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Are Scholastic Experiences Sufficient for Moral Development in School?

Nidhi Pareek

*Banasthali Vidyalaya, (Rajasthan) India***Abstract**

The goal of education is to develop a child into a wholesome balanced personality with all round development. For achieving this, it is not merely sufficient to focus on development of physical and intellectual abilities alone, but also to focus on development of social emotional and moral aspects. According to **Dr. Rajendra Prasad**, "Education is the establishment of two fold harmony in every individual - harmony within his own self and harmony with other living beings in the whole world. The establishment of such harmony through knowledge, action and love is termed as yoga in our country". Thus it can be said that education according to the Indian tradition is not merely a means of earning, a school for citizenship, it is a training of human souls in the presence of truth and the practice of virtue. Thus today's education is not limited to school instruction, where the elders of society strive to attain pre determined aims during a specified time by providing pre-structured tit-bits of knowledge to children through set methods of teaching. Today, education is about the child's physical, cognitive, emotional, social and moral development.

Key Words: scholastic experience, school education, moral development

Education is an essential human virtue. Man becomes 'man' through education. There are generally two aspects of human life. One is biological and other is social. The biological existence is secured through food and shelter. But human life is not complete by merely biological existence. His life can only be glorified through education and it is related to social aspect of human life. There is a powerful change in our society largely due to unregulated advances in science & technology that are happening across the globe. We need to train our children to think differently. There is an urgent need to dig deeper, to ensure that children should have proper understanding of right and wrong through study of morals.

As said by **Mahatma Gandhi**, "By education I mean the all-round drawing out the best in child and man's body, mind and soul" For spiritual development he laid emphasis on moral education. He considers morality as important for the development of the personality of a child. Man is a social being. As such for every human being "understanding of our fellow-being is important. But this understanding becomes fruitful only when it is sustained by sympathetic feeling in joy and sorrow." Therefore "a positive aspiration and effort for a moral configuration of our common life is of over-riding importance." Without morality there is no solution for humanity. "Here we would like to add that this ethical culture will be manifest in one's behavior-

pattern including one's thought, feelings and action”.

Moral Development

Moral development is acquisition of a set of rules of conduct for the specific age group. It has two parts, firstly, the person has to learn the rules and secondly socialization, which implies that the person's dealings with others conform to the rules of conduct. An individual, in his childhood, is neither moral nor immoral. As the child grows, it imitates the morals of the family or group to which he/she belongs. Essential components in moral development are:

- Learning what the group expects of its members according to the customs, rules, laws, etc.
- Development of conscience,
- Learning to feel guilty, when behavior is not according to expectations.
- Make use of the opportunities to learn by social interactions, the social norms and values.

Moral development is not a sudden change of personality of the individual, it includes thinking and acting morally. It is a continuous process where the individual is able to understand and act according to moral principles which are acceptable to the society. Moral development touches all aspects of personality and is a progressive process which depends on many factors. Based on its nature, moral development has been studied as part of cognitive development, social learning and psychoanalytic dimensions. Moral development is not inheritable, it is purely an acquired character.

Cognitive - developmental theorists (Piaget, Kohlberg), on the other hand, view moral development as an active, dynamic, constructive process leading to a state where the individual is able to act according to moral principles which he either accepts because he understands them and agrees with them or which he has worked out for himself.

The psychoanalytical approach

It is to Freud that we owe our awareness of the effects of the unconscious on human behavior. In the area of morality, Freud assumed an end state of rationality and the main impetus of his work in this area was to explain why some people deviate from rational behavior and show an exaggerated or distorted mode of rule following. The acquisition of morality was for Freud the development within the child's personality of the super - ego, the agency or mechanism which issues moral imperatives derived from standard of adults close to him which the child has internalized. These moral imperatives serve to control the impulses of the id (the unconscious), especially those relating to aggression and to sex.; the super - ego he sees as having two prime functions- it acts as the conscience and as what Freud calls the ego – ideal. In Piaget view, one of the main factors contributing towards this developing autonomy is the child's growing ability to cooperate with others. Where rules were seen, at an earlier stage, as emanating from some authority figure, respect for them was unilateral rather than mutual. It is only when children experience relationships with their peers, meeting together as equals, that the opportunity arises for mutual consent and cooperation the scene is set for the

growth of autonomy. But in order to move towards autonomy, it seems essential for the child to be released from constraints imposed by authority figures where adults use their superior force. Cooperative activities and mutual understanding between peers are, according to Piaget, necessary conditions for autonomy to develop.

If we examine some of Piaget's work on children's judgments of right and wrong, we again find a gradual progression from a stage of heteronomy to one of autonomy. Actions are at first regarded by young children as right if an adult approves them, wrong if he disapproves. Children at the heteronymous stage judge conduct according to its material consequences, rather than the intentions behind the act. Piaget distinguishes between two kinds of morality. Conventional morality is reflected in obedience to adult command and an uncritical adherence to rules. This is described as a stage of moral realism or heteronomy, characterized by unilateral respect for and dependence upon others for guidance in moral issues. Rational morality is reached where children are able to formulate their own moral rules by mutual agreement and to apply them according to circumstance rather than follow them rigidly and immutable.

Moral Development - Kohlberg's Theory

Kohlberg expanded Piaget's ideas on moral development. (Shown in figure no.1.1) He too stressed that moral development is a cognitive process and is based on moral judgment. Moral judgment is further based on reasoning that children made. Secondly, he asserts that moral judgment gradually

develop in stages as children grow older, as influenced further by appropriate environment and social conditions.

According to Kohlberg's, there are six stages of moral development. The development of a higher stage logically depends upon the development of the just preceding stage. Each stage of moral development reveals a different kind of motivation for acting morally, or for forming moral judgment.

During stage one (the pre-moral stage) the child is oriented towards the motive of punishment and obedience. A child at this stage believes that disobeying parents is wrong, because parents say so and he will be punished for doing that.

During second stage, satisfaction of needs constitutes the criterion to determine whether an action is right or wrong. Stage third and fourth described by Kohlberg as conventional morality or conventional role conformity. The stage third is called the 'good boy' or 'nice girl' morality where the actions and judgments are primarily oriented towards seeking approval from the others. In the fourth stage there is respect for authority and the given social order. A child at this stage would not like to be condemned by the authority figure. It would like to avoid any transgression of social norms or patterns of behavior accepted by the society or the group to which he belongs.

The stage 'five' and 'six' are based on self accepted moral principles. At these stages the child reaches moral maturity. At fifth stage, for example, one is considerate to the rights of others, and tries to respect other's rights as much as one's own, and also tries to safeguard these rights of others. It is a kind

of 'self-accepted morality' and is not based on the positions of others. At the final stage, an individual acts according to one's conscience or principles. Such principles entail universal values regarding the rights and feelings of others and her/his own behavior towards them. The above six stages of moral development are combined into three levels: the pre-conventional level, the conventional level and post-conventional level or the principled level of morality.

When a child steps out from home to school the change in situation gives rise to a radical change in his/her earlier habits. For the first time he is introduced to the sense of recognition which is to be gained by his merits and demerits. Being outside his family, he enters into a totally changed and new sphere of life without having his parents with him. The child's interest and activities multiply in numbers and broaden in complexities.

He begins to learn to accommodate himself to the demands and expectations of society - formal and informal. Moral Education is meant for human making and character building with values like cooperation, tolerance, austerity, obedience, regard and sympathy. Education acts as a catalyst for moral development of child. Environmental stimulation and opportunities to learn and constant interaction with human beings are the essential requirements for moral judgment which is the main aim of moral education.

Moral Education includes developing the appropriate sensibilities and the ability to make proper judgments and internalize them in one's life. It is an education for becoming

and involves the total personality of the individual. Moral education is essentially man making and moral development of man.

Pupils acquire moral attitudes, beliefs and habits from many sources other than their teachers. It is pertinent to note that the school itself is also a source of this kind of incidental moral learning and, as we have noted before, such learning is a result of the way in which the school is organized and the behavior of the teachers. We must recognize the need of our pupils from the beginning to have a system of moral development, decide on the content of their morality and make efforts towards the development of such content as an important part of what it means to offer them moral education.

It is essential that right from the earliest school stage, deliberate planned and sustained efforts be made to inculcate basic moral behavior among children. School is the period in life of an individual when seed of morality is implanted in their minds so that they might grow into responsible human beings. In the pursuit and promotion of moral development the teacher has the most vital role to play. It is the teacher who is guide, friend and philosopher and the first interaction of children after the parents is with the teacher.

1. Scholastic Experiences – According to the Oxford English Dictionary, Scholastic means of, or concerning schools and education. In the present study, Scholastic Experiences means academic activities included in teaching for moral development in schools. They are related to the text books used by teachers to teach Moral Education as a subject. For teaching this subject,

school decides particular content, time-table and conduct teaching learning process.

Sources of Data

The sources of data in the study were:

- School Records – Schools' time table, list of activities planned for the particular session, school diary, result sheet, teachers' record, and school calendar and school magazine.
- Prescribed curriculum and textbooks of moral education – Content to be taught in particular session in Moral Education subjects.
- Teachers teaching Moral Education.
- Students being taught Moral Education.
- Situations inside and outside the class room (activities, programme & process)

Population

The population of the study comprises of all the upper primary schools in Jaipur city. The study was conducted in the schools of Jaipur city as, Jaipur being the capital of Rajasthan is a multicultural place, where people of different social and economical background lives. It is an educational hub where different varieties of the schools are available. These are affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Rajasthan board of Secondary Education (RBSE) and are teaching moral education through prescribed syllabus as well as other activities in VIII standard. From these schools students of VIII standard, their parents and teachers teaching Moral Education were included in the study.

Sample of the study

10 CBSE and 10 RBSE schools were short listed purposively according to availability and feasibility to conduct research work.

From each school 25 students of VIII Class were randomly selected for the research purpose. In this way there were total 500 students, 250 students from CBSE schools and 250 students of RBSE schools for the study.

Here only those teachers, who teach Moral Education, were taken as a sample in this way 25 teachers were selected for this study.

Parents of 250 students of CBSE schools and 250 students of RBSE schools were also selected for the study. Hence total 500 students and 500 parents were enrolled for the study.

The actual sample used in the study

Tools used for data collection -

In order to collect the desired information, following tools were used.

1. Information performa

Information Performa to collect information about scholastic experiences:

These information were related to Moral Education subject i.e. text book and note books, curriculum, lesson plans of teachers and other official records about time table and examination pattern.

2. Interview schedule

Semi structured interview schedules were prepared by the researcher. These interview schedules were constructed in order to collect information from the teachers of

Moral Education subject and students of VIII standard studying this subject.

3. Observation - Scholastic Experiences for moral development of VIII standard students were observed by the researcher. Visitation to real field's situations, where the teaching and activities related to moral development of students were organized. Each and every detail of events was noted.

Data collected through school records were analyzed which can be represented in the table no. 4.1.

Table No.4.1: Scholastic Experiences for Moral Development in CBSE & RBSE Schools (on page no 99)

Scholastic Experiences were conducted in schools:-

- Content - The chapters or other formal divisions of a book or a document.
- Syllabus - An outline or brief statements of the main point of a discourse, the course of lecture, the part of curriculum.
- Time Table - A student's class schedule or course of study during a school semester.
- Teachings - learning Imparting knowledge & skills related to a process-subject matter by showing, telling, giving instructions, making some one understand in order to learn or creating a situation to enhance learning.
- Objective - Educational objective cover a range of various learning outcomes. It is the acquisition of knowledge understanding and developing intellectual abilities.
- Method - A teaching method includes the way of presentation of content.

Commonly used teaching methods may include lecture, discussion, poetry-drama, storytelling and project.

Lecturing is the process of teaching by spoken explanation of the subject.

Poetry- drama means small act or play in the context of work situation may be organized, where students play the role of some character.

Story telling means to teach and transfer ideas through stories.

- Skills - An ability and capacity acquired to systematic and sustained effort to do some activity.
- Evaluation - It is a systematic determination of subject's merit and worth by using some standard criteria. It can be assessed by written or oral test.

Information related to scholastic experiences for Moral Development of children were further studied and analyzed on the basis of interview with teachers and students and observation of school activities.

Conclusion

- Data collected through records, interview and observation it was found that both types of schools affiliated to CBSE and RBSE teaches with the text books, which were chosen by discussion between Principal and subject teachers. After choosing text books, syllabus is prepared by subject teachers under the guidance and permission of Principal. There was a compulsion to complete the course of Moral Education in all these schools.
- When the point of weekly time table was noted, it was observed that, CBSE

schools teaches more Moral Education than RBSE schools, It may be because CBSE has made a rule to give more preference to activity and projects in teaching along with teaching through text book. So CBSE schools needed more time for project, poem, skit presentation and for other activities. Again it has been shown that more number of CBSE schools used support material and illustration skills than RBSE schools. May be they wanted to explain Moral Education according to the level and need of individual child. With the help of examples, previous knowledge of children is related with present chapter and by this they have better understanding. It was seen that one of the CBSE schools did not organize written class work or home work. In that school Moral Education was taught by reading, oral work, skit or poem presentation, or collage making.

- It was noted that more CBSE schools teach Moral Education by using

interesting methods, than RBSE schools. They gave more preference to students' involvement by activities, projects and interaction, instead of traditional way of teaching. May be, to prepare a child to become a better human being along with a successful person.

- So it can be concluded that CBSE schools organized scholastic experiences for moral development of students in more interesting and interactive way than RBSE schools. They planned more time and more number of activities for students than RBSE schools.

It was found by survey in the study that all schools do not include moral education subject in their curriculum. For developing today's children into complete human being along with physical and intellectual development equal weightage can be given to moral and intellectual development also. Moral Education should be included in school curriculum.

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