

THE ROLE OF TEACHER IN MORAL AND ETHICAL EDUCATION OF STUDENTS

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Abstract: The relevance of this study is driven by the need to build the moral and ethical foundation for the worldview of children in the era of ubiquitous digital technology. The main priority of this research is to provide substantiation that a teacher plays an important role in the moral and ethical education of students. The research reviews a problem related to the content of modern education lacking morale building activities. The research purpose is to substantiate the high importance of a teacher in the moral and ethical education of the younger generation. The main research methods were analysis and synthesis of the scientific literature on the research subject. The research proceedings have a practical value for teachers carrying out their professional activities in the system of general and supplementary education.

Keywords: moral and ethical education, psychological approaches, teacher, student, morality.

1 Introduction

The era of ubiquitous digital technology spurs a necessity to build the moral and ethical foundations for the worldview of children. In the age of continuous advancement of the Internet, where one may find absolutely any information, both positive and negative, a child, due to his/her age and lack of a stable and strong moral base, has no clear concept of what are the manifestations of good example in the society. Not only socio-economic environment in the country has changed, but also the way how the life models are built and how the life is lived, which previously was predetermined by the former requirements of society (Andreeva, 2019, p. 12). The question of fostering moral qualities in children today is more relevant than ever. T. B. Sandabkina (2013, p. 5) substantiates the relevance of this topic, pointing out that modern society in the times of socio-economic crisis, which coincided with the search for new ideals and moral values, puts before the school urgent tasks in the field of moral education – instilling benevolence in children, respectful attitude to history and culture of other nations, development of esthetic needs, ability to act independently on the basis of moral choice.

V. T. Chepikov (1997) defines the core of morality, which underlies essential moral qualities of individual. According to the researcher, the moral qualities of individual determine their moral portrait. The researcher clarifies that such qualities make a person free, as well as valuable and independent in the system of socio-economic relations.

I. A. Parkhomenko (2009) underlines that the problem of fostering moral qualities in the younger generation is global in its scope. "The culture of peace understood as the establishment of universal spiritual and moral values on Earth, is significant in modern socio-cultural conditions, as today the society is facing growing alienation of individuals, cultivation of cruelty and violence, spread of various forms of extremism. Against this background, the role of schools and pedagogical science as guarantors of the revival and inculcation of spiritual and moral values in the younger generation becomes extremely important" (p. 3). The role of a teacher in instilling moral values in students is significant. The content of the educational process is defined

by the categories of teaching and upbringing. Undoubtedly, the family has paramount importance in fostering moral and ethical qualities, but it is also important to remember that the functions of a teacher are not limited to the delivery of the learning content, the teacher's role is much wider. However, in the realities of today's school, we quite often encounter the problem of the teachers' reluctance to implement the function of moral and ethical education.

2 Literature Review

The research relied on the works of the following authors. Studies by psychologists V. I. Selivanov (1992), B. S. Volkov (2016) who provide evidence that uncertain or incorrect moral concepts of younger students may have a major impact on the formation of their moral qualities. Among the domestic researchers who have made a significant contribution to the theory of moral development of personality through interactions with other subjects, in the field of psychology and research of the moral and ethical development of personality, we would like to give a special mention to P. P. Blonsky (2020), L. S. Vygotsky (2005). They in their studies substantiate the necessity and value of the process aimed to strengthen moral and ethical qualities of students. L. S. Vygotsky (2005) views a person through the prism of the process of personal development. The author notes that personal development of an individual is driven by a complex and rich spiritual life. According to L. S. Vygotsky (2005), the process of moral qualities fostering should be based on a certain coordination of communications and interactions between students, which is one of the most important pedagogical tasks. P. P. Blonsky (2020) addresses the problem of fostering the moral and ethical growth of a learner caused by "the pedagogical neglect of the learner".

Researcher T. B. Sandabkina (2013) rightly notes that a combination of particular pedagogical actions and technologies contributes to the higher emotional and moral responsiveness of students, stronger empathy to the feelings of others, and the ability to regulate own behavior and self-esteem based on moral principles. Of particular note is the research of D. A. Bezhevets (2016) in the field of organizing basic general education where this author approaches the process of spiritual and moral development of the younger generation as a holistic pedagogical system integrating two main components: teaching and upbringing. I. A. Parkhomenko (2009) points to the need to supplement the professional training of pedagogical staff with a component providing moral education to future teachers.

3 Methodology

The research purpose was to substantiate the high importance of a teacher in the moral and ethical education of the younger generation.

The research objectives were as follows:

- Examine and give an overview of studies which provide definitions of the concepts "morality" and "ethics" in relation to the educational process;
- Consider and present the analysis of age-specific characteristics of the younger generation;
- Explore the system for instilling moral principles in the younger generation and the role of a pedagogue in the process of moral development of students
- Determine the professional qualities of a teacher, which have a positive impact on the morals and ethics of the younger generation.

The main methods were analysis, synthesis, systematization and consolidation of scientific literature in the field of psychological and pedagogical research concerned with understanding the role of a teacher in the moral education of students.

4 Results and Discussion

The concept of "morality" should be studied in the context of human consciousness and behavior. A moral act is an action, but not any action, only the one that receives a positive evaluation from the public and moral perspective. The moral behavior and moral act are objectified, i.e. the acts and behavior of an individual are unbiasedly assessed for consistency with the interests of society. Moral behavior is an aspect or side of any human activity and does not exist by itself. Any individual actions imply a moral aspect, which is manifested in the goal or intention, in the choice of means, in the way how activity is organized, in its outcomes and consequences.

Morality (Latin *moralis* – moral) is decency, a particular configuration of public consciousness and a type of social relations (moral relations); one of the major means to regulate the acts of people in society based on the norms. Moral norms are based on ideological justification in the form of standards of what is good and bad, justice, etc., as compared to a tradition or an elementary custom. Unlike the law, compliance with the principles of morality may only be regulated by spiritual levers (encouragement or condemnation, social assessment). Morality, along with other elements common to all humanity, by the standards of history are temporal ideals, norms and principles.

Moral beliefs develop to a large extent under the influence of the teacher's personality and first of all teacher's moral beliefs. A perfect moral belief is needed by each and every person. Shaky moral beliefs do not flatter anyone, but when it concerns a person in charge of the process of education, it leads to disastrous consequences.

The building of moral beliefs should be regarded as a special goal requiring from a teacher to be able to:

- Take into account the level of moral consciousness of each student, their capabilities and moral growth prospects;
- Take various approaches to teaching, social work, labour, lifestyle, habits – everything that may produce influence on a certain child;
- Find how aligned are the student's words about moral principles with his/her real actions;
- Reveal difficulties in correction of the wrong beliefs and principles of some junior students by resorting to the power of public opinion, influence of children on each other;
- Take due regard of the possibilities and regularities in the development consistent with age when instilling certain moral beliefs.

When a direct connection is ensured between the child's moral feelings and the knowledge about morality inculcated in a child through upbringing, the child develops firm beliefs. For the pedagogical process a more informed understanding by students of the concepts of morality and ethics means a lot, including changes in the student's view of learning and classes with a teacher.

Junior school age according to E. H. Erikson (1996) is the perfect time for a child to absorb knowledge, skills, and basic morals and ethics. The development of a child of junior age becomes the immediate task of primary school. At this age it is highly important to develop the abilities of students in every possible way, to strengthen their confidence in own abilities. That is why the role of a teacher at this stage in the child's development is so crucial. L. S. Vygotsky (2005) argued that educational efforts tailored to the age of a student are most effective for the all-rounded development of children. A whole lot of changes can be classified as the age-specific characteristics. Such changes relate to physical, cognitive, intellectual, motivational, emotional properties of the body, etc. This has been supported by the study of E. A. Goloyus (2019, p. 9), who points out that moral and ethical beliefs, being a structural component of the moral realm of personality, represent an integral unity of cognitive, emotional and behavioral components.

The essential attributes of personality find manifestations in the lived experience, the emotional responses caused by certain events in children's life.

An important criterion in shaping the moral and ethical system of the student is the influence of the teacher's personality. If the teacher's emotional and moral system is solid and stable, education as such will take place in a calmer manner and in a correct direction, because in the absence of stability and firm adherence to moral and ethical principles, the teacher cannot transfer them to and instill them in his/her student. According to the researcher O. Yu. Fedoseenko (2018) "Morality is a theoretical basis and regulator of behavior, while morality is the freedom and expression of the will of a person, provided that the motives of the person and the requirements of society coincide" (p. 170).

In addition to knowledge of age-specific characteristics, the teacher should have the following professional qualities: fairness, responsiveness, respect for students, as well as actively demonstrate all these qualities in education by way of own example. If a teacher talks about morality and ethics, it is important to understand that students will look first at the teacher's actions and whether the teacher implements this in practice. The years of studentship have a huge impact on the teacher's personality: it is when the lesson perception is shaped, the criteria distinguishing between good and bad teachers are established, and a certain impression of communication between all participants in the educational process is left (Ilaltdinova & Oladyshkina, 2020, p. 3).

Manifestation of respect by the teacher to the student is associated with such mental qualities as care, understanding, empathy, a sense of justice. This contributes to creating a more favorable and safe background for communication, as well as a respectful spirit of dialogue, both with the student and with colleagues. As it is known, education is a reciprocal process (Nemova et al., 2019). This approach is more preferable because direct condemnation and constant coercion pay back only with alienation and loss of trust. Advice, as well as tactful explanations help to achieve better communication, and the information is perceived much easier (Reshetnikov, 2000).

Therefore, a teacher needs a particular set of skills:

- Analyze the individual features of emotional development of students;
- Be attentive to emotional expressions of students, help them to understand their feelings, create a favorable emotional atmosphere in the classroom;
- Facilitate occurrence of special emotional situations in the lives of students, especially in team activities, helpful in revealing the potential of each student and reinforcing the manifested moral feelings;
- Trace changes in the emotions expressed by a student. When a student does not show any emotional response to an intense situation or action, consider the reasons behind such response of a student, and take steps to change the situation for the better by dealing with its causes;
- Cultivate a conscious attitude of junior school students to certain age-related stages in their emotional development, provide the necessary support in this case, and praise the efforts shown by children. Provide support in overcoming of failures and obstacles (Skovorodkina & Gerasimov, 2018).

5 Conclusion

One of the important tasks of a teacher is to lend children a helping hand when they encounter problems which require a moral choice. Such help should not be imposed, the correct pedagogical strategy assumes a different approach: it is important to give a child the right of choice and only gently lead and guide the child to the moral act. Each time a child chooses a morally correct act, it will promote their moral growth and reinforce their spiritual qualities, because such a choice strengthens the faith in own self, instills the habit of moral choice. It is important to understand that growth is possible only

when the situation requiring a moral choice is difficult, but surmountable for a child, and does not cause heavy emotional stress.

For strengthening the moral and ethical motives behind the behavior of student, the teacher should:

- Analyze the student's actions and find a correlation with the line of their behavior as well, since this reflects the moral attitudes already existing at this time;
- Provide freedom to independently choose the path of morality in certain life situations;
- Analyze the content of educational process and should any contradictory or conflicting situations arise in the group, guide a student to the positive resolution from the moral point of view;
- Promote the moral and ethical growth through the team activities, by adding new requirements for an individual and making them more stringent (but still commensurate with student's potential);
- Promote positive relationships within the group, take an active role in group activities, thus providing correctional education to difficult children. Help students to abandon the already formed negative attitudes and destructive ways of behavior, by replacing them with universal moral and ethical foundations.

Thus, we may conclude that instilling morality in the younger generation is an obligatory element of the educational process, as a solid and stable moral and ethical base is the key to the developing a strong and healthy personality.

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