

Teachers` and Concept of Value Education

Ranjeet Kumar Singh

Asstt. Professor, B.B.M. College, Okari, Jehanabad

ABSTRACT

The prophet of Islam had once said that I have been sent as a teacher; is enough to understand the importance of teacher in our society. In modern times Napoleon said that I owe my birth to my father but my life to my teacher. This is the basic philosophy upon which education system is established and particularly in India more emphasis is given to the teacher. Sometimes teacher in our society is respected more than God as Kabir Das had said 'Guru Gobind dono khade kake lagu panv'. But in modern times the role and responsibility of a teacher has been changing rapidly and drastically and it is said that teacher should teach value education also. The point is very sound but before it, we must know that does teacher profess value based education or not. If teacher is himself a professional and he knows only to transmit the information then how can he impart value based education? In this paper effort has been made to redefine the role of a 21 century teacher with reference to value education.

Values are those principles or standards, which help to better the quality of life. Values instruct the do's and don'ts of behaviour. They form the basics of character formation and personality development. The values that spring from within or the core of the heart, like love, compassion, sympathy, empathy, tolerance, etc. lay the foundation for the external practiced like honesty, discipline, punctuality and loyalty. The most important to remember is that "values are priceless, while valuables are priced." In today's fast paced competitive world, man seems to have compromised on his values, integrity and character, in a bid to earn, use and possess more and more of material wealth. As a result, we see rampant corruption, unlawful activities, inhuman behaviour and immoral consumption, which is slowly breaking the very structure of our society, nation and the world. Therefore, there is an urgent need to re-introduce value based spiritual education

dealing specifically with human values", to redesign the fabric of our educational system.

A child's mind is like soft clay and can be molded to any desired shape. Thus, this is the right time and age to impart value education so that the right impressions formed in the child's mind may guide him throughout his life. Such life will definitely be based on moral and just principles. School is the common platform for all children coming from various backgrounds. In an interactive and learning environment of the school, where a child spends a maximum of eight hours of working time, the human values can be easily evoked in him by making him "experience" and "live" the values. Teachers, in turn, present themselves as role models to be emulated. The basic approach to impart value education is "love". This is the most vital aspect to implement value education in three ways: the independent approach, the integrated approach, and the subtle approach.

Sahaj marg the “natural path” is a system of practical training in spirituality. The goal of Sahaj marg is inner perfection, god realization or merger with the ultimate. In Shri Ram Chandra Mission, they meditate on the heart and through meditation regulate the mind. Their present spiritual master is Pujyashri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari. The Sahaj marg research and training institute, a global wing of Shri Ramchandra Mission, has its headquarters at Chennai. “We have been actively involved in conducting training programmes for abhyasis of the mission, and workshops and value education seminars for teachers and educationists,” says Biksham, the zonal incharge, A.P. Mrs. Neelothpala, an abhyasi who also runs echoes pre-primary school, adds, “we also conduct essay writing on subjects pertaining to spirituality on all India basis for school children, college students and youth. Summer camps and open forums are conducted to cater to the needs of children, the youth and women.” Mr. R. Sethuramana, an abyasi, who is basically an engineer in Midhani, explains, “a teacher’s manual on value based spiritual education for classes I to X has been published by the institute. The basic values are explained through experiments in science and other curricular subjects and also through charts.” Children learn more by observation, perception, experience and intuition, rather than by being told or taught about values. They assimilate the codes of behaviour from the direct environment at home and at school, which eventually leads to the formation of character. Hence both parents and teachers, need to present themselves as role models, whom the children can look unto, for guidance. To be effective role models “self-realisation” is the key, for it brings about an internal balance and harmony, which in turn is reflected externally

by right conduct, character and personality. To achieve such a result we need to regulate our minds and purify our hearts by the constant practice of meditation. So, value based spiritual education must be made compulsory at school level, at least.

In order for Values Education to become part and parcel of mainstream schooling, especially in public systems, the closest possible links need to be found between it and the world of teachers and schools. Teaching has undergone a revolution in the recent past. It was once a profession whose systems focused preponderantly on the more academically selective portion of the population, on the learning and cultural preferences of the society and on the essential literacy’s of language, mathematics, science, history and the arts. It is now a profession whose systems have to find the point of relevance for education of students across a vast array of academic and cultural starting-points. It also has to address dimensions of learning quite beyond the standard illiteracies because the social agency role of schooling has expanded beyond even the very lofty goals of its founders.

Values Education :

A Quality Teaching Pursuit - ‘What is Quality Teaching?’ Quality Teaching has been defined in various ways within different projects. Among the differences, however, there is a discernible pattern that has stretched the conception of ‘teacher’ beyond its former constraints. Beyond the expected criteria related to qualifications and updated skills, there are more subtle features that speak, for instance of, ‘intellectual depth’. This is a concept that identifies the need not only to drive students towards dealing with the full array of facts and details related to any topic, but to induct students

into the skills of interpretation, communication, negotiation, and reflection. In a word, the teacher's job is well beyond preparing students for 'get the answer right' standardized testing, but to engage the students' more sophisticated skills levels around such features as 'communicative capacity' and 'self-reflection'

Ken Rowe (Rowe, 2004), one of Australia's leading educational researchers, notes that of all the teacher qualities nominated by those students who achieve best at school, that 'this teacher cares' about me/us or 'I trust this teacher' kinds of responses were first and foremost, with 'knows her/his stuff' and 'makes things interesting' bringing up an important rear. In other words, the content and substance of Values Education has potential to go to the very heart of the power of Quality Teaching by focusing teacher attention on that feature of their professional practice which has most impact, namely the relationship of due care, mutual respect, fairness and positive modeling established with the student. In turn, this notion of teacher relationship with students fits well with the priorities to be found in the literature and research around teacher professional standards and ethics (NBPTS, 1999; Lovat, 1992; 1994; 1995; 2000).

In a word, it is a values-laden notion that marks out the single most important features of teacher impact, with the chestnut areas of content and method coming next in priorities. One is reminded many years on of the caution against instrumentalist approaches to education that were provided by the eminent John Dewey in the early days of public education. He said that to depend overly on subject knowledge and methods was fatal to the best interests of education. He spoke, rather, of the need for a mindset on the part of teachers that was, at one and the same time, self-

reflective and directed towards instilling reflexivity, inquiry and a capacity for moral judiciousness on the part of students (Dewey, 1964). Dewey would not be at all surprised with Rowe's findings. He would also be very much at home, and possibly even feel vindicated, by the priority being given at present to Values Education in the broad and comprehensive way it is being conceived.

Furthermore, with the relationship of due care in place, the hard evidence before us is that a Values Education with an explicit curriculum can make a difference to the ways students perceive and speak about moral issues (Lovat & Schofield, 1998; 2004). In this way, Values Education becomes the firm basis for training in issues of personal and social morality, such as, for example, around drugs education (Lovat et al, 2002) and the addressing of mental health issues for youth, including around matters of depression and suicide.

Conclusion:

Hence, to conclude: we live in a time when our understanding of the role of the teacher and the power of Values Education are coalescing. No longer is Values Education on the periphery of the central roles to be played by the teacher and the school in our society. It is at the very heart of these roles. Unlike the assumptions that seem to underpin so many of our concerns around structures, curriculum and resources, Values Education is more clearly than anything we could point to in contemporary education premised on the power of the teacher to make a difference. In the case of Values Education, the belief is around the teacher's capacity to make a difference by engaging students in the sophisticated and life-shaping learning of personal moral development. I suggest that the

nature, shape and intent of Values Education has potential to refocus the attention of teachers and their systems on the fundamental item of all effective teaching, namely the teacher her or himself, the quality of the teacher's knowledge, content and pedagogy, and above all on the teacher's capacity to form the kinds of relationships with students which convey their commitment and care and which become the basis of forming personal character and tomorrow's citizenry.

The kingpin in the schooling process is the teacher. If the teacher is personally committed to the values and practices them in his/her own life, it is a foregone conclusion that his/her students will imbibe the values for which teacher stands. It is for this reason only those teachers who leave deep impact on their students are remembered and also revered. Therefore, if values have to be nurtured in children it would be crucial that their teachers function as role models.

Therefore, teachers will have to provide learning experiences for holistic development of mind, body, intellect and emotions. So the challenge of teacher education will be to prepare such teachers as can take care of the holistic education of children. This would require value oriented teacher education. In sweetened milk sugar is not visible but its presence is felt by its pleasant taste. All of us prefer to drink sweetened milk than to drink unsweetened milk and eat sugar afterwards. Therefore, for giving value orientation to the curriculum of teacher education instead of adding to the existing courses a separate course it would be preferable to inseparably integrate value education in it.

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