

DISCOVERING THE CONCEPT OF RELIGIOUS MORAL VALUES FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

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Abstract

Young learners need facilities to rise and develop their all personality aspects. In the moral aspect development as an effort for character building, it is necessary to have three components within character building. Those are moral knowledge, moral conception, and moral action. The aim of moral education is preparing young learners in the very beginning to develop their behaviors which are based on the principles of religious and moral value. By knowing, understanding, and implementing the principles of truth value, justice, kindness, and amelioration so that they can live well in the society.

Keywords: Religious, Moral Values, Young Learners

INTRODUCTION

Education for young learners is an education which is given to facilitate the development of students' character building and personality aspects. It means that young learners are given such opportunities to develop their maximum personality and potential. Therefore, it is necessary to have activities to support various aspects development such as cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical, and motoric aspect.

Young learners are learners who are in the kindergarten school aging 2-6 years old. This age is called as golden age since this is the right time to maximize all their capabilities and talents. In this age, young learners tend to be egocentric. Therefore, teachers need to teach them religious moral values with full attention and affection.

Lickona (1992) emphasized the importance of three components of good character. Those are: 1) knowing the moral knowledge; 2) moral conception; 3) moral action. The development of young learners' character within moral knowledge is emphasized good and bad behaviors, without any detail reasons. Moral knowledge refers to culture, habit, values, and rule of life. Therefore, moral values are used to be a behavior standard. In this context, a teacher plays an important role to have and to understand moral values in society which are based on local wisdom. For instance, one is forbidden to lie because it is a sin. Thus, young learners need to be taught why a lie is prohibited.

The moral development for young learners is relatively limited. A young learner has not been able yet to master abstract values related to good and bad behaviors. However, religious moral values should be introduced in the very beginning, so a young learner can be differentiate which one is right and which one is wrong and can do what have been ruled in their religion.

DISCUSSION

Introducing religious, moral, discipline, and affection values implemented within behavior program at kindergarten school is continually conducted and is practiced in the daily life. Therefore, those aspects can be optimally developed. In order to achieve those aspects, it should be practiced regularly in daily life activities. By learning in the very beginning, young learners will then live according to society norms. For this reason, teachers need to guide by giving religious moral values for young learners at school.

Owen, in the early 1800s assumed that education for young learners is a part of establishing a society as the one. In addition, the condition where they live, and how they are protected are also part of society. Corporal punishment may be thought as a bad education for some parents. Teachers are required to appropriately teach their young learners without any corporal punishment.

Based on explanation above, it is a teacher's duty in the kindergarten to give an education according to religious moral values implemented in the society. Behavior guidance should be taught without any corporal punishment. The punishment should be consistent with implemented moral values. Therefore, a good education for young learners at school will be absolute for fulfillment of children's right to a proper education.

Education which is suitable with moral values for young learners is guiding them to a proper behavior according to what have been ruled in the society. This guidance refers to a positive process to develop a good behavior. Discipline is not only about obedience and control, but also about having a proper behavior, being an independent learner, and having a confidence. There are some strategies to guide young learner's behavior. Those are (1) implementing constructive stages; (2) having confidence related to behavior guidance; (3) knowing and practicing activities according to young learner's development and needs; (4) guiding young learners to build a new habit, to empower them, to encourage them to reach their dreams, to be a good model for them, to create an educated learning atmosphere, to build a good partnership with their parents and environment; (5) knowing and appreciating what should be accepted by young learners; (6) implementing conflict management to young learners.

Moral intelligence will be seen from a young learner's behavior. Smart young learners are not only those who are good in the academic but also those who know how to behave to others; appreciating what others do. Moral intelligence cannot be reached only by obeying the rules and learning abstract discussion at school, but also learning how to behave based on the value that is believed to be right; selecting the proper things from what have been seen and what have been heard.

Since the teachers have a responsibility to teach a good behavior to young learners, so they must have a deep knowledge of appropriate religious moral values. Moreover, they should be able to develop moral intelligence of young learners. This is the required competence that should be had by the teachers of young learners. They have to be able to have knowledge and understanding; and be able to be a model for their students.

According to Wiyani, the development of young learner's moral value is the process of how young learner differentiates which behavior is right to do and which one is forbidden to do based on particular norms. While the development of religion is referred to the development of any behaviors that should be done and avoided based on one's belief. Therefore, the development of moral values and religion can be done together because moral values come from religion values and do not contradict it. Basically, if one has done according to the required religious moral values, then he or she will behave based on universal moral values.

The development of moral and religion for young learners can be divided into three aspects:

- a) Cognitive aspect. It is related to the ability of young learners to know appropriate behaviors according to their belief. This ability can teach them what is good based on the religion they believe.
- b) Affective aspect. It is related to the ability of young learners to feel and to love the appropriate behaviors according to their belief. This ability can teach them to have a care and love to society based on the religion they believe.
- c) Behavioral aspect. It is related to the ability of young learners to determine which behavior should be done and which behavior should be avoided according to their belief. This ability can motivate them to be consistent on doing the good behaviors based on the norms.

While teaching religious values to young learners, there are some problems since they still cannot think an abstract idea or unseen thing such as God, Angel, Satan, Jannah, and Jahannam. Here, the ability to teach and give understanding to young learners is important. Related to the concept of God, F. Oser proposed five stages of young learner's perception towards God.

- a) First stage, God is physically powerful
- b) Second stage, God is the One who gives prosperity and goodness

- c) Third stage, God is the closest Friend
- d) Fourth stage, God is the One who creates the rule of law
- e) Fifth stage, God is the One who rules the moral values

As time goes by, young learners will be able to understand the concept of God appropriately. It is expected that daily life activities and models given will be beneficial for young learners.

Yusuf (2008) revealed that moral development for young learners can be taught through some ways: 1) direct education; through understanding delivered by parents and teachers; 2) identification; doing exactly what they see such as appearance and behavior from parents, teachers, and idols; 3) trial; try to do and improve moral values that they have been learnt. The behaviors which result to compliment will continuously do, and vice versa.

Successful religious moral education will influence to successive character building. It depends on awareness, understanding, attention, and commitment towards many educational parties. Kilpatrick reported: “one reason why one cannot behave well although he or she understands about that behavior is because he or she used to not doing it. Therefore, character building for young learners should be taught through real activities, not too theoretically.

Related to those aspects, below are tips for teachers to teach moral values to young learners.

- a) Establishing consistent and appropriate rules for young learners
- b) Appreciating young learners’ opinions and knowing what they need
- c) Having effective communication with young learners
- d) Using clear statements about what should be done by young learners
- e) Explaining the impacts if they do not stop their bad behaviors
- f) Educating them not to lie and explaining why
- g) Reminding them with appropriate ways

Muhammad Takdir Ilahi stated that introducing moral values which are based on religious values will lastly be primordial step to develop moral values for young learners. It influences positively towards their contemplation to understand substantial meaning of religious teachings. Therefore, they will be able to have high respect, kindness, brave to others, ready to face reality, and emphatic to face problems.

Moreover, the significance education for young learners can be applied by: firstly, through the concept of education which contains universal values, it is an understanding to comprehend the meaning of substantial religious teachings. Educational process includes not only cultural transformation value process, but also the development itself. Secondly, transformation process here means that it is a change, forming a better generation from one to another. Education will form creative individual who will continuously develop cultural scope.

Based on description above, education for young learners as a pleasant place to learn for young learners needs some parties to do all the responsibilities. Therefore, every party involved within the school such as teachers, students, headmaster, parents, and stakeholders should have the standardized moral values. In this case, it is necessary to create school rules. These rules are an accepted instruction which aims to control any individual behavior in the school, so that safe environment will be ensured. In addition, it is expected that operational principles at school can control bad behavior and promote good behavior to students.

Generally, one’s behavior is based on moral values which he or she believes. Necessary values for young learners are truth, justice, humanity, and advancement so these values can assist their development. According to Subur, education values are the efforts to form one’s manner and behavior. In line with this, Smith and Spranger stated that moral values affect one’s behavior and manner.

Hermawan (1972) stated, “...value is neither taught nor caught, it is learnt”. That the values substance is not always taught but is learnt, explored, internalized, and made to be a part of

one's personal quality through learning process. It is needed to remind that learning process does not always happen in the classroom but in the society where various cultures are taught because we live in the cultured life.

It can be concluded that moral values is a precious thing to form young learner's character. It needs to be developed within manner and behavior. Moral values are not taught but those should be delivered through real models and should be implemented within behavior according norms and rules of society.

CONCLUSIONS

Moral values are related to one's bad and good behavior in life. Moral development for young learners should be taught by teachers to guide their behavior at school. Besides, religion is the belief which controls manner and behavior for those who believe in it. However, the implementation of religious moral values should be done without any corporal punishment for those learners who break the rule. It should be based on school principles which create the pleasant environment for learners to study and to play. For this reason, the teachers must have deep knowledge and understanding of religious moral values.

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