

Some Moral Issues in School Education in India

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Abstract:

Ancient Educational Systems in India and Other Civilizations emphasize holistic development and education as values. For example, the Gurukul system always focuses on educating students not only in academic subjects but also in ethics, morals and life practices. Teachers play an important role in developing students' character and character, ensuring responsibility, respecting elders, and valuing cultural heritage. However, as time passed, this tradition disappeared. The current education system sees education as a commodity. For this reason, there are big differences between private schools and public schools in terms of education quality. Moral education was restored and the study of character and behaviour was restricted to private schools. The high cost and selective access to these schools limits equitable educational opportunities for those who are already socially and economically disadvantaged. These socioeconomic differences can have a significant impact on a child's education and academic success. In the first part of this article I will try to analyze some important justice issues related to schools, then in the second part I will try to offer some ways to reduce the above ethical problems.

Keywords: Education, Primary Education, Ethics, Morality, Values

Introduction:

Historically, education has not been accepted by the majority and has been regarded by many as a special gift to the few. The elite and the rich. Therefore, educated people are considered wise and intelligent people, and they are supposed to be polite, polite, courteous and polite. On the other hand, people who do not have technical training are often seen as bad people, ignorant and with bad behaviour. This misconception leads to the perception that uneducated people are more likely to commit crimes. However, it is important to understand that this belief is based on social opinion and prejudice rather than concrete evidence. Although education has positive effects on behaviour and morality, it does not guarantee that everyone who is educated will be moral and everyone who is uneducated will be complicit in crime. As previously mentioned, behaviour is influenced by many factors, including health and economics, culture, family upbringing, and personal circumstances. The organization's understanding of learning and behaviour continues over time. The recognition that education is a fundamental right for all people, regardless of social background, has led to the promotion of vocational training for many people. Inequalities exist among students due to economic, racial and family backgrounds. Schools play an important role in shaping children's futures, and if this inequality is not adequately addressed it can lead to students not being able to impact the future. The impact of socioeconomic status on educational outcomes is well documented. Children from low-income families may face additional challenges that impact education, such as food insecurity, lack of family resources, or limited access to advanced education. These conditions can affect their ability to focus, participate, and succeed in school.

Unfortunately, in some cases, schools may not have the resources or support necessary to address these inequities. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds may face punishment rather than providing help or using alternatives, exacerbating the problem and creating a sense of failure. The point that needs to be presented here is common sense and educational understanding. Education is more than acquiring knowledge and skills to advance in business or pass exams. It is designed to create imagination, adapt to a changing world and open the mind to new possibilities. Moreover, education is not limited to intellectual development only; It involves purification of the soul and self-awareness that can lead to personal growth and fulfilment. When education focuses on social, moral and spiritual development, it becomes a powerful force that makes people's lives better and more productive. It is necessary not only for financial support, but also for the social, moral and spiritual strengthening of the understanding that real education should contribute to the clean drinking health of people. This broad approach to learning can bring positive change to individuals and communities, promoting clarity and purpose in life. Education plays an important role in creating peace and harmony by developing the potential of all people. It encourages the development of many characteristics of the person, such as understanding, compassion, imagination, creativity and morality. These qualities lead not only to personal development, but also to the development of the whole person. Education is not just a way to gain knowledge and skills; It is a change that carries people and society from darkness to light, from ignorance to understanding, from survival to life with purpose and dignity.

However, it's important to acknowledge that comparing ancient education systems to modern ones can be complex due to various societal, technological, and cultural changes over time. In the present education system, there are some valid concerns regarding its narrow focus on academic achievements and standardized testing, which may lead to neglecting other essential aspects of development. The emphasis on rote learning and the pressure to perform well in exams can sometimes overshadow the importance of character building and real-life skills.

Nevertheless, it is essential to recognize that there have also been positive changes in modern education systems. Contemporary pedagogy often emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills, which are valuable for navigating the complexities of the modern world. Additionally, there is a growing recognition of the need to incorporate values education, social-emotional learning, and ethics into the curriculum. Efforts are being made to promote a more holistic approach to education, including the integration of life skills, character education, and values-based learning. Many educational institutions are trying to strike a balance between academic excellence and the overall development of students' personalities. While there is room for improvement, it is essential to appreciate that education is an evolving field, and societies are continually learning from their past experiences. By combining the best elements of both ancient and modern education systems, it is possible to create an inclusive and comprehensive approach that prepares students not only for academic success but also for becoming responsible, compassionate, and well-rounded individuals.

Morality or ethics are branches of philosophy that deal with questions of right and wrong, good and bad, and how individuals and societies should conduct themselves. The term "ethics" is derived from the Greek word "ethos," which translates to "character" or "custom." Aristotle, the ancient Greek philosopher, made significant contributions to the field of ethics. In his work "Nicomachean Ethics," he explored the nature

of virtue and what it means to live a good and fulfilling life. For Aristotle, ethics was not merely about following moral or religious rules, nor was it solely a matter of legal compliance. Instead, he argued that ethics was about cultivating virtues that lead to “*eudaimonia*”, often translated as "happiness" or "flourishing." Aristotle identified three key moral virtues as a foundation for living a virtuous life:

Temperance (or moderation): This virtue involves finding the right balance and avoiding excess or deficiency in one's actions and desires.

Courage: Courage is the virtue of facing fears and challenges with bravery and fortitude.

Justice: Justice encompasses treating others fairly and giving them their due, ensuring that both individuals and society as a whole are treated justly.

According to Aristotle, possessing these virtues leads to practical wisdom, which allows individuals to make well-reasoned and morally sound decisions in various situations. He believed that cultivating these virtues was essential for personal and social well-being. Aristotle's ethical framework remains influential in philosophy and continues to be studied and discussed by ethicists and moral philosophers today. His emphasis on virtues and the development of character as the foundation for ethical behaviour still holds relevance in contemporary discussions on ethics and moral education.

Part: I

Some significant concerns about the decline in character and moral values in the education system:

There are some significant concerns about the decline in character and moral values in the education system, not just in India, but also in many other parts of the world. The expansion of the education system has undoubtedly brought about positive changes and increased access to education, but it has also come with its challenges. There are several factors that may contribute to the decline in ethical values within the education system:

1. **Commercialization and Materialism:** The growing commercialization of education, where profit becomes a primary focus, can lead to a devaluation of ethical principles. When educational institutions prioritize monetary gains over character development and ethical education, the overall values of the education system may erode.
2. **Corruption:** Corruption within the education system can have detrimental effects on the values it imparts. When corruption becomes pervasive, it undermines trust and respect for ethical conduct, creating a negative influence on students and educators alike.
3. **Privatization:** The privatization of education, while offering more options for schooling, can sometimes prioritize competition and market-driven practices over fostering ethical values. In some cases, privately-run institutions might prioritize profits over the holistic development of students.
4. **Teacher Absence or Disengagement:** Teachers play a crucial role in shaping students' values and character. When there is a lack of dedicated and motivated teachers who prioritize ethics, moral values may not be adequately transmitted to students.
5. **Political Interference:** Undue political interference in educational matters can lead to compromised standards and an erosion of ethics in decision-making processes.

Moreover, addressing ethical issues through essays and discussions can lead to a deeper understanding of the complexities involved and promote a culture of ethical awareness and responsibility within the

educational community. Educational institutions and teachers plays a crucial role in fostering ethical values and promoting ethical behaviour among students. By openly addressing and discussing ethical issues, they can help create a positive learning environment that values integrity, empathy, and social responsibility.

So, let us see that, what are some common ethical issues in education that schools and other educational institutions face? While there are too many to list in a single blog, some are more prominent than others. These are some common ones that every teacher likely has faced in their classroom. To addressing ethical issues in education is crucial for maintaining the integrity and quality of the education system. Both students and teachers can be directly involved in ethical dilemmas, and some issues may arise due to systemic factors. Some common ethical issues in education are the following:

1. **Cheating and Academic Dishonesty:** Ethical concerns related to cheating, plagiarism, and academic dishonesty among students undermine the principles of fairness and honesty in education.
2. **Teacher-Student Relationships:** Maintaining appropriate boundaries in teacher-student relationships is essential to prevent potential abuses of power and conflicts of interest.
3. **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities:** Ensuring equal access to education for all students, regardless of their background or abilities, is an ethical imperative.
4. **Privacy and Data Security:** Protecting students' privacy and ensuring the security of their personal data in an increasingly digital educational environment is critical.
5. **Discrimination and Bias:** Addressing issues of discrimination and bias in schools is essential to promote a fair and inclusive learning environment.
6. **Social Media Use and Cyberbullying:** Ethical concerns arise when students or teachers engage in cyberbullying or misuse social media platforms.
7. **Socioeconomic Disparities:** Ethical considerations surround the provision of quality education and resources in economically disadvantaged communities.
8. **Teacher Professionalism:** Maintaining professional standards and ethics among teachers is crucial for creating a positive and respectful learning environment.
9. **Inadequate Funding and Resource Allocation:** Ethical questions may arise when educational institutions face financial constraints and resource allocation challenges that affect the quality of education provided.

Apart from the above issues there are some very crucial ethical problems which we cannot avoid in any way. This include:

Social Diversity and Grading Exams: In multicultural countries like India and neighbourhoods, it is vital for every place of education, especially public schools and colleges, to aim for ethnic and social equality in what is offered. All the primary schools could organize value oriented multicultural festivals and ethnic sports to make such students feel included. The significance of ethnic and social equality in educational settings, especially in multicultural countries and neighbourhoods. Ensuring that every student feels included and valued in the educational environment is essential for fostering a sense of belonging and promoting a positive learning experience. Students those who comes from ethnic minorities and diverse backgrounds should not feel left out. The traditional reliance on exams and tests as the primary method of evaluation may not always provide an accurate representation of a student's knowledge and abilities. Furthermore, it can perpetuate inequality, as some students may struggle with exam-related stress or have

different learning styles that are not adequately addressed by conventional assessments. Some key factors contributing to the declining ethical values in the Indian education system include:

1. **Focus on Materialistic Goals:** With modernization and globalization, there has been an increasing emphasis on material wealth, career success, and individual achievement. This focus on materialistic goals may overshadow the importance of ethical values and social responsibility.
2. **Lack of Values-Based Education:** The educational system's primary focus on academic achievements and career-oriented goals may result in the neglect of values-based education. Schools may not give enough attention to moral and ethical development.
3. **Cultural Shifts:** The influence of western culture and consumerism may lead to a shift away from traditional values and ethics, contributing to a decline in moral standards.
4. **Rise of Competition:** The competitive nature of the education system, where students are often encouraged to outperform their peers, may lead to unethical practices like cheating and academic dishonesty.
5. **Commercialization of Education:** Privatization and the commercialization of education can sometimes prioritize profits over the holistic development of students, leading to a neglect of ethical education.
6. **Inadequate Role Models:** A lack of strong role models and ethical leaders in society and the education system can make it challenging for students to develop a strong ethical foundation.
7. **Corruption and Unethical Practices:** Instances of corruption and unethical behaviour within the education system can set negative examples for students and erode trust in institutions.

Rapidly spreading corruption: Corruption in the education sector is a deeply concerning problem that can have far-reaching consequences for the availability and quality of education. Corruption in education not only erodes the integrity of the education system but also affects students' access to quality education and equitable opportunities. It creates an uneven playing field, where those with financial resources or connections may gain unfair advantages over others. Corruption in education can manifest in various ways, such as:

1. **Bribery and Illegal Fees:** Students and their families may be subjected to bribes or illegal fees for admissions, examinations, or other privileges within educational institutions.
2. **Academic Fraud:** Academic fraud includes cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of dishonesty in academic assessments.
3. **Teacher Salary Withholding:** Corruption can lead to the withholding of teacher salaries or misallocation of funds meant for education.
4. **Preferential Treatment and Placements:** Corruption may result in preferential treatment for certain students or teachers, compromising the fairness and merit-based nature of educational processes.
5. **Charging for Unnecessary Tutoring:** Some institutions or teachers may exploit students by charging fees for tutoring sessions that should be covered in regular classroom teaching.

Privatization of educational institutes: Privatization is another major cause for the declining ethical values in education system. In the recent decade in India, privatization of educational institutions has emerged in several forms. Indian Government have been allowing and encouraging private authority to open self-financing private institutions with recognition, which may be termed as commercial private education institutions in this present scenario. Privatization of education has become a significant trend in

various countries, including India, in recent years. While privatization can offer increased access to education and diverse options, it also comes with challenges that can impact the ethical dimensions of education. Some of the issues related to privatization of education that can lead to ethical concerns include:

1. **Commercialization of Education:** The shift towards privatization can sometimes prioritize profits over the holistic development of students and the ethical aspects of education. The focus on financial gains may overshadow the educational mission.
2. **Access and Equity:** Privatization may lead to increased disparities in access to quality education. Higher fees and costs can limit access for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, affecting social equity.
3. **Quality of Education:** The pursuit of profits may compromise the quality of education in some private institutions, leading to substandard facilities, unqualified teachers, and inadequate resources.
4. **Corruption and Bribery:** Privatization can create opportunities for corruption, where students or their families may need to resort to bribes or illegal fees to gain admission or other privileges.
5. **Lack of Regulatory Oversight:** Some private institutions may lack sufficient regulatory oversight, making it challenging to enforce ethical standards and ensure accountability.
6. **Teacher Employment Practices:** Private institutions may adopt hiring practices that prioritize cost-effectiveness over teacher qualifications, leading to a compromise in the quality of education.

Part: II

Conclusion: The present education system seems like factories which is producing many literate persons but they are unsuccessful in the struggle of life. In this present scenario, the aspect of values and morals is completely neglected and to this generation, education means how to earn money or getting job. That is the reason behind the problem in our educational system, i.e., this attitude has increased many perpetual problems in Indian education system. Nowadays, this is common to see that most of the unsocial and criminal activities are being committed by well-educated new generation. There is a lack confidence towards the relationship between teacher and students. Most of the students lack humanitarian attitude towards other persons, family, society and the nation. Therefore, this is the high time to rethink about ancient education system in India.

Thus, there is no doubt that plenty of ethical issues in education in India exist today. Whether we talk about public or private education centres, ethical issues like these and more need to be tackled. There are some other issues related to ethics, which include topics like sex education, drug tests, value education, teacher evaluation, and more. Each and every teacher should be well trained, especially to handle the nursery as well as primary level children and they need to be aware of such issues so that they are able to tackle them in their classes at the very beginning. To tackle some of these ethical dilemmas in education, all things that need to be done are treating children from diverse backgrounds in an equal fashion, employing a second chance policy where applicable and grading work fairly are. Apart from this, the factors such as social environment, upbringing, cultural norms, economic conditions, and individual personalities also influence behaviour.

It is essential for educational institutions to adopt more inclusive and equitable practices. To address these issues and promote ethical values in the education system, it is vital to focus on value-orientation and

moral development. This can be achieved through various means, here are some potential steps that schools can take:

1. **Targeted Support Programs:** Implementing targeted support programs that provide additional resources and assistance to students from disadvantaged backgrounds can help bridge the gap. This could include mentoring, tutoring, or access to resources like school supplies and nutritious meals.
2. **Teacher Training:** Providing training to teachers on culturally responsive teaching methods can help create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. Teachers can be better equipped to understand and address the unique challenges faced by students from diverse backgrounds. Apart from that, providing comprehensive training to educators on ethical teaching practices and emphasizing their role as moral mentors can positively influence students.
3. **Curriculum Development:** Including ethics and moral education as integral parts of the curriculum can instil values from an early age.
4. **Reducing Bias:** Schools should work to identify and reduce any biases that may affect the treatment of students based on their economic or ethnic backgrounds. Implementing fair and consistent disciplinary policies is essential.
5. **Community Engagement:** Building strong partnerships with families and the local community can create a support network for students and help address the challenges they face outside of school. Engaging parents, communities, and stakeholders in the education system can create a collective commitment to instilling ethical values.
6. **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):** Integrating SEL into the curriculum can help students develop essential skills like self-awareness, empathy, and resilience, which can support their overall well-being and academic success.
7. **Access to Technology:** Ensuring access to technology and the internet for all students can provide opportunities for learning beyond the classroom and can be particularly beneficial for those with limited resources at home.
8. **Institutional Culture:** Fostering an environment that promotes honesty, integrity, and empathy within educational institutions can help shape students' characters positively.
9. **Research and Philosophy:** Encouraging philosophical thinking, research, and discussions on ethical dilemmas can help students develop critical thinking and a strong moral compass.

Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive effort from all stakeholders, including policymakers, educators, parents, and society as a whole. Some potential solutions to counter the decline in ethical values in the Indian education system include:

1. **Integrating Ethics in the Curriculum:** Incorporating ethics and values-based education as an integral part of the curriculum can help students develop a strong moral compass.
2. **Promoting Ethical Leadership:** Encouraging ethical leadership in educational institutions and society can inspire students to follow ethical paths.
3. **Teacher Training and Professional Development:** Providing teachers with training on ethics and moral education can enable them to be effective mentors and role models for students.
4. **Emphasizing Holistic Education:** Promoting a balanced approach to education that considers not only academic excellence but also character development and ethical values.
5. **Fostering a Culture of Integrity:** Creating an educational environment that values integrity, honesty, and respect for others can contribute to a more ethical society.

6. **Engaging in Moral and Ethical Discussions:** Encouraging open discussions and debates on moral and ethical issues can help students develop critical thinking and ethical decision-making skills.

Therefore, transforming the education system to prioritize ethical values and character development alongside academic achievements can help create not only educated individuals but also responsible and ethical citizens who contribute positively to society and the world. It is essential to recognize that promoting ethical values in education is not a one-time effort but an ongoing process that requires the collective commitment of society, educators, policymakers, and parents. By prioritizing ethical education and value-based learning, we can work towards creating a more compassionate, responsible, and morally conscious society. On the other hand, addressing educational inequalities requires a multi-faceted approach, involving collaboration between policymakers, educators, families, and communities. By actively working to create more inclusive and supportive learning environments, schools can help level the playing field and provide all students with equal opportunities to succeed academically and beyond.

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