Problems of Moral Education in China's Schools and Solutions*

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Abstract

School moral education is an important part of education, which concerns the students' growth and development in mental health. How to conduct moral education to help the students shape good moral norm is an issue frequently discussed in the academic area. This paper probes into this issue from the formation of incorrect outlooks towards wealth and power, discusses the risks of apparently incorrect moral education, and suggests the right moral education ways, combined with some specific cases: return to the true state of morality in the concept of moralization; conduct the students' sense of value through teaching activities in the content of moralization; and distinguish between good and evil in moral conflict in the way of moralization.

Keywords

Moral education, puzzles, solutions

School moral education is an important part of education, which considers the students' growth and development. The concept and practice of moral education influence the success or failure of education. Therefore, it is necessary to review the current practice of education.

THE MORAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOL: TO PROMOTE THE STUDENTS' GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Morality is a cultural phenomenon. It is also a kind of human creation which requires an orderly and meaningful social life to be distinguished from animals. It regulates, moralizes, and edifies people in some living areas to pay more attention to the self-introspection of the relationship among nature, society, and others (Zhu 2015: 4), thus leading to a life of virtue.

It can be seen that morality is the basic attribute of

human being, which is the intrinsic nature of human being as well as the humanization process. It emphasizes the possibility that people may live, and that this life has good norms, which are the most important features of good life. It aims at the happiness of life, improves people's behavior, and fosters the inner quality of human beings by habit, thus leading to a wonderful life. This quality of morality is due to the realization of human characteristics. Man is not only the existence of nature, but also the existence of reason. The combination of the rational and the moral qualities makes person better improve his own behavior, so as to pursue and realize the goodness and happiness of

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life. It can be seen that morality is an important criterion to measure and regulate the cognition and behavior of individuals and human beings. All these are based on rational thinking, and individuals are free to choose the right actions and take responsibility for them (Bao 1988: 341). Paulsen once said, "The first great and basic truth that people can achieve by thinking about their own morality is—good people live well, and evil people live badly" (Bao 1988: 354).

Based on the above moral characteristics, we can see that the purpose of school moral education should be determined according to the characteristics of morality. Correspondingly, the content and form of moral education should be prescribed by moral characteristics.

THE DILEMMA OF SCHOOL MORALITY EDUCATION ON HUMAN GROWTH

It is true that the moral education of school must make efforts to the existence of man's ought to be; that is to say, school moral education is supposed to do something significant to the belief establishment, character formation, life respect, and so on. It should integrate the students' ideas of moral cultivation that it ought to be into reality as a way to a good life. However, in the modern society where the technology is thought of most importance and the demand for productivity has grown so much, the competition between the moral ideal and objective reality causes a tendency to acquire and enjoy material wealth, which makes people gradually forget the pursuit of culture, values, and spirit, or even overwhelmed by the pursuit of wealth.

School Morality Is Against the Requirements of Moral Education

School is the field for students' ideological experience and behavior correction. The teachers' words and deeds have a far-reaching influence on the students.

In reality, however, some requirements of the school, which seem to be concerned with their students, are affecting the students' gradually formed values. School is a significant field for students to develop good morality and also an important implementer of moral education. Some of the school practices are evidently against the moral pursuit. Obviously, this is the public abandonment of moral education. Thus, because of the conflict between the reality and ought to be, the students have obstacles in the cultivation of proper morality. The unintentionally paradoxical behavior of the school has a profound influence on the cultivation of students' moral habits.

The School Moral Education Is not in Accord with Social Reality

In the present life, wealth and power are things that everyone cannot escape. Also, it is an important way to realize people's happy life. Especially in the society of advocating material desire, people consciously or unconsciously regard the amount of wealth and the size of power as a reference to their own status, and unconsciously become slaves of material desire and desire for power. This is the realistic field that the school moral education encounters, and it is also a problem that moral education must solve.

However, students always receive such education in class. For example, one must respect the old and take care of children, must observe the discipline and abide by the law, and must be a honest and trustworthy person. Fairness and justice must be kept in everyone's mind. Back in the real world, they saw some people who accumulate wealth by any means, and who treat money as a universal tool. Just as someone said, "good fame is more valuable than golden belt; but people with good reputation don't get the gold belt, and I see that people who have golden belts today never lack good reputation" (Diderot 1959: 287).

Students are affected by such misconducts in school, and gradually lose their correct understanding of power and health. Moral education in school cannot withstand the impact of the secular behavior, so that the teacher's lecture becomes impossible to make corrections with the students' behavior of showing power and wealth, not to mention the society hidden rules. As a result, students did not benefit from moral education in schools.

The School Evaluates Moral Education Through Utilitarian Value

In the evaluation of moral behavior, the school rewards some students whose behaviors are common in our daily life. The reasons given by a university news network are as follows:

This student is an ordinary college student, who is from disadvantaged backgrounds and has to support his poor family. He is excellent in character and learning, eager to help students, and actively participates in volunteer service activities. He also volunteers to tutor many students in poverty and helps them enter the ideal universities.

Obviously, from the basic education to the higher education, the school moral education makes the students become utilitarian. Outside the campus, the students' moral events are similar to those of the campus, and the difference only exists in the scene and the scale.

On the morning of January 1, 2011, Zhou Tiancheng and Luo Wei, senior high school students of Shenzhen Luohu Foreign Languages School, went to school as usual. While passing through Guowei Road, they saw an old woman fell down on the side of the road, with blood on her face. A lot of people passed the old lady by, for they were afraid to help her. In this case, the two students stepped forward, lifted the old woman, and then sent the elder to the hospital for treatment. Also, they paid for the medical expenses and sent the old lady back to her home. Then, Obliging Youth Commending Assembly was held in

Shenzhen City to reward Luo Wei and Zhou Tiancheng 10,000 yuan for their virtues (Yu 2011: A3).

After the newspaper reported the incident, the network responded greatly. Nearly fifty thousand netizens participated in Sina's survey on how to treat such event that two teenagers received a bonus for helping an old lady who fell on the floor. The results show that nearly 79% of the netizens believe that this spirit of courage to help people deserves reward and promotion in today's society; 10% of the netizens believe that the rescue of the fallen elderly is a virtue that ordinary people should have, and there is no need for reward; and 11% of users find it difficult to comment on it (Blog 2011: 01).

WHAT SCHOOL MORAL EDUCATION SHOULD DO TO PROMOTE STUDENTS' GROWTH

Admittedly, there are many problems to be solved in school moral education. In order to enhance the effectiveness of school moral education, the concept, content, and mode of school moral education should be changed.

Return to the True State of Morality in the Concept of Moralization

At the moment, the moral education of Chinese students is affected by many unfavorable factors. To return to the moral ontology, there must be an originality on the concept of morality; it must remove all the pursuit for moral supremacy, avoid sublime, emphasis on ordinary, and return to the moral "origin" and "where".

Human nature is "sacrificing the same kind to seek happiness" (Diderot 1959: 287). As you can see, the moral education "is not to let the individual cannot live, but treat morality as a kind of practice of acquiring sexual skills, just like cooking or carpentry skills" (Oakeshott 2003: 107).

Moral learning should be derived from life and practice, rather than simply learning knowledge. In view of the current practice of moral education, they do not care about the above “reasonable” analysis. They regard morality as the noble embodiment of life, a beautiful Mosaic in life, which is impossible to reach. It is true that the starting point of morality is the ordinary reality of life. Moral education should be combined with the living condition of the students and guide students to take responsibility and respect life, and so on.

Conduct the Students' Sense of Value through Teaching Activities in the Content of Moralization

In the content of moralization, we should not only interpret the value which is advocated by the text, but also guide the teaching activities to generate value. For example, a teacher told a story of “Banling Fei Du” to students. In this story, the hunter, with the help of the hound, drove more than 70 impalas to the cliff. Behind them were the hunter with guns, and in front of them was the formidable abyss. During this teaching process, teachers and students conducted dialogues as follows:

Teacher: The “me” in the article was always a spectator. With curious eyes, “I” calmly watched the old impala die, but “I” had no regret and did nothing helpful. This reflected the ugliness of “human beings”, which was also a reflection of “human evil”. What do you think?

The first student: The hunter in the article was still merciful because he did not shoot.

The second student: The author wrote such a beautiful and moving story, which showed that he still had his regret.

The third student: As hunters, they had the need to kill their prey; otherwise their lives would not be available.

The fourth student: Wild animal hunting is a kind of illegal behavior and should be prevented.

Through the dialogues between the teachers and students, we can see that the initiative and enthusiasm of the students in the teaching activities are mobilized, and the classroom has “living” nature. This is the classroom instruction expected by education practitioners and education researchers. The success of the course lies in the unexpected dialogue between teachers and students, which endows the textbook with a new value. The dominant value of the text is the group consciousness and dedication spirit of the impala, but through the dialogues between teachers and students, they have gained a discussion about human nature. Indeed, in the dialogues between teachers and students, it is an accidental thing to transcend the value advocated in text interpretation. Most of the time, the teacher will choose to be silent or ignorant about such extra matters, who think it has the possibility to deviate from teaching goals. In fact, teaching activities are both a process of value activities and a process of value appreciation. The former refers to the realization of the determined value target. The latter refers to the unexpected value harvesting activity of the teaching process when teachers and students jointly carry out the activities of value conception, value adjustment, and value realization (Hu 2015: 17).

Distinguish Between Good and Evil in Moral Conflict in the Way of Moralization

Kohlberg, the founder of Modern Moral Cognitive Development, raised the question of “moral dilemmas”. He carried out the moral education through the creation of a moral dilemma. Especially in the current social pluralistic value orientation, teachers often encounter value conflict events in teaching. If teachers can deal with these conflicts in time and correctly, students will have their own perception, which will enhance their moral emotion and improve their moral behavior. Of course, the value conflict in classroom teaching is not only the accidental value

conflict in the teaching process, but also the teacher's preset teaching situation which contains value conflict. During the course of teaching, when the teacher and the student discussed the story of captain, the following scene happened. When the passenger ship was hit and sank by the "Marie", a big ship, the captain commanded passengers and crew out orderly, and eventually he sank into the sea with the ferry. The purpose of this article is to praise the captain's noble spirit of dedication and sacrifice (Wang 2008: 3).

Teacher: Finally, the captain did not jump into the skiff to go with the others. What do you think of this behavior?

The first student: I think what the captain did was respectable. If he had run for his life with the others, then he would have violated the duties of being a captain.

The second student: I think the captain's approach should not be encouraged and celebrated. Compared with the ordinary people, the state has to invest a lot of money to train an excellent captain, so his sacrifice is a great loss to the country.

The third student: The value of a man cannot be measured by money. The captain saved 60 lives with his own life. So it is worth it.

From the value guidance of the textbook itself, the values of the first student are advocated by the textbook writers and teachers. The values of the second and the third student are obviously not expected. Such as these teaching events are the value conflict problems which teachers often encounter in guiding leading values. How do teachers explain to the students who have different opinions? In the face of such conflicts of value, teachers should not judge directly. They should analyze the teaching situation and capture the meaningful education resources. Thus, further questions and discussions are raised. The formation of students' moral cognition, the promotion of moral rationality, moral emotion and belief, and the growth of virtue are also among them.

CONCLUSIONS

At present, the content, the way, and the evaluation of moral education in the school in China are confronted with the dilemma of the social life, which affects the students' emotion, attitude, and values as well as their behaviors. Therefore, moral education in the school is changed from the concept, the content, and the mode. The concept must return to the purpose of moral education. The content should be concerned about the value guidance of unexpected dialogue generated in the text advocacy of value interpretation. The way of sermons should advocate the discrimination of good and evil in the moral conflict, and the training behavior in the empathy.

Note

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