



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



## The decline of ethical values among children in contemporary society: The case of Morogoro municipality

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### Abstract

This study investigates the decline of ethical values among children in the Morogoro Region of Tanzania, aiming to explore its underlying causes, societal impacts, and possible interventions. Data were collected using structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions involving 75 participants including teachers, parents, and students. Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. Findings indicate that the erosion of children's ethical behavior is primarily driven by three interconnected factors: the pervasive influence of media and technology, peer pressure, and weak parental involvement. Media platforms, particularly social media and digital entertainment, were found to expose children to content that often glamorizes unethical conduct, weakening traditional moral frameworks. Peer influence emerged as a strong social force, often encouraging behaviors such as dishonesty, disrespect, and academic misconduct, especially during adolescence. Therefore; limited parental engagement in moral instruction, due to time constraints or overreliance on schools, further contributes to value deterioration. The impacts of ethical decline are evident in both academic underperformance and deteriorating social relationships, as well as in the broader school climate, which suffers from reduced trust and cooperation. However, the study also reveals optimism among stakeholders for meaningful interventions. Recommendations include the integration of moral education into school curricula, teacher training programs focused on ethical development, and improved home-school collaboration to reinforce shared values. These findings underscore the urgent need for multi-stakeholder efforts to restore and strengthen ethical foundations among children in contemporary Tanzanian society.

**Keywords:** Ethical values; Children; Contemporary society; Causes; Impacts; Interventions

### 1. Introduction

In recent years, there has been growing concern over the decline of ethical values among children in various parts of Tanzania, including the Morogoro Region. Increasingly, cases of indiscipline, disrespect, dishonesty, violence, and lack of responsibility are being reported in schools, homes, and communities. These behaviors indicate a weakening of the moral foundations that traditionally guided children's conduct. This moral decline not only affects individual development but also threatens social harmony and national progress (Eisenberg, N., & Lennon, R. 1983).

Morogoro, like many regions in the country, is undergoing rapid social and economic changes, including urbanization, technological advancement, and shifting family dynamics. While these changes offer new opportunities, they also expose children to negative influences such as peer pressure, harmful media content, and reduced parental supervision (O'Keeffe, G. S., & Clarke-Pearson, K. 2011). Furthermore, traditional agents of moral education; families, schools, and religious institutions seem to be losing their influence in shaping the ethical behavior of children Miller, J. G. (2008). In schools across Morogoro, teachers and administrators have reported increasing challenges in managing students' behavior and instilling discipline. Many children appear to lack a clear understanding of right and wrong, which may be

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attributed to inadequate moral guidance, poor role modeling, and the limited integration of ethics in both formal and informal education. The erosion of ethical values at an early age can lead to long-term consequences, including increased school dropout rates, youth crime, and a breakdown in community trust (Hochschild, A. R. 1998).

This study seeks to investigate the root causes, effects, and potential solutions to the decline of ethical values among children in Morogoro Region. Focusing on the local context, the research aims to provide practical insights and recommendations for parents, teachers, community leaders, and policymakers. The ultimate goal is to contribute to the restoration of ethical behavior and moral responsibility among children, which is essential for building a disciplined, respectful, and socially responsible future generation.

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## **2. Research methodology**

This chapter presents the methodology employed to investigate the decline of ethical values among children in the Morogoro Region. It outlines the research design, data collection techniques, sampling procedures, and ethical considerations applied to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from parents, teachers, and students to explore the causes, impacts, and potential interventions related to the decline of ethical values among children.

### **2.1. Research Design**

The study adopted a mixed-methods research design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This method allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the issue by combining statistical analysis with rich, contextual insights. Qualitative data offered deeper perspectives from stakeholders, while quantitative data provided measurable evidence of the problem. This approach enabled triangulation, thus strengthening the credibility of the findings.

### **2.2. Study Area**

The research was conducted in Morogoro Region, Tanzania, a rapidly urbanizing area facing increasing ethical challenges among youth due to societal changes and media influence. The study included schools, homes, and community spaces in both urban and peri-urban areas to capture a broad range of experiences.

### **2.3. Population and Sampling**

The study population comprised secondary school teachers, parents of school-aged children, and students aged 12 to 18 years. A total of 75 participants were selected through stratified purposive sampling to ensure diversity and relevance to the study objectives. These included 25 teachers, 20 parents, and 30 students from three secondary schools; Mjimpya, Tushikamane, and Kihonda, each representing different localities in Morogoro.

### **2.4. Data Collection Methods**

Quantitative data was gathered using structured questionnaires administered to teachers and parents, and a student-friendly version for children. Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, enabling participants to share personal views and experiences.

### **2.5. Data Analysis**

Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with software such as SPSS to generate frequencies, percentages, and correlations. Qualitative data underwent thematic analysis, where patterns and themes were identified through coding of interview and discussion transcripts. Excel software supported the organization and coding of data. Findings from both methods were triangulated to enhance the depth and validity of the analysis.

### **2.6. Ethical Considerations**

The study adhered to strict ethical standards to protect participant rights. Informed consent was obtained from all adult participants and from parents for minors. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing data and storing it securely. Participants' dignity was respected, especially when discussing sensitive issues, and data was only accessible to the research team.

### 3. Results and discussion

This chapter presents the findings from the data collected during the research on the decline of ethical values among children in Morogoro Region. The data was gathered through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions with teachers, parents, and students. The analysis of this data focuses on the main themes that emerged during the study, which relate to the causes, impacts, and possible interventions for addressing the decline in children's ethical behavior. Both qualitative and quantitative data have been analyzed and are presented in the following sections.

**Table 1** An Overview of the Data

Participants	Data Type	Data Collection Methods	Number
Teachers	Quantitative & Qualitative	Structured questionnaires Semi-structured interviews	25
Parents	Quantitative & Qualitative	Structured questionnaires Semi-structured interviews	20
Students	Quantitative & Qualitative	Structured questionnaires Focus group discussions	30
Total Participants			75
Data Analysis Method	Descriptions		
Descriptive Statistics	Used for analyzing quantitative data obtained from structured questionnaires, providing insights into the perceptions of ethical values among teachers, parents, and students.		
Thematic Analysis	Employed to analyze qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, identifying key themes and insights regarding personal experiences and observations on ethical behavior.		

**Table 2** Quantitative Data Analysis on Ethical Behavior Among Children

Awareness of Ethical Values			
Stake holders	Findings	Frequency	Percent
Teachers	Believed that ethical values are crucial for children's development	15	60
	Reported that ethical education should be integrated into school curriculum	10	40
Total		25	100
Parents	Agree that ethical education should be part of the school curriculum	12	60
	Reported that ethical values are essential for children's overall development	8	40
Total		20	100
Students	Reported being taught ethics in school	13	43.33
	Felt that these values are consistently practiced.	17	56.67
Total		30	100
Perceived Causes of Ethical Decline			
Teachers	Cited media influence (social media, TV, video games)	10	40
	Mentioned peer pressure	7	28
	Identified weak parenting as a cause of ethical decline.	8	32
Total		25	100

Parents	Cited media influence	8	40
	Reported weak parenting	8	40
	Mentioned peer pressure	4	20
Total		20	100
Students	Identified peer pressure as a major cause of ethical decline	15	50
	Cited media influence	8	26.67
	Mentioned weak parenting	7	23.33
Total		<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Impact of Ethical Decline</b>			
Teachers	Observe a link between ethical decline and poor academic performance	10	40
	Reported a negative school climate	10	40
	Cited deteriorating social relationships	5	20
Total		25	100
Students	Reported that unethical behavior harms peer relationships	15	50
	Cited a negative school climate	9	30
	Mentioned a decline in academic performance.	6	20
Total		30	100
<b>Interventions and Solutions</b>			
Teachers	Supported integrating ethics into teacher training	17	68
	Agreed that more moral education in schools will improve behaviour	8	32
Total		25	100
Parents	Supported ethics in teacher training	13	65
	Reported that focusing on moral education will positively influence behaviour	7	35
Total		20	100
Students	Agreed that ethics in teacher training will help improve ethical standards,	18	60
	Acknowledged that more focus on moral education will positively influence them	12	40
Total		30	100

### 3.1. Causes of Ethical Decline

#### 3.1.1. Media and Technology

The influence of media and technology, particularly social media, emerged as a dominant concern among both teachers and parents regarding the decline of ethical values among children. Participants consistently described how constant exposure to digital content, including movies, television, social media platforms, and online games, significantly shapes children's attitudes and behaviors, often in ways that undermine traditional moral and cultural values (Valkenburg & Piotrowski, 2017).

Many teachers voiced their worries about the glamorization of unethical behavior in online content. As one teacher remarked, *“social media glorifies bad behavior, and children are exposed to it daily. They tend to emulate what they see.”* This reflects the growing influence of digital role models celebrities, influencers, and even fictional characters which frequently promote disrespect, aggression, dishonesty, or materialism as desirable traits (Strasburger, Jordan, & Donnerstein, 2010). Teachers reported observing students mimicking such behavior in school, including disrespecting authority, using inappropriate language, and showing reduced empathy toward others.

Similarly, parents emphasized the role of smartphones and unrestricted internet access in accelerating the loss of ethical grounding among children. One parent noted, *"Children are influenced by what they see online, and they adopt behaviors that are not in line with our cultural values."* This points to a shift from community-based moral learning to individualistic and globalized influence, where children receive ethical cues not from elders or local role models but from online content creators whose values may differ drastically from those upheld in their families or communities (Subrahmanyam & Šmahel, 2011).

Some parents mentioned that social media processes often expose children to increasingly extreme or inappropriate content, reinforcing harmful ideologies or normalizing unethical practices such as cyberbullying, vanity, or dishonesty for personal gain. Children may also be desensitized to violence or immoral conduct due to frequent exposure in online videos and games. As a result, many young people struggle to distinguish between right and wrong, especially when immoral behavior is rewarded with attention, popularity, or financial success online (Strasburger et al., 2010).

Teachers further expressed that students' overreliance on technology negatively affects their interpersonal relationships and moral judgment. Face to face communication is often replaced with text or social media interaction, which limits children's ability to develop empathy, resolve conflict constructively, or understand the emotional impact of their actions on others (Subrahmanyam & Šmahel, 2011; Valkenburg & Piotrowski, 2017).

Despite these concerns, both teachers and parents acknowledged that media and technology are not inherently negative. They can serve as powerful tools for positive moral instruction if used responsibly. Educational programs, documentaries, and age-appropriate ethical content can reinforce values such as kindness, justice, and respect. However, this requires deliberate media literacy education in schools and at home, where children are taught to critically evaluate what they watch and how it aligns or conflicts with their ethical upbringing (Common Sense Media, 2020).

### 3.1.2. Peer Pressure

Throughout the focus group discussions, students consistently highlighted peer pressure as a powerful force shaping their ethical decisions. One student candidly admitted, *"If your friends are doing something wrong, it's hard to say no,"* reflecting the inner conflict many young people face when trying to maintain personal values while also seeking acceptance among peers. This statement reveals how social dynamics, particularly the desire to fit in, can overpower an individual's understanding of right and wrong especially during adolescence, a critical stage of identity formation (Steinberg, 2014).

Students explained that peer pressure often arises in subtle but persistent ways. For instance, in school settings, peers may encourage others to cheat on exams, skip classes, engage in bullying, or disrespect teachers. Even if a student initially disagrees with such actions, the fear of being excluded, mocked, or labeled as "different" can lead them to conform. The need to belong to a group is a strong emotional motivator that often compels children to compromise their ethical standards (Brown & Larson, 2009).

Teachers and parents also confirmed this observation, emphasizing that peer groups have a significant influence on children's behavior. Educators reported that unethical practices such as cheating, dishonesty, and bullying tend to spread quickly among students when such behavior is normalized or even rewarded within the peer group. One teacher noted that *"When students see others getting away with bad behavior, they start to believe it's acceptable, even clever to do the same."* This creates a toxic environment where ethical conduct becomes the exception rather than the norm.

Parents, on the other hand, expressed concern over their limited ability to monitor and control peer influences, especially as children grow older and become more independent. They acknowledged that friends often have more day to day influence over their children's behavior than they do, particularly during school hours or on social media platforms. Some parents also mentioned that peer pressure is not always overt; it can be embedded in trends, group norms, or even online interactions where children are exposed to content or challenges that promote risky or unethical behaviors (Wentzel & Looney, 2007).

Therefore, both teachers and parents recognized that while peer influence can be negative, it can also be harnessed for positive change. If schools and families work together to cultivate peer groups that value respect, responsibility, and honesty, then students may be more inclined to adopt ethical behavior to gain approval and admiration from their social circles (Brown & Larson, 2009).

### 3.1.3. Weak Parental Involvement

Several teachers and parents interviewed in this study identified the lack of parental involvement as a major contributor to the decline of ethical values among children. One teacher frankly expressed, *"Parents are so busy that they don't have time to teach their children about right and wrong."* This observation highlights the growing concern that, in the midst of demanding work schedules and increasing social responsibilities, many parents are unintentionally neglecting their crucial role in their children's moral upbringing (Grusec & Hastings, 2015).

Teachers emphasized that when parents are not actively engaged in guiding their children's behavior, it leaves a vacuum in value formation. While schools are often expected to provide ethical education, they cannot replace the foundational of moral teachings that should begin at home (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Ethical development is most effective when it is consistent and reinforced across all environments in a child's life. However, the reality is that many children are growing up without these consistent moral lessons, due in part to reduced parent-child communication and limited quality time together (Baumrind, 1991).

Parents, for their part, acknowledged this gap. Many admitted that they frequently rely on schools and teachers to instill moral values in their children. They viewed the school system as a structured environment where children can learn discipline, respect, and responsibility. However, several parents also recognized the limitations of this approach and acknowledged that the home should serve as the primary foundation for moral instruction (Grusec & Hastings, 2015). They agreed that reinforcing ethical values at home is essential and cannot be overlooked, regardless of how comprehensive a school's character education program may be.

The reliance on schools as the sole source of ethical instruction may lead to inconsistent value transmission. When children receive different or conflicting messages at school and at home or worse, when moral reinforcement is missing altogether, they may struggle to develop a stable ethical compass. Moreover, children are highly observant and learn more from what they see than what they are told. If parents do not model ethical behavior through their actions, children may fail to internalize the values they are taught in school (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Some parents expressed a desire for more structured collaboration between home and school. They suggested that schools could support them by organizing parenting seminars, offering moral development workshops, or creating platforms for regular dialogue between teachers and families. These initiatives could empower parents to take a more active role in their children's character formation and help build a cohesive moral framework shared between school and home (Epstein, 2001).

## 3.2. Impacts of Ethical Decline

### 3.2.1. Academic and Social Impacts

Teachers consistently emphasized that unethical behavior, particularly acts such as cheating and dishonesty, significantly undermines students' academic performance. According to educators, when students rely on dishonest practices instead of genuinely engaging with the learning process, they miss critical opportunities to develop essential knowledge and skills. As one teacher explained, *"Cheating is common, and it affects students' ability to perform well in exams."* This statement highlights a broader concern that unethical habits create a dependency on shortcuts rather than fostering discipline, critical thinking, and intellectual growth. Over time, this can result in long-term academic underachievement, as students who consistently engage in dishonest behaviors are less likely to build the foundational competencies required for future success (McCabe et al., 2012; Anderman & Murdock, 2007).

Furthermore, teachers pointed out that such behavior also lowers the academic standards of the entire learning environment. When dishonesty becomes normalized or goes unpunished, it can demotivate hardworking students and compromise the integrity of the education system. It also puts honest students at a disadvantage, as their efforts may not be equally rewarded in an environment where unethical behavior prevails (Whitley, 1998).

From the students' perspective, unethical conduct also deeply affects social relationships and trust among peers. Several students shared that cheating and dishonesty create divisions within their classrooms. One student honestly stated, *"I don't trust some of my classmates because I know they cheat during exams."* This reflects how unethical actions can erode the social fabric of student communities. Trust is a fundamental element in peer relationships, and once it is broken, it becomes difficult to rebuild (Stephens & Wangaard, 2016).

The presence of widespread unethical behavior fosters suspicion, resentment, and a lack of cooperation among students. It can also lead to social isolation of those who are perceived as dishonest, while honest students may feel

frustrated or disillusioned with the learning environment. In the long run, this breakdown in peer trust not only hinders academic collaboration but also affects students' emotional well-being and their ability to form meaningful, respectful relationships (Anderman & Murdock, 2007).

### 3.2.2. School Climate

The issue of school climate emerged as a central theme in discussions with both teachers and students, highlighting the broader impact of unethical behavior on the learning environment. Participants emphasized that a growing lack of moral discipline among students has led to a deterioration in interpersonal relationships, classroom order, and overall student well-being. This reflects findings by Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, and Pickeral (2009), who noted that school climate significantly affects students' academic, behavioral, and emotional development.

Teachers reported that unethical behavior such as bullying, disrespect, dishonesty, and lack of responsibility has significantly disrupted the positive atmosphere that schools aim to maintain. One teacher described the situation bluntly, stating, *"The lack of respect for each other has created tension in the classroom."* This sentiment reflects the challenges educators face in managing classrooms where students fail to show consideration for peers and authority figures. In such environments, the teaching and learning process becomes strained, as teachers must frequently intervene in conflicts or disciplinary issues rather than focus on instructional goals. Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, and Higgins-D'Alessandro (2013) affirm that when a school's climate deteriorates due to behavioral issues, academic motivation and performance tend to decline.

Classroom tension, according to teachers, often stems from verbal insults, exclusionary behavior, physical altercations, and intimidation among students. This creates a climate of fear and unease for those targeted, undermining their academic performance and emotional health. Teachers also pointed out that some students mimic aggressive behaviors they see at home or online, which further fuels disrespect and antisocial conduct in school settings.

From the students' perspective, the school climate was similarly described as deteriorating due to unchecked unethical conduct. Many students mentioned that bullying was common and, in some cases, ignored or downplayed by school authorities. There was a shared frustration among students over the inconsistent enforcement of rules, particularly when some individuals engaged in misconduct but faced little or no consequences. As one student put it, *"It's not fair when someone keeps doing wrong and nothing happens to them."* This lack of accountability contributes to feelings of injustice and resentment among students who strive to act ethically.

Moreover, students noted that when unethical behavior goes unpunished, it sends a message that such actions are tolerated or even acceptable, thus reinforcing a cycle of misbehavior. It also discourages others from standing up for what is right, as doing so may lead to social isolation or retaliation. The result is a school environment where unethical practices become normalized, and positive behaviors are not sufficiently recognized or encouraged. As Berkowitz and Bier (2005) argue, creating a culture of character in schools requires not just teaching moral values but also reinforcing them through consistent actions and school-wide practices.

In many cases, the absence of a strong ethical framework within the school contributes to a breakdown in student-teacher relationships and peer collaboration. Students are less likely to work together respectfully or take responsibility for their actions, leading to group conflicts and a diminished sense of community. Teachers also expressed concern about the impact on their own morale and motivation, as managing constant behavioral problems can lead to burnout and a feeling of helplessness.

To address these issues, both teachers and students recommended the establishment of clear ethical guidelines, consistent enforcement of disciplinary measures, and the promotion of a respectful, inclusive culture through awareness programs, peer support systems, and value-based education. They emphasized the importance of school leadership in modeling ethical behavior and fostering an environment where kindness, responsibility, and accountability are both taught and practiced.

### 3.3. Proposed Interventions

The need for enhanced ethical education emerged as a dominant recommendation among teachers, parents, and students, reflecting a shared concern about the moral development of children in contemporary society. Participants stressed that the current school curriculum does not adequately address ethical issues and moral reasoning, and they strongly advocated for the formal integration of ethics as a core subject in the educational system. Teachers were particularly vocal about the importance of equipping students with a solid foundation in values such as honesty, respect, empathy, responsibility, and integrity. They argued that teaching academic subjects alone is not sufficient for preparing

students to become responsible citizens and morally upright individuals. One teacher stated, *"Ethics should be taught as a subject, and it should be part of daily school life."* This suggestion reflects a growing belief that ethical education should not be limited to isolated lessons or occasional talks, but should be woven into the daily routine, classroom discussions, and overall school culture (Lickona, 1988; Palma-Pires, 2023).

Furthermore, teachers emphasized that incorporating ethical education would help address a range of behavioral issues, such as cheating, bullying, disrespect, and disobedience, which are becoming increasingly common in schools. They noted that when students are taught the importance of moral values in a structured and consistent manner, they are more likely to reflect on their actions, develop empathy for others, and make ethical choices even when faced with peer pressure or challenging circumstances (Narvaez, 2019). Parents echoed these views, expressing concern that their children are growing up in a world where traditional moral values are being overshadowed by materialism, media influence, and rapid technological change. They felt that schools must step in to fill this gap by instilling a strong moral compass in children from an early age. Many parents admitted that due to busy work schedules or a lack of knowledge about how to teach values effectively at home, they rely heavily on schools to provide this form of education (Positive Action, n.d.). Some suggested that ethical education should begin in primary school and continue through secondary levels, allowing children to internalize values over time.

Students also acknowledged the potential benefits of a more ethics-centered education. During focus group discussions, they expressed a desire for structured guidance on how to navigate real-life dilemmas and make better decisions. One student shared, *"If we were taught more about being honest, respectful, and responsible, it would help us avoid making bad choices."* This statement reveals a level of self-awareness among students, who recognize that learning about ethics can provide them with tools to resist negative influences and improve their behavior. Students mentioned that many of their peers lack role models or support systems to guide their behavior, which makes formal ethical instruction even more crucial (Educate Together, 2019). They suggested that ethics lessons could include interactive discussions, real-life scenarios, storytelling, debates, and group activities that engage them actively and help them apply what they learn in practical situations.

Participants across all groups also stressed that ethical education should not be treated as a one-time initiative or an optional topic. Instead, it should be a systematic and sustained effort supported by school leadership, educators, and the wider community. They proposed that ethical education could be integrated into existing subjects such as civics, religious studies, and life skills, or offered as a standalone subject with a clear syllabus, trained teachers, and assessment methods (Narvaez, 2019).

### **3.4. Role of Schools and Parents**

A recurring theme that emerged from the qualitative data was the critical importance of collaboration between schools and parents in fostering ethical behavior among children. Participants across all groups including teachers, parents, and students emphasized that the task of moral upbringing should not rest solely on the shoulders of one party. Instead, they advocated for a shared responsibility, where both the home and the school environments work in harmony to reinforce positive values and guide children's ethical development. Many parents acknowledged that while schools play a vital role in formal education, they cannot and should not be expected to carry the entire burden of moral instruction. One parent aptly noted, *"Parents need to partner with schools to instill values in children."* This statement underscores the belief that ethical values are first nurtured at home through daily interactions, conversations, and role modeling. However, for these values to take root and flourish, they must be consistently supported and echoed in school settings. When children receive mixed messages for example, learning honesty in school but witnessing dishonesty at home it creates confusion and weakens the overall impact of moral education.

Teachers, on the other hand, expressed a need for stronger parental engagement in school based activities related to ethics and discipline. Many reported that parental absenteeism during meetings or a lack of interest in their children's behavioral progress creates challenges in enforcing school rules and expectations. They recommended regular communication channels, such as parent-teacher meetings, joint workshops, and home-school ethics programs, to bridge the gap and ensure consistent messaging about values. In addition, both parents and teachers stressed that schools should not only teach values through the curriculum but also demonstrate them through practice. To that end, teachers highlighted the necessity for ethical leadership training for school administrators and educators. It was pointed out that school leaders must model ethical behavior in their everyday dealings with students, staff, and the wider community because children often learn more from observation than instruction. A school leader who shows fairness, respect, transparency, and accountability sets the tone for the entire school culture, encouraging both teachers and students to uphold similar standards (Lickona, 1988; Palma-Pires, 2023).

#### **4. Conclusion**

This study set out to explore the causes, impacts, and possible interventions for the decline of ethical values among children in Morogoro Region. Drawing from qualitative data collected through interviews with heads of secondary schools, the study found that the erosion of moral values is a pressing concern affecting both academic and social spheres.

The findings revealed that the key causes of ethical decline include increased exposure to negative media influences, peer pressure, and weakened parental guidance. These factors have contributed to a noticeable rise in unethical behaviors such as dishonesty, disrespect, and a lack of responsibility among students. The consequences of such moral decline not only affect individual development but also undermine the integrity of educational institutions and society at large.

Despite these challenges, the study identified several opportunities for intervention. Promoting ethical education, fostering collaboration between schools and parents, encouraging mentorship, and recognizing positive behavior were some of the proposed solutions. The role of teachers, parents, and the wider community is crucial in nurturing moral character and shaping the future of children.

#### *Recommendations*

The study proposed several recommendations from the findings which address the decline in ethical values among children. Schools should integrate moral and ethical education into the formal curriculum, emphasizing values like respect, honesty, and civic responsibility. Regular ethics training for both teachers and students through workshops and seminars is encouraged to enhance moral reasoning. Strengthening parental involvement and fostering collaboration between schools and families are vital for reinforcing ethical development. Mentorship programs involving experienced educators and community leaders should be established to model ethical behavior. Institutions are advised to recognize and reward ethical conduct among students to promote positive behavior. Schools should encourage open dialogue and reflection on moral issues, while parents and educators must monitor and guide media consumption to mitigate negative influences. Policy support from the government, including resource allocation for ethical training, is essential, along with promoting teacher well-being to ensure effective value transmission.

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#### **Compliance with ethical standards**

##### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this research titled "The Decline of Ethical Values Among Children in Contemporary Society: Causes, Impacts, and Interventions." All procedures were carried out with professional objectivity and academic integrity, and no financial, personal, or institutional interests influenced the design, data collection, analysis, or interpretation of the study findings. The research was independently conducted to contribute to the understanding and improvement of ethical behavior among children, with no bias or external pressure affecting the outcomes.

##### *Statement of informed consent*

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. Prior to participation, all respondents including teachers, parents, and students were informed about the purpose, procedures, and voluntary nature of the research. For student participants under the age of 18, informed consent was also sought from their parents or legal guardians. Participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential, and no identifying information would be disclosed in any part of the report. They were also made aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. The research process strictly adhered to ethical standards to protect the dignity, privacy, and well-being of all participants.

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