

Character Building /Moral Teaching in The System of Secondary Education

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Abstract

Character building is the process of helping young people to develop good character. Most thinkers, educational practitioners and parents acknowledge that children are born helpless and need the care and guidance of adults into their teens and often beyond. More specifically, children need to learn how to live harmoniously in society. Historically, the mission of schools was to develop in the young, both the intellectual and the moral virtues. Concerns for the moral virtues such as fairness, honesty, responsibility, compassion, self respect and respect for the others was the domain of moral teaching.

Character building / moral teaching helps the children to acquire those virtues or moral habits that will help them individually live good lives and at the same time become productive, contributing member of their community. Character building is based on the premise that good character is not formed automatically. It is developed through a sustained process of teaching, example, learning and practice.

The present paper covers the role of secondary schools in building the character of students. It is quite clear that the morals and ideals which are formed in the stage of secondary school persist throughout the life, hence secondary school level education can be considered as most important level at which character building of child and application of the same should be worked out and strategies should be applied to make the future of the child bright and calm.

Keywords: Character, Moral teaching, Secondary education, Learning and Development

Introduction

Character building is the process of helping young people to develop good character. The future destiny of a country rests not in the hands of soldiers and merchants but in those of students and scholars. Dr. Annie Besant beautifully remarks, "The destiny of a nation is folded within its budding youth as is the flower within the close embrace of the petals. That is what our youth thinks today the nation will think tomorrow." Standing on the threshold of budding youth, a student cherishes splendid visions, colorful dreams and buoyant hopes. It is the spring time of the life when his energies are at the highest. It is a season of life when one can either make or mar one's career forever. It has been described rightly as the period of preparatory training for the practical duty of the mankind. A student shall therefore, very carefully observe the path he walks upon during this period and make his life a living success by judicious applications of his energies into right channels. But, it is a fact that nowadays our students are tossed around like rudderless boats on the rapidly changing waters of modernity. The elders are squarely responsible for it owing to their failure to impart knowledge with moral values. Most thinkers, educational practitioners and parents acknowledge that children are born helpless and need the care and guidance of adults into their teens and often beyond. More specifically, children need to learn how to live harmoniously in society. Historically, the mission of schools was to develop in the young, both the intellectual and the moral virtues. Concerns for the moral virtues such as fairness, honesty, responsibility, compassion, self respect and respect for the others was the domain of moral teaching.

It is commonly felt today that students get less moral instruction from parents, school and religious institutions and at an increasingly early age, are exposed to mixed messages on the media about sex, drugs and violence. The rate of school violence and class room disruption indicates

that young people are having difficulty making sound moral decisions. In our country children are hurting themselves, their peers and others. Many of them are too distressed to demonstrate concern about their welfare. Character building / moral teaching helps the children to acquire those virtues or moral habits that will help them individually live good lives and at the same time become productive, contributing member of their community. Character building is based on the premise that good character is not formed automatically. It is developed through a sustained process of teaching, example, learning and practice.

In the present scenario of life, character building should be emphasized as the national mission. So a concerted effort towards it is the most vital activity that should be taken up in the schools. It is the only mean to make the students evoke as enlightened citizens. Since independence, our nation has effected great social changes through successful revolutions like the Green revolution and White revolution. Today, to overcome the moral malnutrition of the students, let us give the call for a character revolution. The teaching community should not leave any stone unturned, to achieve the goal that is a character revolution. Mahatma Gandhi rightly said "The end of all knowledge must be the building up of character."

The present paper covers the role of secondary schools in building the character of students. At secondary school level child passes through an adolescent age and it has been psychologically proved that this stage is a stage of stress and storm. A lot of emotional, social and physical disturbances occur in this stage. But it is quite clear that the morals and ideals which are formed in this stage persist throughout the life, hence secondary school level education can be considered as most important level at which character building of child and application of the same should be worked out and strategies should be applied to make the future of the child bright and calm. The mind of a child is just like photographic plate, whatever impressions are left is retained by it. So, values like cooperation, cleanliness, courage, devotion, leadership, obedience, punctuality, patriotism, self reliance, quest for knowledge, reverence for the old people, self discipline, social service, socialism, team spirit, tolerance, universal love, universal truth, environmental values etc. are to be inculcated in them during schools days. The schools is a temple of learning In this temple of learning the teachers should move heaven and earth to inculcate moral values in the pupils who will be the architects of tomorrow's India.

Parents and teachers expect utmost perfection from our students in all activities. But, with increasing academic pressure, no time is left to inculcate even basic values in them. The result is a growing erosion of these values and qualities that are important for an all round personality development. The introduction of value based education is a step in the right direction. Value education is a must in every educational institution. It also helps to eliminate

obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism.

The Sargent report, 1944 felt that curriculum devoid of an ethical base will prove barren in the end. In 1952, Mudaliar commission expressed that religious and moral education does play an important role in the growth of character. In 1964, Kothari commission report also concluded that there was a need for preparing the youth to face both 'work' which could be compared to living and 'life' which is higher and more sublime than living. New Education Policy 1986 also emphasized on the 'Character based Education.

Aim of the Study

To emphasize on the importance of Character building / Moral teaching, in the system of secondary education.

Strategies

To achieve the goal of Character building / Moral teaching, in the system of secondary education different strategies can be utilized in following arena:-

1. Curriculum based on Value Education and Moral Teaching.
2. Inter coordination and Behavioural upliftment of parents, teachers and students.
3. Quotable Quotations with moral teaching.
4. Value based co-curricular activities.
5. Appreciation of some one special.

Curriculum based on Value Education and Moral Teaching

1. Curriculum of secondary level education must be included with moral teachings of luminaries like Tulsidas, Surdas, Premchand, Gandhiji, Shastriji, Gurunanak, Bhagat Singh, and Swami Vivekanand etc.
2. Historical events which have higher moral values must be taught with great interest and enthusiasm by the teachers and student should take equal interest in teaching.
3. In order to maintain moral values among teachers, content related to it should be included in the syllabus of teacher's training programme.

Inter Coordination and Behavioural Upliftment of Parents, Teachers and Students

1. The parent should have friendly relationship with their children who will help them to know the real behaviour of their child and on the positive hand the child will also have a natural trust that he/she will be guided positively by their parents.
2. The teachers should have a friendly attitude with the students and should not treat them merely as student but always give them right opinion as they give to their own children.
3. The parent and teacher should have increment in their moral status and behaviour so that the children/students should take them as their role models and as a result the children adopt the behaviour of their teacher and parent into their own lives.
4. The institution should regularly organize parent – teacher meeting so that the teacher and parent may cooperate with each other in the upliftment of child's behaviour. In this way the teacher will

come to know the behaviour of their student in home and the parent will know the vice – versa.

Quotable Quotations with Moral Teaching

The objective of this area is to collect the quotations of eminent person embedded with moral values. Each student should be instructed to collect at least five “Quotable Quotations.” Among all the quotations submitted by the students, the best 25 quotations will be selected. They will be written beautifully on card boards using paint and fixed on the prominent location of the wall of the school in such a way that they would attract the attention of the students. Other Quotations collected will be presented in the morning assembly by the students as ‘Thought of the day’.

Examples of some quotations are as follows:-

1. To succeed in your Mission you have a single minded devotion to your goal.-Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.
2. Arise, Awake and Stop not till to goal is reached- Swami Vivekanand.
3. Money comes and goes but morality comes and grows.
4. Success is the progressive realization of a worthy goal.
5. Talk less, work more.
6. Behaviour is the mirror in which everyone shows his image.

Value based Extra-curricular activities

To inculcate moral values among children through extra-curricular activities following techniques should be adopted in schools:-

1. Through elocution competition, topics like “Charity begins at home”, “Gandhian principles can lead the world to the path of peace” etc. can be selected.
2. Group dance of almost all the States should be presented by the students in functions organized by the institution.
3. In connection with International Non-Violence Day which also is the birth anniversary of Gandhiji, all faith prayer and fancy dress competition should be organized in the institution.
4. Festivals like Buddha Purnima, Sadbhavana Diwas, Onam, Rakshabandhan, Janmashtmi, Ganesh Chaturthi, Deepawali, Kite festival, Pongal, Makarsankranti, Id and Christmas should be celebrated in the institution in a grand manner.
5. Birthdays of eminent personalities like Tulsidas, Premchand, Gandhiji, Shastriji, Guru Nanak, Swami Vivekanand, Dr. Ambedkar should be celebrated with pomp and show.

6. Movies which entertain as well as give inspiration to do something good for the society should be shown to the children like Tare Jamin Par, Lage Raho Munna Bhai, Bawarchi, Bhagat Singh, Gandhi etc.
7. Important days like World Population Day, Teacher’s Day, Children’s Day, Annual Day of the Institution, Republic Day and Science Day etc. should be celebrated in a befitting manner.
8. On every Thursday or any day suitable, a speech highlighting moral values should be delivered either by a teacher or by a student of secondary level. Few questions based on moral values should be asked to test the comprehension of the students.
9. The teacher should encourage the students to write articles, essays, short stories etc. for Vidyalaya Patrika and compose poems incorporating moral values. Value based articles should be given top priority in the selection for the publication in the Vidyalaya Patrika.
10. “Cleanliness is next to Godliness”. The students should be engaged in cleaning the campus from time to time in such a way that they understand the dignity of labour and service.
11. Excursion trips should be arranged to places like Gandhidham, Aurbindo Ashram etc.

Appreciation of Some One Special

“Appreciation is the most powerful weapon”. Usually middle school students do not realize how great efforts from their parents, teachers, friends and family have affected them.

Writing activity should be performed in the school hours to encourage the students to bring out their thoughts and appreciation for someone they feel is a good friend to him and always motivates him in his difficult time and also gives him good moral advices.

Conclusion

Finally, the development of vision, character and competence in our young people is necessary to allow our nation to continue its role as one of the world leaders into the 21st century rather than be relegated as former world leaders such as Egypt, Iran, Spain, Portugal and Great Britain. Each of these former world powers failed to keep pace with changing demands of the world around them. In many cases it was not the failure of Economic or material aspect of society, but it was the human, social, political and spiritual aspects. The educational system must prepare the individuals to progress in each of these arenas of life. Therefore Character Building must be seen as an organic process in the development of the Material/Physical,

Human/Psychological, Spiritual/ Transcendental aspects of human beings. Thus it can be said that quality of education cannot be increased, neglecting the character aspect of the child.

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