media, including WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and many others. Calatrava *et al.* (2024) <sup>[7]</sup> report that youth tend to ignore the conventional parenting skills their parents provide. This reflects the reality that youth spend much time on the internet and are drawn to various aspects, including those incompatible with their society's cultural norms. One parent in discussion with PA2 states that:

*"These days, the internet is everything to our youth; they do not bother to ask about knowledge, skills, cultural norms or moral values for the betterment of their lives. When they need to learn something, they do not inquire from their parents or elders; instead, they get answers from the internet. Thus, they spend lots of time perusing the internet, where they get information, both morally and immorally."* (FG, PA2 31 March 2021).

Additionally, the collected information from PR1 expresses this idea that:

*"In our society nowadays, there is no informal education in the family and in society for the youth, as in previous days. Instead, the youth learn and copy everything from social media, including fashion styles, open sexual relationships in terms of boyfriend and girlfriend... In all these, neither the family nor society shows any reaction. So, the youth feel comfortable and proceed."* (SI, PR1, 29 March 2025)

Such information reveals that, in modern times, social media usage is growing faster among youth than ever before because they receive various information that interest them, some of which is constructive and some of which is destructive. Unfortunately, this situation in some circumstances is attributed by parents as PA1 explain:

*"We, parents, do not have enough time to spend with the youth at home; we are always busy, yearning for our family's subsistence. So, the youth are not well monitored. Some of us buy smartphones for their youth and have no control over them. This spoils their morality."* (FGD, PA1 29 March 2025)

The information portrays parents' inattention to their youth's moral development. The parents provide their youth with what they think is help for their lives, but they do not have time to supervise and monitor their use of social media, which affects their moral behaviour. The youth are extremely free to utilize internet material without parental supervision. As a result, the parents fail to invest much in MV among youth through guidance and life skills. Consequently, their expectation to see their offspring's success, which returns to them as gratitude from their children, comes to nothing.

### Parent-youth Attachment

Furthermore, Table 1 states: "The youth are open in communication with their parents." The results show that 13 (43.3%) teachers and 24 (40.0%) students agreed. Also 7 (23.3%) teachers and 18 (30.0%) students were strongly agreed. Additionally, 3 (10.0%) teachers and 9 (15.0%) students disagreed, 3 (10.0%) teachers and 9 (15.0%) strongly disagreed, and 4 (13.3%) teachers were undecided. The mean scores for teachers and students were 3.60 and 3.55, respectively.

This mean score indicates that both parents and youth have insufficient communication. The youth do not open their mouths to tell their parents about their life challenges, and the parents also do not dare to ask or give instructions on how the youth can safely navigate their adolescent challenges. Thus, the study grounded parent-child attachment as a crucial factor in fostering a close relationship between parents and youth, which, in turn, promotes positive outcomes in youth moral development. This facet is nourished by providing life support to the youth and effective communication.

Bowlby's (1969) <sup>[6]</sup> attachment theory, emphasises that the parent-child bond in the child's early years, has a positive impact on the individual's future life. The information aligns with Aliyu and Aransiola (2023) <sup>[4]</sup>, who argue for strengthening and promoting communication between parents and adolescents in the family, as there is a strong need for parents to promote parent-youth communication to address the challenges youth face in adolescence in acquiring and promoting moral values. For this reason, the youth became opposed to their parents, and consequently, changing the situation became difficult. Therefore, the parents should create a strong parent-child attachment to facilitate a healthy, affectionate bond with their offspring.

The information from PA1 promotes this concept by advising parents to communicate with their youth in a suitable manner that brings them together and fosters the enhancement of moral values in youth. On the other hand, the data indicate that some respondents disagreed with the statement that youth are not open in communication with their parents. This negative opinion implies that at this age,

youth tend to hide the challenges they face from their parents, believing they can solve them on their own. Thompson *et al.* (2022) <sup>[34]</sup> note that youth typically ignore or resist their parents' instructions and conventions, doing what they prefer. This fact is supported by PR1, who says:

*"These days, youth are very stubborn; they ignore the advice and norms of their parents, they have no respect for their parents and elders, even among themselves. Sometimes parents and elders are shocked by such a situation, find nothing to do with the youth, and remain silent."* (SI, PR1, 19 March 2025).

The data underscores the importance of building a secure parent-child attachment bond in offspring from an early age to support healthier interpersonal skills, emotional closeness, social interaction, and moral development.

### The Society's Involvement

The last statement in Table 1 states: "The participation of society in the provision of moral guidance to the youth helps to shape their moral behaviour". The data shows that 10 (33.3%) teachers and 26 (43.3%) students agreed. At the same time, 19 (63.3%) of teachers and 32 (53.3%) of students were strongly agreed. However, 1 (1.7%) of students disagreed, and 1 (1.7%) of them strongly disagreed. Also, 1 teacher (3.3%) was undecided. For teachers, the mean was at 4.60, and for students, it ranged from 4.45.

The data presents many respondents who agree that society's participation in shaping the youngsters is much needed. The finding demonstrates that society needs to be involved in imparting moral values to youth. The existence of morals in society denotes the continuation and the well-being of that particular society, while immorality signifies the imminent decline and disappearance of that society. In this context, PA1 gave an example from Biblical scriptures (1Sam 2:12-17, 22-25), which demonstrates the failure of Eli in shaping his sons reflected the failure of the whole community:

*".....Our failure to instill moral values in our youth divests us of God's blessings and undermines our esteem before others. It signifies doom for us, our family, our society, and our future generations. As it was, Eli the priest, who had an uppermost position of service to God among his fellow Israelites, but he failed to discipline his own sons."* (FGD, PA1, 29 March 2025).

This information highlights the importance of parents' moral guidance for the youth in the family, which conveys their esteem or contempt and their expectations of success or failure. This points out the reality that, when society is overwhelmed by various immoral forms, like irresponsibility, sexual abuse, contempt, abortion, disrespect, indecent dressing, and so on, the anticipation disappears among people. Thus, the study highlights the necessity for society's involvement in instilling moral values in youth, hence to spare the whole society from harm.

### Summary of the Study

The study examined the influence of parental care strategies on the development of moral values among youth in Dodoma Municipality, Tanzania. The society in Dodoma

Municipality exhibited a discernible erosion of moral values at the familial and societal levels, particularly among youth, as indicated by violations such as irresponsibility, indecent dress, indiscipline, insults, lying, stubbornness, stealing, engaging in unacceptable relationships, and laziness. All these are fostered by immoral examples of parents towards youth, such as Alcoholism, divorce, adultery, violence and negligence. Additionally, the study found that parental irresponsibility and societal indifference towards youth, as well as family instability, contributed to youth violence. All these were counted as the core source of moral decadence among youth.

The study collected information from respondents using probability and non-probability sampling techniques and obtained a sample of 114, representing 1,137 of the targeted population.

The study presented parental care strategies expected to attain MV in youth, including Religious Moral Teachings (RMTs), the roles of parents and teachers, parent-child attachment (PyA), communication, and societal involvement. The Findings reveal that RMTs significantly enhance Moral Values (MV) among youth by guiding them to live morally. The PyA demonstrate the importance of the affectionate bond between parents and children, for it facilitates the instilling of MV in youth. Furthermore, the findings highlight the significant role of both parents and teachers as moral moulders and exemplars among young people. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of society's involvement in promoting MV in youth, as it can significantly influence their daily moral behaviour. Furthermore, the study reveals the importance of communication between parents and youth. All these remind parents and other caregivers of their fundamental role in nurturing and fostering, which steering youth away from immorality. Due to this, the study examines strategies for parental care to enhance morality among youth in secondary schools and to resolve immoral problems in secondary schools and society at large in Tanzania.

Ultimately, the study advocates a collaborative approach between families and society to promote MV among youth, thereby reducing immoral practices in schools, families, and society.

### Conclusion and Recommendation of the Study

The study highlighted PCSs as a method for restoring MV among youth, including Religious Moral Teachings (RMTs), Parents' Parenting Role, Teachers' Parenting Role, Communication, Parent-youth Attachment (PyA), and Society Involvement, as key strategies for addressing immoral behaviour among youth. These strategies embody the spirit of doing what is right to oneself and to others from within (Kant, 1993) <sup>[18]</sup>, which can lead individuals to be responsible in fulfilling their duty to the well-being of the person and to the whole community. This behavioural characteristic has a great influence on youth and motivates them to do the right thing and to ignore wrongdoing. This resulted in the creation of morally upright youth and a less criminal society.

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