

Moral Values and Ethics in School Education - A Practical Approach

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Article Info

Received: June 8, 2023

Revised: June 25, 2023

Published: December 31, 2023

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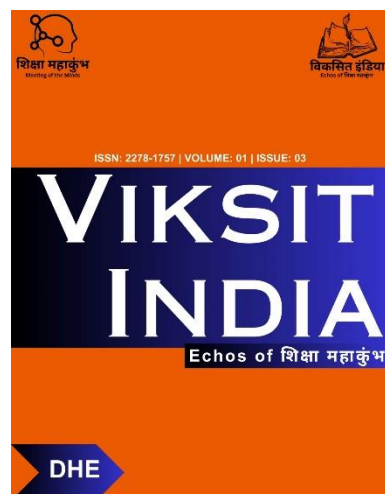
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DOI:

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ISSN: 2278-1757

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Introduction

'No one was ever really taught by another; each of us has to teach himself. The external teacher offers only the suggestion which rouses the internal teacher to work to understand things.'

- Swami Vivekananda

The dictionary meaning of moral is the inner strength to do what we believe to be right. Ethics refers to moral principles that govern an individual's behaviour. Throughout history, moral values and ethics have been an integral component of our education system since the Vedic era. The source that can help introduce moral values and ethics into school education or which is succinctly termed VBE (Value Based Education) has now been made an integral part of the New Education Policy 2020. MHRD (now Ministry of Education) set up National Resource Centres for Value Education (N.R.C.V.E) in institutes of higher Education quite some time back. Some other steps, books related to the spread of moral values and ethics have been brought out by many agencies like NCERT by way of helping the schools to spread moral values and ethics.

Today's presentation focuses on the approach taken by St Vivekanand Millennium School (SVMS) to incorporate moral values and ethics into the school curriculum, considering technological advancements, pedagogical techniques and psychological factors. Evidently, teachings and preachings of Holy Trio: Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Maa Sarada and Swami Vivekananda, our apostle, serve as guiding principles at SVMS, contributing to our distinctive approach in inculcating morals and ethics.

"Education is manifestation of perfection already in man." Says Swami Vivekananda

A youth of this Internet Age, has access to incredible amount of information about everything in this world, but irony lies in the fact that he is utterly ignorant about himself. He has knowledge, but lacks wisdom. In this context one is reminded of Swami Vivekananda's words: "Excess knowledge and power, without holiness, makes human beings devil".

Indeed, sharpening of the intellect should be accompanied by the sublimation of feelings and motives. The society should be firmly rooted in ethics and guided by moral values.

As dedicated educators, at our school we firmly believe in shaping students into successful and responsible citizens. It is our unwavering mission to harmoniously blend our strong cultural fundamentals of the gurukul heritage and other traditional systems with advanced modern learning tools, thus providing a new direction in education. Through this fusion, we forge a new path in education, one that not only impart knowledge, but also nurture spiritual growth.

While, there are a number of books and software available in the market to promote value education, but we have recognized the pressing need to integrate value education with the existing system of academic framework. Values, therefore, occupy a vital position in our educational paradigm. As we acknowledge their indispensable role in shaping the well-being of our future.

The impact of a single lecture delivered by a skilled orator may not bring the desired results in character development. So, it is felt that continuous encouragement and training is required to create a character-moulding lasting impact for assimilation of good qualities and habits. To achieve this, we design systematic periodic hearings, classes, activities and daily practices to ensure a lasting impact.

Objective

The objective in imparting moral values and ethics is to

- Inculcate higher values like truthfulness, patriotism and self-sacrifice in our students.
- Develop in them the spirit of enquiry, empower them with independent thinking and instil the ideal of science as a form of worship.
- Value kindness, tolerance and non-violence

- Engage in environment friendly practices
- Live in peace and harmony with others specially those who differ from them.
- Sense of duty towards parents, teachers and society.
- Aspire to be a decent human being and a valuable member of his family, neighbourhood and nation.

Implementation

Greet each other: Our School strongly believes in teaching Indian traditional values to our students. As a result, the tradition of saying NAMASTE while wishing others is being followed in the school since 2005. Students and staff members greet each other by saying NAMASTE. On asking how are they, the reply is “I am Happy and Healthy”. On Wednesdays all greet each other with JAI HIND further emphasizing our patriotism.

Association with Ramakrishna mission: We are affiliated centre of UPRKVBPP under the aegis of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, Belur that strive to give a practical shape to Swami Vivekananda’s idea of education. The idea is to blend higher values and ethics with formal education. RKM, New Delhi, that has conceived and supervised the development of Awakened Citizens Programme concerning the unique idea of being proud citizens of a great nation. Under this programme, regular classes and activities are organized for value education for the students of classes 7 and above.

Meditation: To promote spiritual development among our students, the school follows the teachings of the apostle Swami Vivekanand and each day starts with yoga and meditation sessions. Daily there is session of meditation of 5 mins. for the students followed by mantra Chidanand Roopam Shivoham Shivoham. Remarkable improvement has been observed in students’ focus and attentiveness as a result of these meditation sessions.

Meditation Cum Introspection Room: A Meditation cum Introspection room has been set up for the spiritual and personal growth of the students. As the school believes that the students should not be punished physically by making them stand out of the class rather, they are sent to the meditation room where they have the opportunity to reflect on their mistakes and contemplate self-improvement. The meditation room has a very positive ambiance.

Amanashrya- The Value Tree: To bring the student closer to the natural environment and make them feel that nature is their permanent friend, a Mango tree where placards of different values are hung on different branches. They depict the virtues of Gandhiji and has been named as Amanashrya in the school premises.

The objective of the whole project is to inculcate in the students Values like truthfulness, cleanliness, compassion, Patience, service, unity and make them aware about teachings of Gandhiji about peace and harmony. The students come & sit under the tree and recite; any prayer they believe in that makes them calm & relaxed.

Matri-Pitri Poojan Diwas: The school celebrates Matri-Pitri Poojan Diwas on 14th February i.e., Valentine Day every year in order to imbibe the feelings of indebtedness among children towards their parents and teachers. Children

worship their parents as we do when we perform pooja of Gods and Goddesses. Parents shower their blessings on the children by garlanding them. Children recite prayers for their parents and pray to Almighty god for their healthy and long life.

Food is given due respect/ importance: All students recite Bhojan Mantra before they take lunch and they generally follow this at their homes also. They are been motivated; to avoid watching TV while taking meal at homes. Some of the students make their parents to follow them with these practices.

Vivekanand Chhatr Utthan Manch: A project with the name of ‘Vivekanand Chhatr Utthan Manch’ has been working in the school with an aim “Shiv Gyan Se Jeev Seva”. Under this project, the students collect charity through various activities by the school. The money collected through this charity is utilized in helping the needy children & for the benefit & support of school children. Every year nearly 100 Blankets are received from RKMA before winter start. Students bring one Fist (muthi) chawal and dal each, collect it in one big utensil and they make packets of 1 kg each. They go to slum areas and distribute both the Blankets and Ann to poor needy people by their hands.

Students’ mange under guidance of teachers annual Manav Kalyan Shivir- Blood Donation, Eye & Dental Checkup, Cancer Detection, Free Homeopathy, Ayurveda camps. It also polishes the inner qualities of students like entrepreneurship, public speaking, a feeling of compassion altruism.

Panch Kosha: Curriculum as per the National Education Policy-2020 is strictly followed suitably linking it with Panch Kosha Philosophy of Education. Pancha Kosha is five different layers of our human growth and evolution. These five cardinal sheaths work together in a holistic manner. These are: Annamaya Kosha, Pranamaya Kosha, Manomaya Kosha, Vijyanamaya Kosha and Anandmaya Kosha. An effort has been made to ideally connect the philosophy to the curriculum so that the process of man-making happens unknowingly and coherently.

Regular Interaction: Students get regular opportunities to interact with people of high intellect. They are generally Monks from RKMA and learned/successful personalities from society.

Social interaction: Social Interaction is an integral part of the curriculum. For this, Various trips are organized. These trips are planned according to the class. Places visited during these visits are orphanage, slum area, villages, museum, railway station, CSIO, parks etc.

Library on Wheels: During COVID made students of our school and slum areas Books from Library. Still go regularly visit slum and villages for health and awareness activities. This project had National TV coverage on DD.

Khadi Clothes: All students and specially staff members are motivated to do purchasing from Khadi and Kargha udog at regular intervals. To have pride wearing Khadi, Principal (me) and good number staff members come to school wearing Khadi cloth attire, every Wednesday.

Silence Period: At the end of the day, we have the silence period after blow of “bigul”. Silence is observed to enable the students to reach out their inner self and thus are able to shut out of the material world.

The concept of total wellness recognizes that every thought, word and behaviour affect our greater health and wellbeing and we in turn are affected not only emotionally but also physically and spiritually.

Celebrating Festivals: Festivals of all religions are celebrated in school. A special emphasis is given about its scientific and social benefit of it; on self and the society are shared with students. Students are liberated from only rituals.

GENESIS: Under these sessions are conducted for the Parents for effective parenting and have good family culture/environment.

Promote Indian Art and culture: In association with Haryana Kala Parishad, SPIC MACAY, Sanskar Bharti, etc regular activities are conducted for the students.

Guru Varta: Enacting the stories from Panchtantra/ moral value in the Assemblies on stage and later discussion are regular feature.

CALA: Campus as an Aid of Learning and Application: The following are part of our school campus:

Statue of Maa Saraswati, Panchvati – Five Palm trees with statue of Lord Buddha in centre, students read the hand written painted knowledge and information facts while moving in corridors, yellow lines marked on the floors of corridors – develop habit to walk on left side, fixed separate dustbin for Bio and Non Bio degradable waste, Installed portrait of Swami Vivekanand above each Smart board and Tiranga (National Flag) in each classroom. The school campus houses 100+ varieties of plants and trees. A YouTube creative is made where one can see their local,

biological name as well as their other aspects. The Aquariums in school are labelled with “Our Aquatic friends”.

Antmavalokan: (Know your True self)- 3 mirrors installed at a place each separately depicting Swami+ Vivek+ Anand. The school believes in perennial wisdom teaching to the students. The concept of 3 mirrors is an attempt to ponder over the most essential need of working on oneself. So, there prevails a **Swami Vivekanand in all of us, all we have is to realize our True Self.**

Evaluation

- Imparting moral values has helped growing children to have a better understanding of their own self and of Indian civilization.
- Students have sensitised about values like truth, purity, unselfishness, selfless services, dedication, tenacious hard work and respect for all religions.
- The values of obedience discipline, civic sense, hard work, sense of duty towards parents, teachers and other elders have been inculcated among the students
- Parents cooperation as joint evaluators is always sought.
- Students feel some fresh air among the monotonous, routine-bound syllabus-burdened life.
- Importance of discipline, duty, concentration, obeying and helping parents and elders have been learnt by the students.
- The moral values and ethics have inspired the student and have given ideal to their lives.

We have not stopped here. We are continuously in search of tools of advanced technology, especially international technology promoting parallel opportunities for self-learning in groups, preferably outside the classroom. In fact, we are always in search of positive opportunities to translate the same into action for the welfare of the children and better growth of the society.

THANKS

In service of students always