

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS VALUE BASED BEHAVIOUR OF THE ADOLESCENT STUDENTS

*Tina Roy
**Dr. Karuna Gupta

Abstract

Throughout the history, the inculcation of "values" and development of "character" has remained a primary goal of public education, not just in India but world over. This continues into the present decade as does the quest to discover effective methods to successfully develop character. Despite these efforts, several disturbing and unsettling data and media reports of increased violent juvenile crime, suicides, materialism, lack of social skills and inappropriate behaviour in today's children have caused many to declare a moral crisis worldwide. This leads to some burning questions as "What are we doing to combat this crisis?" "Are we still waiting for an all-out crisis and complete degeneration of values in our children?" "As the one the most powerful agencies of change, are schools making any efforts to prevent our young children from getting on the wrong path? As educators, are the teachers doing what is expected of them in shaping the children? Consequently, the present study aimed at finding answers to some of the above raised questions. Qualitative Descriptive Research Method was used. The data was collected using Semi-structured interviews. The sample comprised 42 teachers teaching in the secondary level of English medium SSC Board schools spread across Mumbai. Grounded theory – constant comparison method was used to conduct the qualitative analysis of the data. The study revealed that the value deterioration in youngsters is one of top listed challenges faced by the teachers today as it has a strong impact on their rapport and classroom interaction with the students. It was found that there are no concrete or well planned activities for value transaction in the school curriculum. The findings strongly indicated a definite and urgent need to take some serious action for the value restoration among secondary school students especially the adolescents owing to the vulnerable period of their development.

Key words- Value Education, Character Development, Teachers Perception, Teachers Role

Introduction

All through the history, the development of "character" has remained a primary goal of public education, not just in India but all over the world. A culturally rich and diverse country like India has a very strong history of values and character being the core of the society and woven into the fabric of the society through various mediums like family, gurukuls, places of worship, religious leaders, members of the neighbourhood etc. In ancient India, the families with mostly a joint family system comprised elders constantly imparting the necessary values to all the members of the family, especially the children. The Gurukuls or Gurukulashrams where the Guru's ensured that the children enrolled in these institutions for education

are enriched with best of the values and developed a strong character along with knowledge and life skills. The responsibility of turning a child into an individual who is an asset to the society and the nation was primarily and effectively borne by the Gurus.

However, over the years we have witnessed this valuable culture changing completely as the two powerful agencies of shaping an individual have fallen prey to the modernity and the perils of it. Today families find it difficult to impart even the basic values like honesty, integrity, patience, compassion, tolerance etc. in the children let alone the higher order values like benevolence, altruism, camaraderie, universalism etc. (Schwartz, S. H. 2012). Our current education system is more

*Ph.D. Scholar, Gurunanak College of Education Bhandup (W), Mumbai

**Principal, Gurunanak College of Education Bhandup (W), Mumbai

synonymous with being like exam factories, with the primary focus on churning out toppers year after year than being a temple of knowledge with the aim of all round development of a child. The holistic development has been replaced with shallow material achievements.

The National Policy on Education (NPE), made a strong recommendation for including value education in the teaching content (Association of Indian Universities, 2000, p. 75, cited in The justification offered was that the tremendous advances in science and technology have resulted in a complete change of attitudes and lifestyles, the consequences of which are not wholly desirable. Value education was necessary to prevent further erosion of traditional values (Association of Indian Universities, 2000, p. 75). However it remains the sad truth that despite providing a list of core values to be included in the curriculum and giving necessary guidelines to implement the above recommendations the government has failed to ensure the effective implementation of them by the educational institutes. Though the schools have been trying to incorporate these values some way or other it has failed to yield any measurable impact. Mostly due to lack of curriculum that allows the seamless integration of value education or values, lack of skills, interest and willingness in the teachers as well as the educational institutes that are hard pressed by a heavy syllabus and result oriented culture. It is no wonder that we hear constant media reports, news broadcasts and various statistical data with respect to the highly disturbing role of youngsters in violent crimes, especially against young children and women, the increased suicide rates in children as young as 9 years old, depressing reports of students' cheating, lack of self-discipline, lack of regard to authority. As a society all we seem to be doing is asking "what is wrong with these children?" whereas a more viable question to raise might be "What's wrong with society today?" "Are we collectively going wrong somewhere with concern to our children?"

Rationale of the study

Our youngsters are the future of tomorrow. So the lack of moral values especially among this important section of the society is a serious issue. Owing to the globalization there is a societal change that creates

opportunities for children to live in ways that are significantly different from their parents. Today's children are freely and easily exposed to things totally inappropriate for their age, they are strongly influenced by their peers, the media and other social media and believe that they can try anything and do anything for the sake of their pleasure or thrill. Youngsters at an impressionable phase of development are more vulnerable to these exposure and pressure resulting in inadvertently succumbing to the evil temptations of the modernity and the need to assert their independence.

Thus it becomes pertinent to catch them at this crucial stage where they are at the threshold of shaping their personality, identity and individuality. All the stakeholders and most importantly the parents, teachers and educational institutes must join hands to share the responsibility of positive grooming of the children and put them back on the path that leads to a wholesome and desirable character formation.

Instead of becoming too much like exam factories, the schools, the teachers and all other stake holders must prepare and equip themselves to take up this challenge of moving the student from "knowing the good to be desirable" to "desiring to do the good and develop the kind of character these young people need to meet the challenges they face in school and beyond.

Therefore the researcher took up this study to understand the value based behavior of children at school and the effect of such behaviour on teachers and the school environment. The researcher also tried to understand the role played by the teachers and the schools in providing opportunities to children to understand the importance of value based behaviour and strengthen the values that lead to an appropriate character development.

Objectives

The study seeks to achieve the following **objectives**:

1. To understand the teachers perception towards value oriented behavior of their students
2. To understand the role of the teachers in creating value based environment during teaching learning.
3. To understand the challenges faced by the teachers in this regard.

4. To understand the role of the schools in organizing value based activities/programmes for the students
5. To conduct the need analysis for developing a training module on value enrichment programmes for the students

In pursuit of the objectives, the following **Research Questions** were raised:

1. What is the perception of the secondary school teachers towards the value based behavior of their students?
2. What is the role of the teachers in creating value based environment in the classrooms and school?
3. What are the challenges faced by the teachers in this regard?
4. What is the role of the school in creating school culture to enhance the value based behavior of all the stake holders?
5. Is there an urgent need to take serious action for the value restoration among secondary school students/youth?

Definitions of the Terms

Values: In the present study the values refers to the those guiding principles that helps an individual to deem what is correct and desirable in life, especially regarding their personal conduct.

Values based behaviour: In the present study it refers to the way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others, based on the value system inherent in him

Secondary School Teachers: In the present it refers to the teachers teaching in the Secondary Level of Indian Education i.e. from class VIII to class X.

Adolescent Students: In the present study the students of std. VIII, who are in the age group of 12 + years and are experiencing the onset of adolescence, are considered as the adolescents

Teachers' Perception: In the present study it refers to the way secondary teachers' regard, understand or interpret something.

Method

Qualitative approach was used and Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data in the present study.

Sample and Data Collection

The study was conducted on 42 teachers teaching in the secondary level of English medium SSC Board

schools spread across Mumbai.

Measures

A semi-structured interview prepared by the researcher was used to collect the data. Most of the following questions were included in the interview and few were modified and added based on the interviewees reply.

1. How would you define values or what does it mean to you?
2. Is it important to have values?
3. Do you think children in your class have appropriate values instilled in them? If yes or no, describe how?
4. Can you list the values you would like to see the most in your students' behaviour?
5. Does the lack of values in students affect you in anyway? If yes describe how?
6. Do you include any value based teaching during your regular classroom teaching?
7. If yes, describe how you incorporate value based teaching in your classroom (i.e. your approach, amount of time, materials used, incorporation into the curriculum, reinforcement of the concepts, etc.).
8. How would you describe students' reaction to your effort in value incorporation?
9. Was there any notable impact of incorporating values during classroom teaching? If yes, describe.
10. What are the challenges faced by you while incorporating value based teaching in the classrooms?
11. Are there any value education or character development programmes/activities organised for the students by the school? If yes, describe.
12. What is your outlook towards value based, character development programmes/activities for students?
13. Would you recommend such programmes to be compulsorily included in the school curriculum?
14. Any comments or suggestions you would like to make in this regard?

Techniques of Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis was carried out using Grounded Theory approach. Researcher used Constant Comparison method and carried out

Thematic Coding of the interview data.

Data Analysis

Researcher compiled the interview data and analysed them by comparing the replies received for each question and then coding then grouping them to generate patterns and themes from the data.

1. How would you define values or what does it mean to you?

Almost three fourth of the teachers' defined values as the ability to differentiate and choose the right from wrong. Whereas the remaining one fourth could not define the term but could only provide examples of values such as truthfulness, honesty, patience, sincerity, loyalty and perseverance.

2. Is it important to have values?

All the teachers said it's very important to have values as it leads to the development of good and honourable character. All of the teachers strongly believed that a good person must have values instilled as it shows a good upbringing. Having values is also looked upon as necessary to be able to live in the society amicably.

3. Do you think children in your class have appropriate values instilled in them? If yes or no, describe how?

All of the teachers unanimously reported that most of the students in their class lack even the basic values like cleanliness, honesty, truthfulness and sincerity. Teachers described the behaviour of the students as brash, disrespectful and impolite. Almost half of the teachers said the use of bad words by students for each other is a matter of great concern for them. Three fourth of the teachers worried about the disregard displayed by the students towards authority and rules and regulations.

4. Does the lack of values in students affect you in anyway? If yes describe how?

Most of the teachers around four fifth of them responded that if affected their rapport with the students which in turn affected their classroom transactions. They also said it upset them and fouled their mood many a times. Some them also reported that they carried this foul mood to their homes as well and behaved irritably with their own children.

5. Can you list the values you would like to see the most in your students' behaviour?

About two third of the teachers listed down the

values such as truthfulness, honesty, punctuality, sincerity and care. Remaining one third listed most of the above values along with values like citizenship, loyalty, tolerance, sensitivity, environmental consciousness, compassion and empathy.

6. Do you include any value based teaching during your regular classroom teaching?

Only one eight of the teachers said they include some form of value based activities during their classroom transaction. The also reflected that none of these activities were planned and mostly were spontaneous depending on the demands of the situation.

7. If yes, describe how you incorporate value based teaching in your classroom (i.e. your approach, amount of time, materials used, incorporation into the curriculum, reinforcement of the concepts, etc.).

It was reported that all the activities were spontaneous or spur of the moment as per the situation in the class. There was no time frame decided by the teachers as it was not pre planned by them. Most of them said they spent approximately 5 to 10 minutes on value dissemination during a 30 to 35 minutes class period. Most of the teachers used speech, motivational stories to bring out the importance of values. Language and History teachers, which made up half of the one eight reporting positively to above question, said they imparted values using the pros, poems and lessons as illustrations.

8. How would you describe students' reaction to your effort in value incorporation?

All of the one eight of the teachers replied that the students' mostly listened to them attentively during these activities. Though sometimes they did show disinterest and seem to be making fun of the teachers by chit-chatting amongst each other during the activities or speech.

9. Was there any notable impact of incorporating values during classroom teaching? If yes, describe.

None of the teachers reported any notable impact of their value incorporation activities undertaken during the classroom teaching.

10. What are the challenges faced by you while incorporating or planning to incorporate value based teaching in the classrooms?

All of the participant teachers expressed the desire to impart and re-inforce at least the basic values in their students however they complained about the dearth of time to conduct such activities during the class timing and expressed their concern for syllabus completion. Also some of the teachers expressed apprehension in spending their time on non-academic activities during teaching period due to the fear of reprimand from their supervisors and the parents against the wastage of teaching time.

11. Are there any value education or character development programmes/activities organised for the students by the school? If yes, describe.

Only one tenth of the teachers said they had value education programmes organised for students in their school. Most of them said they had once a year workshop on values, where external guest speakers were invited to address the students, most of these programmes included either lectures, illustrations or stories on desirable values.

12. What is your outlook towards value based, character development programmes/activities for students?

All of the forty two teachers were unanimous in saying that value based character development programmes and activities were the need of the hour as the present generation children seriously show lack of even the basic values necessary for being a decent human being. Teachers insisted that government should organise such programmes in the schools on regular basis. They also rued on the fact that teachers were over burdened with too many activities in the school thus leaving no room for anything outside the curriculum. They also said many of the teachers especially the younger ones lack the skill necessary to undertake such activities. Teachers wished that every school takes initiatives in this regard and make value education programmes as a part of the curriculum and allot time to conduct them.

13. Would you recommend such programmes to be compulsorily included in the school curriculum?

All the teachers replied they would very strongly recommend such programmes to be compulsorily included in the curriculum with properly allotted time schedule to conduct these activities.

14. Any comments or suggestions you would like to make in this regard?

Most of the comments were that the Government should seriously take note whether schools are incorporating the core values prescribed by them. Character development programmes must seriously become a part of students' secondary level education because the lack of values becomes majorly evident from eight grade onwards and deteriorates further. Also schools must give value education programmes as much importance as the other academic and non-academic activities. There should be provision for training in this area to empower the teachers with necessary skills to implement such programmes.

Findings of the study-

The findings suggest that,

- The school teachers have a very strong perception about the value based behaviour of their students as it has a direct impact on their own behaviour and temperament. Negative temperament affected the teachers' classroom transaction and also badly affected their rapport with the students and in some cases their parents as well.
- Teachers do not consider themselves as role models for students anymore as feel they are not revered by students as before. However they do believe that given the opportunity they can play an important role in creating value based environment in the classroom as the students do spend most of their time in the school daily. Being teachers they have access to students' time and thus can utilize it for promoting value based behaviour amongst students.
- Though the teachers wished to promote value based behaviour by organizing activities they felt restrained due to heavy syllabus and lack of time. Teachers feel they are already overburdened by various compulsory academic and non-academic activities in their schools. Many of the schools management had no interest in this area and hence did not include it in the school activities.
- Most of the schools do not take value education programmes seriously. Some of them try to implement the government policy by incorporating value based activities mostly in the form of annual workshops, talks etc. Schools

do not wish to spend their resources in this area as it does not yield any quantifiable results like high scores on a mark sheet.

- There is a definite and urgent need to take some serious action for the value restoration among secondary school students especially the adolescents, when their personalities are shaped in real sense. Schools, teachers and management must come up with character development programmes that cater to the curiosity of the children and not bore them with talks and lectures.

Conclusion

The above study was definitely a wakeup call as it threw light on urgent necessity of value restoration in our youngsters today more than ever. It is definitely right on top of one of the challenges faced by the schools today. There seems to be clear deterioration of values in today's learners especially those in the age group of 12+ years leading to lot of behavioural problems, severely affecting their academic as well as psychological development. Teachers too seem to be greatly affected by this kind of behaviour as it has a direct impact on their teaching practices and general temperament. Despite such worrisome situation the teachers and schools lacked any serious strategies to address this challenge. Many schools did not have any programme to improve the prevailing situation; mostly it was individual teacher's personal interest in this area that motivated them to communicate and make an effort to transact some moral and social values to these students. Schools being the primary agency of education with a goal of all round development of a child must not forget their responsibility towards the develop character, good conduct, moral integrity, self-discipline, compassion and love for all living beings, responsibility, and other positive qualities in the young people. . Instead of becoming too much like exam factories, the schools, the teachers and all other stake holders must prepare and equip themselves to take up this challenge of moving the student from "knowing the good to be desirable" to "desiring to do the good and develop the kind of character these young people need to meet the challenges they face in school and beyond.

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