

A Phenomenological Study of Value (Moral) Education in a School of Kirtipur Municipality

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Abstract

This study aims to explore how teachers experience on value education particularly related to moral education of students in a public school in Kirtipur. In addition, the study explores the challenges of maintaining value education that positively and adversely imparts quality education. A qualitative research design embedding phenomenological study was used in this study. Three secondary-level teachers were interviewed for more than half an hour each. The data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The finding shows students show a wide range of moral behaviors that make the importance of value education. In addition, Teachers face certain problems related to the curriculum, social environment, and family while transmitting values to students.

Keywords: *Value education, pedagogy, school system, transformation*

Introduction

My ongoing MPhil study (A Phenomenological Study of Value (Moral) Education in a School of Kirtipur Municipality) builds on my engagement in the field of teaching and learning from the basic level school to the high school level. In addition, I reflected and was involved in teaching, pedagogical approaches, and evaluation techniques. I taught social studies and health subjects in schools in Nepal for a few years. During that period, my pedagogical experience was accompanied by the discovery of three underlying problems of the teaching and learning approaches. First, parents of school children blame teachers in the case of the study of children if the achievement was not good. It reflected to me that the school had functioned in isolation from society. The second is school teachers' backups primarily based on recitation in teaching and learning. It reflected to me that school teachers in Nepal believe banking concept of education and a culture of silence. And the third is the effects of Nepalese culture on classroom pedagogy. My interest in classroom pedagogy as a broad area of study has its roots in, and is broadly founded on, those mentioned preliminary concerns.

I dreamt of situating myself in the lived culture and tradition of research in order to raise my consciousness towards the application of the postmodern approach of writing, research, and pedagogy from a social perspective, cultural perspective, and critical perspective. It offers me an opportunity to critique my practices of teaching, learning, and research and ultimately helps me to understand who I am, what to teach, and how to teach. I have tried to link my pedagogical perceptions and practices from the early days until now, but I found myself in a dilemma. This raises a few questions in my mind to search for answers to these questions. What is value-based pedagogy in the school system in Nepal? What was my pedagogy in the past (in the school and the university) and what is my pedagogy now and what will be my pedagogy in the future? I believe that changing pedagogical practices with time and context. I think that such changes in

the practices of teaching and learning from behaviorist to constructivist or traditionalist to modernist and postmodernist constitute a paradigm shift in me to a cultural perspective of learning in relation to the value education and its importance in the school system in Nepal. Education in Nepal is highly influenced by the Vedic education system (Timilsina, 2016) In this context, people face important decisions regarding the education of their children that affect their lives. The members of diverse groups evaluate these decisions in different ways. These issues are filtered through the screens of divergent experiences, group histories, educational problems, and present situations (Tenbensen & Silwal, 2023). So far Nepalese context is considered, the nation is undergoing social, political, economic, and cultural changes. Such progressive changes demand improvement in instructional design and delivery approaches. Similarly, advances in technology have also dramatically changed the learning and teaching process and have provided new learning opportunities and access to educational resources beyond those traditionally available (Schank & Rieckmann, 2019). The debates over which direction society should go in education are not likely to be meaningful or even mutually intelligible without some understanding of the complex learning needs of socio-culturally and linguistically diverse learners in Nepal today.

A key to motivating learners to become involved in the learning process lies in understanding value education. Also, the use of learning style preferences can positively or negatively influence a learner's performance (Awla, 2014). Chen and Sun, (2012) confirmed that there has been a substantial increase in the use of instructional technology in school education over the past few years. Computer technology provides educators and learners with lots of opportunities to transform the teaching and learning process by the adoption of a wide range of features, from the most common and simple uses to the most sophisticated. Advances in technology have also dramatically changed the learning and teaching process and provided new learning opportunities and access to educational resources beyond those traditionally available in Nepal. The overuse of gazette decreases collaboration, cooperation, love, respect, or overall value education in the school system in Nepal. So, this study seeks to explore the condition of value education in schools in Nepal.

A reflective perspective is required on the importance of value education in school teaching and learning. The school system in Nepal overemphasizes content coverage, performance on standardized tests which primarily measure the lower-order thinking skills of recall and rote, and unquestioning acceptance and obedience in students, then that is what the schools will continue to produce.

Schools in Nepal adopted a popular approach to content delivery a lecture format of learning (Yadav et al., 2022). But this format does not encourage active learning or critical thinking on the part of students. So, they further say educators must give up the belief that students cannot learn the subject at hand unless the teacher covers it. In my experience, there is less focus on the thinking part in the classroom. I, as a student and as a university novice teacher, have reflected that most of the classroom activities are content-driven and have less chance to provide opportunities in value education aspects. As a result, developing value education in students is ignored.

School students are studying in a pin-drop silence classroom. They are passive and do not arise any questions to challenge thought and generate new knowledge. And also do not link the activities done in the community to the classrooms. Students do not discuss much. Learning occurs through social interaction (Hall, 2018). It helps students to go beyond the existing knowledge. As

a result, developing value education in students in school classrooms is ignored. I realized it is necessary to explore the sociocultural influences and views on value education in Nepalese school classrooms and also find possible ways to enhance critical thinking in students. With a new insight into the effects of Nepalese society. Cultural influences on school teaching and learning process in the schools of Nepal. This study enables me to thread the beads of various interests and concerns onto a single, new string of empirical studies centering on the movement towards critical school teaching and learning in the country. I am a 35-year-old woman born and grew up in the village of Arghakhanchi district, Nepal. Concerning my school life, teaching, and learning styles and practices as a school and a university teacher educator and a novice researcher, the approach adopted in this study is not rooted in value education. As a researcher and a university teacher educator, I describe my positionality as an insider in alliance with other insiders with the benefit of entering this research space with innovative views to explore value education. For this, as the author of this paper, I have seen students' behavior, the language they speak, the behavior they reflect, and how they respect peers and teachers in the public schools in Nepal. In the context of Nepal, the value is based on its own cultural, educational and philosophical bases. Moral values are rooted in religious, cultural, and traditions in Nepal. The moral values shown by the students in the schools in Nepal depend on how they grew up and what kind of rooted dogmas students faced while growing up. The main objective of the study is to explore the perspectives of students, parents, and teachers towards value in public schools in Nepal.

Methodology

This study follows an interpretivism research paradigm. I understood that there is value of multiple perspectives in this paradigm within the post-modern realm of knowledge. A paradigm is a set of overarching and interconnected assumptions about the nature of reality (Chilisa & Phatshwane, 2022). Any paradigm is built on a number of assumptions that deal with the nature of reality. A paradigm provides the largest framework within which research takes place. A qualitative research design is used in this study. A phenomenological study is carried out in this study. This study also explores the lived experiences of the author in relation to the value of education, its importance, and its challenges. Purposive sampling was used in the study. The data are collected through in-depth interviews with three teachers. Participants were selected only after sharing the research purpose with the head teacher. Participant observation was also done during the data collection. A community high school is selected located in Kirtipur municipality.

When I reached the school at 10 am in the morning before the morning assembly, I took the time of the head teacher. I shared my purpose of the visit with the head teacher and build a rapport after sharing for about half an hour. After his consent, I met one of the students in grade eight and a teacher teaching at the same level. I entered the life world in the school and motivate the respondents to share their experiences, feelings, and insights related to the value education, its importance, and challenges. Each interview was taken for more than half an hour discussing to underpin the meaning. For each interview, I took oral consent from the respondents, put a recording device in front of the respondent, and recording was started. I also noted down the gesture in my diary.

After the collection of the data in the form of recording and diary notes, it is transcribed and translated into English medium. I prepared codes, sub-themes, and themes for the translated document. The data was analyzed through thematic and verbatim approaches. The in-depth

interviews and observation records were transcribed, translated, and analyzed using verbatim and thematic content analysis. At first, I have done open coding by reading the translated documents at least five times reading, re-reading, and reviewing the transcripts while writing notes. Audio records were transcribed and translated in Nepali language, the analysis was performed in Nepali. During the data analysis and write-up of the manuscript, the original Nepali quotes were used to prevent losing meaning during translation.

Findings

Students in public schools in Nepal with diverse backgrounds have dissimilar considerations of diversity of values particularly related to moral education. It depends on the multifaceted phenomenon that is exposed to the variability of understandings, and the mission of trying to start that one clarification is accurate is never upfront. Public school teachers' understanding of the variety of values should be well-grounded rather than arbitrary. Thinking about the diverse ways in which we can value things assists researchers in seeing that we cannot unavoidably pick out a specific set of values and say these are moral values. Teachers were in dilemmas that what kind of values work in the school system. Connection is needed here. E.g. Within these core findings, I present the thematic findings in the sections below:

Traditional Mode of Values

Public school students in Nepal adopt moral education that focuses on teaching core values like responsibility, empathy, and respect for diversity. The moral values of the students and the people of the society need to be understood by the curriculum and the related stakeholders like teachers and parents. To maintain moral values among the students, the schools in Nepal adopt and implement rules and regulations within the school premises. The school system towards value education is an important aspect from the Vedic education to the Gurukul system in Nepal. Values were traditional and indigenous in the schools in Nepal. The relation between the teacher (*Gurus*) and students (*Chelas*) believed a good conduct. Students need to respect and cooperate with the teachers which is an importance of moral education. In this regard, one of the teachers said, "Students show diverse moral characters in the school. Their moral behaviors are rooted in the family background where they have grown up". While visiting the school, it is shown that students use words while calling their friends that are not accepted by the school rules. Practices of giving moral values to students by teachers during leisure time (Shrestha & Parajuli, 2019). Moral values in Nepal are practiced by our forefathers and that need to be continued by the present generation to maintain discipline in the schools in Nepal.

Students in the schools have diverse background that affect moral values. Importance of value education is needed in the schools in Nepal. Students have diverse norms, values, rules, and regulations in the community where they are living. They are grown up in different backgrounds. They behave differently. The moral values of students are different and affect moral education in the schools in Nepal (Shrestha & Gupta, 2019). In the schools in Nepal, is necessary to maintain love, respect, cooperation, and help to each other.

Students in the schools in Nepal are taught the importance of respecting their parents, teachers, and elders. The priority has been given the importance of family well-being from the time of Vedic education. The value of education was related to a part of the education and family culture of country from the ancient times. The humanistic alignment deliberates the school as an educational community in which students learn through cooperative interaction and experience.

Learning and behaviour are viewed in psychological and sociological terms, not moralistic terms. Self-discipline is relieved by strict teacher control. Character education creates schools that foster ethical responsibility (Pala, 2011). Humanistic views lead teachers to desire a democratic climate with open channels of two-way communication between pupils and teachers and increased self-determination.

Modern Perspective of Value Education

Value (particularly moral education in this article) is deeply rooted in the religion i.e., dharma which is a central concept in Hindu and Buddhist ethics. One's duty or moral obligations in various roles and relationships are based on it. Students are taught to fulfill their dharma as sons or daughters, students, and members of society. In modern time, teaching at schools need to address the scientific principles, laws, and logic that is provided by modern science. One of the school teachers said: "the importance of value education in modern education is based on the religion that we follow". Values are incorporated in activities (Halstead, 2005). Value education in the schools in Nepal is decreasing. The degree of respect, cooperation, and relation between the students and the teachers is not up to the level of our satisfaction. One of the verbatim of the science teachers regarding the value of education is value education plays a quintessential role in contributing to the holistic development of children. Without embedding values in our students, we wouldn't be able to teach them good morals, what is right, and what is wrong.

Regarding the need for value education, another teacher respondent argued the need and importance of value education in the 21st century are far more important because of the presence of technology and its harmful use. By teaching children about essential human values, we can equip them with the best digital skills and help them understand the importance of ethical behaviour and cultivating compassion. It provides students with a positive view of life and motivates them to become good human beings, help those in need, respect their community as well and become more responsible and sensible.

Overall, the non-violence and compassion in the traditional and modern education system in Nepal is an important part of value education. Ahimsa i.e., non-violence, and *Karuna* i.e., compassion are still the rooted values of Nepalese society. Such values are needed in the modern education system. Developing kindness and empathy among Nepalese children is a must in the schools in Nepal. The common voice of the teachers is inclined towards the importance of value education in the schools in Nepal. However, the degree of value education is decreasing day by day. It makes it difficult to maintain cooperation and discipline, respect each other, kindness, and helpfulness for a better school. To upgrade such as situation in relation to value education, the Nepal Government has to incorporate a curriculum related to value education in the schools in Nepal.

Discussion and Conclusion

It is found that the importance of value education in public schools in Nepal is necessary. Arguing this finding, Setyono and Widodo (2019) said that value education is a must in schools to maintain discipline. Also, another study said that value education in schools is a must to maintain law and order (Ray, Bala, & Dwivedi, 2021). Moreover, value education helps teachers and parents to fulfill their duties and responsibility (Gulec & Yalcin, 2020). The use of good language is one of the benefits of value education (Yaman & Anilan, 2021). Kołczyńska, (2020)

researched that public school teachers' understanding of the variety of values should be well-grounded rather than arbitrary (Bai, Wang, & Nie, 2021; Hall & Pulsford, 2019; Hill et al., 2021; Setyono & Widodo, 2019). Values are grounded and contextual in school-to-school as well as community-to-community. The theoretical backups of the Vedic education system in Nepal. This was supported and proved by the research carried out by a number of researchers. Values should be well-informed rather than uninformed (Bishop, 2020; Monroe, 2019; Simanjuntak, 2020). The importance of value education in the schools in Nepal is a must.

Likewise, the study argues that the humanistic alignment deliberates the school as an educational community in which students learn through cooperative interaction and experience. This argument is linked with the importance of value education is immensely felt in the schools in Nepal. Toropova, Myrberg, and Johansson, (2021) researched that people cut off their time need values. One interesting finding is that the respondents started to change their appearance while talking about the importance of value education. It is now declining. Wigfield and Eccles, (2020) said values are missing by people of this age. Values are declining in the school and so students sometimes misconduct teachers in the school and the university. Mullen and Fletcher, (2012) researched that mentoring quality education needs value education. Love and respect based on cultural practices are needed in value education. On the one hand, value education demands fulfilling the aspiration of cultural diversity, and on the other hand, it needs respect for different cultural and socio-economic practices.

Moreover, the importance of value education needs to be incorporated in the curricula of the public schools in Nepal. Value education must be incorporated into national policy documents (Patil & Patil, 2023). In addition, Vaccari and Gardinier, (2019) a UNESCO document prioritized value education in the national policy documents. Mansikka and Lundkvist, (2022) proved that value education is an important part of national policy documents. The need for value education is a must in the present time. It was favoured by Banks, (1998) researched that the value of education is a must in a multicultural society. The need and importance of value and linking it to education is a prime factor in the glocal village worldwide (Cordner, 1989; Flood & McAvoy, 2007).

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