

Imparting Values and Life Skills in Teaching Practice

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I. INTRODUCTION

"If someone is going down the wrong road, he doesn't need motivation to speed him up. He needs education to turn him around," rightly says Jim Rohn. In more recent times, Educational institutions have been pressurized to keep up the ethos and values. Is it the responsibility of schools and colleges to impart values? Are values vital for life skills? Or can we conveniently ignore our responsibility stating, it is not our concern as it is vested to family and society. The uncertain and aggressive world we live in today is an outcome of the moving away from ideals to extreme practicality. It's not my business or concern is the popular mantra enfolded by many.

This conceptual paper is an attempt to showcase the problems faced by teenagers in this contemporary world. Elucidate what are right values, roles and responsibilities of educators, how values can be imparted through subjects, relationship between values and life skills, finally ways in which values can be imparted.

Defining Values

When we don't know or we haven't clearly defined our values, we end up drifting along in life. Instead of basing our decisions on an internal compass, we make choices based on circumstances and social pressures. We end up trying to fulfill other people's expectations instead of our own. Generally Values has been taken to mean moral ideas, or simply means attitude, preferences needs and sentiments or behaviour of a person. According to oxford dictionary value means, "Principles or standards of behaviour; one's judgment of what is important in life." On the contrary, sociologists are more precise in defining Values.

According to M. Haralambos, "A value is a belief that something is good and desirable." For R.K. Mukerjee (Indian sociologist who initiated the study of social values) "Values are socially approved desires and goals that are internalised through the process of conditioning, learning or socialisation and that become subjective preferences, standards and aspirations". Thus, Values are collective conceptions of what is considered to be good, acceptable, desirable or undesirable.

II. CHALLENGES OF TEENAGERS

Mass media has bombarded the ethics and morality of teenagers. It propagates burglary as heroism, Vengeance is fine, Killing is bravery, and Love is obtainable through Lust. All happiness is found in this materialistic world. Glamour, fantasy are interpreted to be realistic. Games causing excruciating pain even leading to death which is horrifying. All that was considered as taboo is no more a taboo. Religious men and women who are supposed to set an example have become a great scandal. On the other hand, we witness students loaded with hatred, anger, antagonism, conflict, frustration, depression leading to suicides, crying out for help, unknowing where to seek guidance and support, down the line losing hope and go astray.

III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EDUCATORS IN IMPARTING VALUES

The aim of Education is at promoting values not just in schools but also life beyond schools, making the world a better place not just for themselves but also for their family, colleagues, friends, and everyone.

The concern for value education is reflected in our key policy documents from time to time. After independence the National Commission of Secondary Education (1952-53) was a significant landmark in emphasizing character building as the defining goal of education. "The supreme end of the educative process should be the training of the character and personality of students in such a way that they will be able to realize their full potentialities and contribute to the well-being of the community."¹

Teaching is not a profession, it's a vocation, a special call where one is called not only to teach but to educate and impart the right values. Currently, the responsibilities of the educators or teachers have risen considerably in sharing the values. How can teaching practice be a platform to impart knowledge? The answer is simple. The life - style of the teacher directly or indirectly influences the values among the youngsters.

1. **Honesty:** besides being the source of knowledge, a good teacher should foster values and mold good characters in among the students. Teachers must teach the students not to copy or cheat in exams. A good teacher will also narrate stories about honesty.

2. **Helping Pupil to Choose Right Behaviour:** According to the famous psychologist and educationalist Glasser, "behavior is not separate from choice; we all choose how to behave at any time." Hence the choice to behave rightly will lead to right action; right actions will lead to cultivate right values. He further says, in the classroom, it is important for teachers to "help students envision a quality existence in school and plan the choices that lead to it."²

3. **Being Kind and Loving:** Students tend to love the subject if they love the teacher. A loving and kind teacher is a blessing to an institution. The caring words of the teachers can help the students to develop right values.

¹ Sushma Gulati, and Daya Pant, Education for Values in Schools – A Framework, new Delhi.

² William Glasser, *Choice Theory*, <http://www.choicetheory.com/>. Sited on 21.9.2017.

4. **Etiquette and Manners:** Once again teachers set an example by behaving well mannered. If the mannerism of a student is bad, teacher must not push it aside; rather take risk in correcting the child.

5. **Teacher as a Counselor:** A teacher is not only a knowledge provider, but a multi-faced personality. Teacher as be a librarian, mother and father, clown and comedian, doctor so on. But teacher as a counselor play an important role in transforming the life of a teenager.

6. **Developing Social and Emotional Skills:** Another important aspect in teaching learning process in to develop social and emotional skills. Social and emotional skills facilitate everyday life. If a teacher address social and emotional dilemma, there are chances of preventing depression, conflicts, anxiety and violence. Social and emotional learning is also a strong predictor of future children moral outcomes.

IV. IMPARTING VALUES THROUGH SUBJECTS

We live in an age where parents are increasingly dodging their responsibilities in bringing their children. It has become the moral responsibility of the educators to assist in developing the desirable characteristics or moral values of students. One of the effective ways of imparting values can be through the development of appropriate curriculum.

English

English is not only a subject or language; it is a culture, a way of life dealing with oneself. Literature includes story and poetry that explores human experience and response to life and death. An inspiring novel or a story can transform the life of an individual. They are free to express feeling and emotions, knowing that words can influence feelings. Right curriculum can inspire students to love the subject and imbibe values.

Activity 1: Asking children to express the meaning of the word Honesty in different ways.

Activity 2: Display a picture and let students describe it. The picture being original can also carry some moral message.

Science

Science aims at the development of understanding of the concepts, principles, and facts, theories that describe the physical and natural world. It helps the student to reflect upon the mystery of the natural world, life cycles and growth. It helps to strengthen the commitment to curiosity, inquiry, open mindedness and search for truth etc.

Mathematics

Good use of games for social interaction, taking turns and sharing, working in pairs and groups to gather information and solve problems, encouraging honesty, not cheating mathematics can turn out to be one of the best value provider tools for the pupil. If the curriculum of Mathematic is designed appropriately, the lover of this subject will become the best citizen.

Physical Education

Students expose their true colour on the sport arena. When students take part in team games and obey rules, they automatically become aware of others need, encourage peers, celebrate achievement, develop a sense of fair play, automatically helps one to develop values.

Social Sciences

In early school stage social science intend to broaden children's vision of society as good citizens. History portrays the acts of great men and women, upholding patriotism, compassion, bravery, co-operation, loyalty, justice, love, perseverance leads to inspire young generations.

Activity: Ask children how a war can disturb them emotionally. How peace can be restored.

Who is their role model or who is their inspiration.

Environmental Science

Environmental Science (EVS) is full of prospects for conveying values of equality, justice, human dignity, love, rights and caring attitudes towards Nature etc. There are various topics ranging from 'Wastage of Food', 'Family and Friends' 'Work and Play' 'Sharing with needy'. This subject provides ample opportunities for teacher to highlight and promote values.³

Thus, every subject is considered from the stand point of value education hence considered to be a repository of values.

V. LIFE SKILL

WHO rightly defines life skills as, "the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with demands and challenges of everyday life." Life skill is a broad term used to describe the set of skills one achieves in life which enables one to face the reality of life and handle issues, problems encountered in everyday life. It includes problem-solving skills, decision making, ability to communicate effectively; creative thinking helps one to have a holistic development. Life skills touch issues that are real, sometimes sensitive, often controversial, and ultimately moral.

VI. LIFE SKILLS AND VALUES

³ Sushma Gulati, and Daya Pant, Education for Values in Schools – A Framework, New Delhi.

Values and life skills are like the two wings of the same bird which balances an individual. When right values are taught, students develop self-confidence, self-critical thinking, and cope up with depression, failures, and low self-esteem and lead a healthy and productive life. An individual becomes more efficient in dealing with their challenges that they encounter every day and develop a positive attitude towards life and society.

Let's think about this; are there a comprehensive set of values and a set of life skills that one needs to master? In fact, there could be a set of core values that one may wish to lay down as operating principles, while the life skills that are required to see one through the journey of life, are several. Eventually, however, all decisions are based on values.

Education in values also prepares student for the world of work. The values like hard work, discipline, cooperation, honesty, communication skills etc. enable them to develop healthy interpersonal relationships at home and in colleges which in turn facilitate their better adjustment on the profession.

VII. TECHNIQUE TO IMPART VALUES

With increasing pressure to complete the syllabus, driven by competition, schools and colleges are hard pressed to find time to focus adequately on this crucial aspect of education. One possible suggestion is that, values and life skills can be kit together. Values need not necessarily be confined to classroom teaching. This may happen unconsciously on the games field or elsewhere, but a consciousness of the process needs time for reflection, which often gets pushed to the backburner in most cases.

Secondly, it can be waved into the timetable. Gone are the days where large number of intuitions had allotted a specific time for moral science class. By allotting a specific time for moral science class vital ingredients can be added.

Thirdly, group discussion leads to team building. When members in the group share their ideas, it leads to team building built with love and care. This also makes one to feel accepted and gains courage.

Another way to reinforce values is by appreciating the students. If you appreciate them for exhibiting the values you want to see, they are far more likely to repeat and reinforce them.

Finally, apart from regular classes, the non regular classes can be more effective. This format includes debates, discussions, activities, role plays, drama, art, circle time educational games and movies can impart values and life skills to a great extent.

CONCLUSION

When your values are clear to you, making decision becomes easier says, Roy. E Disney. If values are not clear, one is perplexed and follows erroneous values. To know the right values education plays a vital role. But is it sufficient to impart values in class room alone? While it is necessary, but may not be sufficient to equip the teenagers for life. While they need to imbibe strong values, they also need to know how to put them to use during the ups and downs of life. Here is where life skills come as an aid to an individual leading on the right direction to have a strong belief in oneself and towards the society.

No doubt, imparting value is both parent and public responsibility but educational institutions ought to take the major responsibility in imparting values in students. The endeavour is to be seen as an investment in building the foundation for lifelong learning, promoting human excellence, national integration and global unity there by celebrate life!

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