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Education in human values (EHV): Alternative approach for a holistic teaching

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A good and comprehensive education system is expected to create the necessary human capital and knowledge workers who will bring the country to greater heights. In this regards, a holistic education programme is needed which can equip students with both the hard and soft skills required as well as human values. However, the main emphasis in education today lies in acquiring large amounts of information, passing examinations and securing qualifications for future employment. This paper highlights the implementation of a programme called the "Education in Human Values" (EHV). This programme seeks to improve the teaching-learning environment that will foster character building through the incorporation of basic universal values, thus, contributing towards academic excellence. The stress of an ever-increasing workload, and a working environment dominated by social problems will continue to make a teacher's profession more difficult and less satisfying. The many behavioral problems in society are vividly mirrored in schools, through bullying, drug abuse, theft and vandalism and scores of criminal acts. With so many external influences, demands and constraints, it can be easy to lose hold of the values that make up a civilized society. This education in human values programme seeks to help teachers, parents and children to re-focus on the basic positive values that that underlie all aspects of a moral society. This is done through what is called a "Triple Partnership for Education" between teachers, parents and students, meaning that all three groups play key roles in reversing current trends, and in reaching towards the goal of truly successful value based education.

Key words: Education in human values (EHV), human values, triple partnership for education.

INTRODUCTION

The opportunity cost for development in many developed countries today is the deterioration of social values among the members of society especially younger generation. Developed nations such as Japan, United States (US), United Kingdom (UK), South Korea and Singapore have reported high rates in social problems among the younger generations whom are expected to lead these developments. There are many reasons that can be stated and debated over this phenomena but one cannot deny the fact that, the system of education plays an integral part in creating human capital in the right character and conduct.

The globalization impact in education has been a worrying process, precisely by the fast way that it changes. But the analysis goes beyond the realities that generates. The experiences in the most industrialized countries show that the economical development and growing had been thanks, to the education. However, when only a few power groups (political and economic) are the beneficiaries of the global education, we can not be cheerful in the concept of a world designed in this scheme. With the creation of market blocks, free commerce and the "neo-liberal" economic model, the globalization has imposed and established rules, which only benefit a few persons. The economic power is concentrated in the financial elite, represented by big multinational corporations, which has generated inequity and poverty as never before. Under this point of view, there is a great concern for the fast growing of poverty,

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so the suggestion is that globalization must tend to be a "globalized profit" and not only of wretchedness (Tapia, 2009).

The main emphasis in education today lies in acquiring large amounts of information, passing examinations and securing qualifications for future employment. Children in many parts of the world are under tremendous pressure to succeed academically (Burrows, 1997). As a result of this, children are being robbed of their childhood and have to grow up too quickly. The jewels of childhood such as imagination and creativity are being swept aside. Instead of playing make-believe games, young children are sitting in front of computer screens and videos. Burrows (1997), firmly believes that, there should be a balance between modern technology and the holistic development of the child.

Schools often have to face a dichotomy between the goals of quantitative achievements in academic standards and fostering the all important needs of the child in a holistic way where the environment nurtures self-confidence, integrity, love, and other moral values required to tackle problems such as poor discipline, bullying and vandalism. Thus, the creation of a learning environment through an appropriate methodology for the school has become very important (Ritchie, 1998).

The important of the human values in education gets lost in globalization, because it only stimulates the educational system by the economic point of view and there is no other reference. The educational relationships are guide only by the mayor power of insensible and irrational use and abuse of human kind. The critic to the actual education system is located, principally, in the social unconcern in the ignorance of the social function as a generator, guidance and formatter of the human values. On the other hand, analysis that pretends to cover the concept of education in the globalize environment must concede the primacy to persons, above things. Such study would not obtain any results, when we turn people into things.

The actual education must confront the misery, poverty and inequity problems with success, but overall, it has necessarily made a deep emphasis in human values, where it recognizes person as an individual and gain the harmonic and respectful integration of the bases of justice, solidarity and subsidiary. By this way, education will be oriented in an upright humanist thought, which will be for the benefit of all.

The paper is based on a case study of the implementation of human values within the conventional education system in Malaysia.

THE HUMAN VALUES IN EDUCATION

The great defiance in the education in this millennium is, without doubt, to give special emphasis in man's, dignity and values, with a special vision that conceives him as

creator who does not limit only to watch the established order. By the contrary, he dynamically participates in the changes that benefit the human race. In the years of history, man's dignity has occupied a preponderant place, but actually, we observe a deplorable decadency and crisis in the fundamental values, so we have to recover the course of our own humanity existence before that is forgotten in history route. Today, we have a society that the only practices are profits, earns, commerce and the great shares in which man is only an object, not a subject, so disposable as the same products that we make for only one use. For this reason, education development must essentially contributes to the knowledge and significance of man as a person, and by no way allowed its mutilation, or worst, its own reduction as a thing of learning.

Given the scenario, what is education in human values? How educators can incorporate these principal into the daily classroom teachings? What are its benefits to the teachers and pupils?

There are two types of education. One type is worldly education and the second type is what is referred to as "Educare" (Jumsai, 2005). Education will equip a person with knowledge that will enable him/her to earn a living. Education can help that person to become great with name and fame. However, "Educare" will bring out the latent human values from within and will transform the person into a good person with character. Education is related to educating the head whereas Educare is related to education of the Heart. Both education and Educare are necessary. However, education in human values (EHV) takes a holistic approach to educating the child and recognizes five values as an integral part of the human being (Majmudar, 2000). These values are recognized by all major religions, adopt a multi faith approach, allow and encourage each child to follow his or her faith, and are simply conducive to application in diverse cultural conditions. These values are love, peace, truth, right conduct and non-violence (Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, 2007).

These five values in SSEHV program define five aspects of the human personality: the intellect, the physical, the emotional, the psyche and the spiritual. Each of these five aspects corresponds to one basic human value. For instance the intellect aspect is related to truth, the vital or emotional aspect relates to peace, the psychic relates to peace, physical aspect related to the right conduct and finally spiritual aspect relates to non-violence or more properly non-violation (Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, 2007). We can relate the five human values to the three levels of consciousness: the conscious mind, the subconscious mind and the super conscious mind. One must realize that we are not just a body, but we also have a mind, which is very important in the learning process.

The human values integrated learning concept starts with the interaction with the environment. This is essen-

tially education. Students have to study Mathematics, Sciences, Languages, and other subjects so as to prepare themselves for their careers in life. But at the same time, human values are integrated into all subjects so as to bring about peace and calmness of the mind which will prepare the learner for the journey within and that is Educare. When the conscious mind is raised towards the super-conscious mind, then knowledge and wisdom will be drawn out from within (Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, 2007).

The following is the basic principle of the human values integrated instruction (Sri Sathya Sai Central Council Malaysia, 1993):

- i. Human values are an integral part of all subjects and all activities in the school and in the home. In fact, human values are an integral part of our life.
- ii. The five human values of truth, right conduct, peace, love and non-violence are one and cannot be separated. If one value disappears, then all the values will disappear. For example, if there is no love and compassion then the person does not think of others first but has become more self-centered. Thus, right conduct will disappear. The person will not feel peace when there is no love. When there is no peace, consciousness cannot be raised to the super-consciousness and so truth will disappear. Without peace, love, truth and right conduct, then, there will be violence.
- iii. Human values cannot be taught, they have to be brought out from within the learner. It has been a mistake in the past, where teachers have been teaching morality, ethics, values, good character etc. as subjects. Learners can memorize them and can pass examinations, but they fail to put them into practice in their daily life. There seems to be a general decline in morality throughout the world. Transformation of the person cannot take place by mere teaching, but can be achieved through self-realization when the values come out from within the learner. In such cases, there is a direct experience of the human values in the life of the learner.
- iv. In real life, everything is inter-related. Thus, a good learning experience is to have an integrated approach. In our daily life, we do not just have one value throughout the day. For example, right conduct cannot be there alone but it is found that all the five human values are inter-related and exist at the same time. Thus, it would be a mistake to teach one value at a time. In the same way, Mathematics should not be taught as a separate subject as in real life, Mathematics exist along side all the subjects.
- v. Human values integrated instruction gives the learner the ability to solve problems from various perspectives by giving varied inter-related experiences.
- vi. Human values integrated instruction opens up a wider world view for both the teacher and learner making the learning process much more interesting.

The education in human values is a multi-cultural, multi-

faith self-development programme designed for children and young people all over the world. It is a simple educational tool designed to help develop positive values in the young so that children and young adults become fit for life and not just for earning a 'good' living. There are many definitions, modules and programmes that have been designed in educating the human values, however, in this paper, the case study will be on the Sathya Sai education in human values (SSEHV) programme. It directly addresses these issues by focusing on the young children throughout the world through a self-development programme.

The education in human values programme originated in India. Sathya Sai Baba is the founder of this program (Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, 2007). Sathya Sai educational institutions were established in India, which included primary, secondary schools and institute of higher learning. These are the model institutions fully accredited by the Government of India and display the highest academic standards.

The international programme bears the name of Sathya Sai as the whole international programme originated from a workshop given by Sathya Sai Baba to an international group of educationists and academics and was developed by the working team in the form of an international programme for an application world-wide. At present, independent Sathya Sai Schools have been established outside India in Thailand, Zambia, Nepal, Malaysia and Australia. The SSEHV programme is introduced as appropriate in the public sector schools in 69 countries in the Eastern Hemisphere (Majmudar, 2001).

The five human values and child development

The aim of the SSEHV programme is to bring out the inherent goodness in each child and help to sustain it by regular practice through the difficult period of emotional growth. Goleman (1996) argued that, emotional intelligence, or EQ, matters more than the intelligence quotient (IQ). It is increasingly recognised that some teaching of social and emotional skills should ideally start in pre-school years. The early school years, 5 or 6 to 11 years are most crucial as the emotional growth is intricately linked with other developments, which include cognition and biological maturation. Thus, the child's development in these years will have tremendous influence in later life.

The core value in the SSEHV programme is love (Jumsai, 1997). The development of empathy and love are taught through a set of related values such as: caring; friendship; generosity; kindness and sharing. Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that education must lead to a "broadening of heart". This term encompasses an expansion of love and consciousness and universal compassion. When love in this broad sense is combined

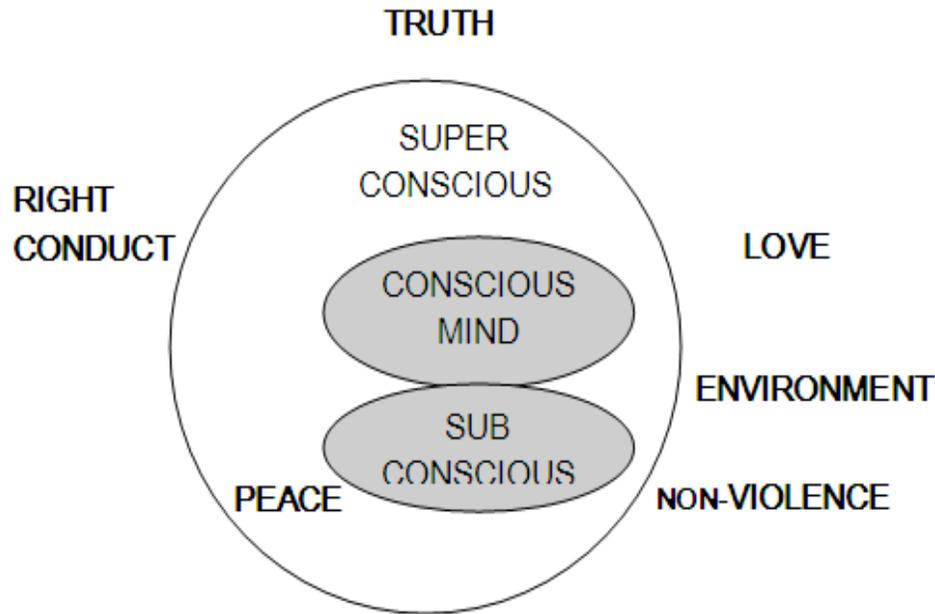


Figure 1. Basic universal human values. Source: Jumsai (1997).

with the capacity of discernment, it is referred to as truth. Relative truth can take many forms, but when it comes from within oneself as the dictate of 'inner self', it becomes the right conduct. Peace refers to an awareness of emotions, their acceptance and skilful handling, resulting in calmness and balance. 'Peace within' can come from the practice of truth, right conduct and love. When all four values are practiced, non-violence or non-violation emerges as the culmination of all values.

It focuses on the basic universal human values, which are truth, love, peace, right conduct and non-violence. The process of building and practicing these values is the essence of character building (Figure 1).

THE SATHYA SAI SCHOOL KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

The Sathya Sai Baba Council of Malaysia started the Sekolah Rendah Sathya Sai in the year 2002 at 61/2 mile of Jalan Puchong, an annex of the very well-known Pure Life Society a home for underprivileged children in the city of Kuala Lumpur. The school is registered as a private school under the Ministry of Education and uses the same curricula as other national primary schools throughout the country. The aim of the school is to bring about:

- i. Academic excellence.
- ii. Development of good character.
- iii. A secure value based foundation with the inculcation

of the main values, that is, right conduct, peace, truth, love and non-violence.

Mission

The Sathya Sai School, Kuala Lumpur aims to propagate the ideals of Sathya Sai Education which is to establish character or human excellence.

Motto

Towards human excellence through integration of human values into the school curriculum.

The school started with only 46 students in the year 2002 and the total enrollment for the year 2009 is 189 students comprising of all races and about 20% of them are underprivileged students. Education in human values is incorporated in the curriculum based on the five thrust as follows:

- a. Truth: Students gain a deeper understanding of truth by developing discrimination, honesty, self-reflection, and integrity.
- b. Right action: Students experience right action through the sub-values, which include self-confidence, forbearance, responsibility, good manners, and other social skills.
- c. Peace: Students experience peace as they gain emotional equilibrium through self-acceptance, optimism, patience, contentment and humility.

d. Love: Students develop compassion, sharing, tolerance, friendship, and sacrifice as they discover that love is not mere emotion, but the force that permeates all creation.

e. Non-violence: Students learn that true non-violence is not harming anything, living and/or nonliving, in thought word or deed. It encompasses cooperation, respect for diversity, ecological balance and the unity of life.

A day in Sai School

i) 7.10 - 7.20 am: School starts daily (Monday-Friday) with a 20 min of silent sitting. All the students and teachers will sit in a common place silently with background music.

ii) 7.20 - 7.30 am: Quotation for the week. Student representatives will be presenting about the quotation which centers on moral values such as love, peace, non-violence, truth and right action.

iii) 7.30 am - 1.30 pm: Normal school hours and subjects.

For every class, there will be a special period for about 45 min every week on human values. Students will be exposed on values and will be taught their role in helping others. Some of the quotations used are: "Service to man is service to God", "End of education is character", Love all and serve all' etc. Moreover, students are also encouraged to put into practice what they learn, for example, for the "ceiling on desires", students were asked to save some money from their daily school allowance and at the end of the project, and the class will donate the money to needy homes or students. Another program is on Mother Nature where students were asked to plant a tree and provide care for it. The blended method of teaching and doing make students appreciate what they have learned.

Benefits to teachers

"I am happy to teach in an atmosphere of love and positive vibration which is a blessing".

"Being a teacher here is an unforgettable experience. Teachers are guided to lead the children into Swami's path of building excellence in character".

"It's a second home for me. The love of the children transformed me into a lovable person".

"I am fully indebted to all the people around me in this school. Thanks to the Almighty God who has given me such wonderful experience of teaching at Sai School".

Benefits to students

"I am very sad to leave the school after my UPSR examination this year. I am thankful to all the teachers for

their love and patience in teaching us".

"This is not an ordinary school. I am so gifted to be here. Thanks Swami".

"I love my teachers very much. They teach me both the subjects and human values"

"Sai School is the best school. I have become a hero from a zero since studying here since standard one".

As an exemplary case study of how the education in human values had brought about tremendous impact to the children and teachers in a school, is the Sathya Sai School of Ndola in Zambia or famously known as "Miracle School" (Times of Zambia, 2005).

The Sathya Sai School of Ndola, Zambia

The Sathya Sai School of Ndola, Zambia (Ritchie, 1998), has been awarded the International Gold Star Award for Quality in terms of leadership, innovation, training, and excellence in education. It is a private non-profit making school for boys located in Panodzi, Ndola and started in 1993. The school has currently 550 pupils and a teaching staff of 44. It has three inter-related aims: spiritual and moral excellence, academic excellence and environmental excellence.

The school is non-denominational. The curriculum and syllabi operate within the statutory framework of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Zambia. The school accepts children from all backgrounds, but especially admitted the students who were rejected from proceeding to secondary school education because of their failure to achieve the necessary grades in primary seven. These students having studied at Sathya Sai School for Grade 8 and Grade 9 showed consistently over three consecutive years that they could achieve more than the required total marks at the end of grade 9 and proceed to the Senior Secondary School. The results have been virtually 100% pass rates. However, when the school was started in 1994, the situation was totally different (Ritchie, 1998).

The school was located in a socially and economically disadvantaged area. Many boys had failed the national primary Grade 7 examination (a precondition for entrance into secondary schools). They failed because they were truants, poor attenders and difficult to teach and were rejected. These were the same boys the Sathya Sai Secondary School in Ndola admitted. After two years and upon taking the National Grade 9 examination, not only were they among those who obtained the highest marks in the country, they all passed (100%). This success rate has been repeated at Grade 12 later for the past 10 years. Kanu's report contains impressive accounts by pupils, parents and staff, who spoke of dramatic changes for the better, both at school and at home. The school has been called 'The Miracle School of Zambia'.

The Vice Principal of the Secondary School emphasizes

the following: there is neither vandalism nor theft of neither school text books nor school equipment by pupils; morals are taught during assemblies in the school auditorium held twice daily, also daily during class to mould pupils to grow as proper citizens.

CONCLUSION

The human values integrated learning concept obtained through intuition, has gained wide acceptance around the world. The students and teachers have benefited greatly from this unique method of teaching and learning experience. The nation needs heroes who can bring their country to greater heights. What we witness today is that, current approaches to education only address at most one or two aspects of personality in the teachings. These techniques are not adequate in bringing out the potential latent in each child. In most education system, individuals are treated merely as action agents unable to bring out the divine potential within a child. By adopting the human values approach with the right teaching techniques, it has been proven that it is possible to create a balanced individual and society. A good education system with the education in human values can make it a reality.

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