

# HUMANIZING: A CHARACTER BUILDING

Mas Darul Ihsan

English Literature Department - Universitas Gresik

## Abstract

It is a commonly known fact that children's education always begins with socialization to their culture and community, and only later upon their exposure to other communities and acquisition of universal intellectual assets. They adopt the ideas and practices of general culture. That's why developing humanistic school culture is a must. Such as (1) multi-faceted cultivation of student personality; (2) developing a social climate of security and fairness; (3) using various types of dialogue with the students in order to reach out to and empower them; (4) developing a community approach and social involvement; (5) developing the students' intellectual powers by means of general and liberal education; (6) developing teaching techniques in which 'the tree of knowledge' becomes the students' and the community's 'tree of life'; (7) ensuring a safe and hospitable physical infrastructure. And also in constructing behavior and affirming behavior there will be "a golden rule" and "silver rule." It is supported by the concept of 5 e's character development. Such as *example, experience, environment, education, evaluation*.

**Key words:** *Humanizing, behavior, character, character building.*

## INTRODUCTION

Traditionally character has been defined as "the combination of emotional, intellectual, and moral qualities that distinguishes a person." It derives from the Greek *kharassein*—to engrave, inscribe, or sketch. In other words, character means qualities that are internally engraved in people, becoming an integral part of them. These qualities are then reflected in a person's pattern of **behavior**. Thus,

leaders' behavior reflects what they stand for and what their core nature is (Klann, 2007:7).

Then, Jean Piaget was among the first psychologists whose work focused on character development. He believed that all development evolved from action; people create their understanding of the world through their interactions with their surroundings (Piaget, 1965). He believed that through this process character, too,

was developed. Although he worked primarily with children, his theory applies to adults just as well. Through the results of and feedback from their behaviors, through reason and reflection, people can determine which behaviors are appropriate and effective and which are inappropriate and ineffective. Through this process of personal discovery and problem solving, they can then adjust their future behaviors. Then, According to (Loughran and Russell, 1997:3) It is in teaching and learning events that had unfolded during each class.

This paper is going to discuss about the role of concept of humanizing in shaping a good character when it is connected to the character building.

## **DISCUSSION**

It is a commonly known fact that children's education always begins with socialization to their culture and community, and only later upon their exposure to other communities and acquisition of universal intellectual assets. Because (According to Moore, 2000:24) that culture affected the way in which children went about their school learning'—a concern arising, specifically, out of 'the discovery of the impact of poverty, racism and alienation on the mental life and growth of the child victims of those blights'. They adopt the ideas

and practices of general culture. In view of this fact, it seems obvious why a **humanistic** and universally oriented education is preferable to an ethnocentric and provincial education (Veugelers, 2011:38).

The value of humanistic principles has recently received support, of all sources, from empirical studies on the quality of life in various countries. It is supported by on December 10th 1948, determined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that 'without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth of other status... Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.'

Based on the humanistic philosophy of human dignity as well as on empirical findings regarding the prerequisites of quality of life, we are called to shape an educational policy having the following arch-objectives: (1) An intellectual approach based on open-mindedness and broad education, autonomous and critical thinking, logical reasoning and factual evidence; (2) A moral standpoint characterized by attributing equal human worth to others, striving for social justice and peaceful neighbourliness and showing respect, fairness and consideration for others; (3) Active democratic citizenship evidenced

by social responsibility and political involvement, as well as by the dispositions of pluralism, tolerance and self-restraint; (4) Cultural richness supported by active curiosity, broad intellectual horizons, experiential depth, commitment to excellence and cultural diversity; (5) Being a 'world citizen', consisting in being informed and concerned not only about one's local community and culture, but also about other cultures and about ethical and ecological issues that are of global and international concern (Veugelers, 2011:41).

## **DEVELOPING A HUMANISTIC SCHOOL CULTURE**

Apart from the significant change required from teachers in the areas of professional awareness, pedagogic presence, and normative commitment, it is very important to focus on some aspects of the school culture, so that this may serve as fertile ground for promoting the objectives of a humanistic education. They are;

### ***(1) multi-faceted cultivation of student personality;***

There are seven critical facets or fundamental aspects of personality cultivation: (a) Helping the students develop a positive self-image or a sense of self-worth, that they are worthy, important,

accepted and capable – as a prerequisite for their faith in their own ability to lead a life of quality and meaning. (b) Foster their interest in both their human and their natural environment, in order to cultivate their *joie de vivre* and personal involvement in social activities and cultural contents. (c) Develop their emotional intelligence as well as their capacity for empathy, moderation and self-mastery. (d) Develop the intellectual virtues of curiosity, critical and reflective thinking, sense of measure, sound judgment, creative imagination, and sensitivity to values. (e) Foster an autonomous standpoint of independent thought, personal accountability and perseverance in dealing with intellectual issues, social pressures and personal desires and urges. (f) Cultivate an authentic, personal voice, producing its own contents and shaping itself through an interpersonal dialogue of self-nurturing and self-motivation. (g) Develop the courage to be 'imperfect' and act also in ambiguous situations defying simple solutions.

### ***(2) developing a social climate of security and fairness;***

In general, the optimal conditions forming a social climate of security and well-being include norms of humanity, fairness, transparency, rationality and dialogue. Specifically, the following

conditions are crucial: (a) A sense of physical, emotional and mental security, which translates into relaxation and personal well-being. (b) A family atmosphere of caring and empathy, together with personal attention by the teachers and a sense that the student is truly dear to them as a person. (c) A sense of belonging and partnership reinforced by active involvement in decisions related to the school culture. (d) Norms of reason, fairness, dialogue and transparency which minimize any sense of arbitrariness and authoritarianism. (e) Norms of mutual respect and caring about others as well as about social and environmental justice.

***(3) using various types of dialogue with the students in order to reach out to and empower them;***

According (Barton in Terzi, 2010:70) elaborated that “education is thus about responding to diversity, it is about listening to unfamiliar voices, being open and empowering all members.”

Educational tradition has offered empowering dialogues of various kinds. suggest the following typology: (a) The Socratic dialogue which is intellectually empowering in that it does not offer regurgitated knowledge and ready-made answers, but creates discomfort concerning a given issue or dilemma and guides the student in a process of self-discovery and critical reasoning with a

constant feeling of being ‘on the way’. (b) The Nietzschean dialogue which empowers the student’s autonomy and authenticity by rejecting the option of mass conformity and encourages the alternative of building the students’ selfhood based on self-definition and self-creation. (c) The Buberian dialogue which develops a caring and empathetic sensitivity in interpersonal relationships by substituting professional and hierarchic alienation with sincere and attentive encounters, in which both the teacher’s and the student’s personality are completely present. (d) The Rogersian dialogue which enhances the individual’s faith in her ability to lead a successful life by tuning in and getting to know oneself; (e) The Freireian dialogue which helps students from weak and oppressed social groups to free themselves of inhibitory and regressive forces through the development of active knowledge and critical literacy and their application in a political struggle for social justice and equal opportunities.(f) The ecological dialogue, reinforcing empathy for one’s natural environment, so that the student’s self-awareness of the necessary conditions for personal growth and well-being leads to caring for a thirsty tree, a drooping stalk, a turtle helpless on its back, a beached whale, endangered and

confined animals, polluted oceans and rivers, and the beauty of nature.

***(4) developing a community approach and social involvement;***

This trend comprises the following aspects: (a) Greater involvement by parents and students alike in shaping the school's characteristics and contents, including parental contribution in curricular enrichment and students contributing in the form of tutorship programs and determining school regulations. (b) Support systems for culturally deprived, economically disadvantaged or physically and mentally challenged students. (c) Collaboration with other social organizations in the community, such as culture clubs, youth movements, kindergartens, nursing homes and animal rights and environmental organizations. (d) Active citizenship intent on abolishing social injustices and ensuring the integrity and propriety of both the public arena and the natural environment.

***(5) developing the students' intellectual powers by means of general and liberal education;***

The following elements are necessary: (a) Linguistic literacy, including comprehension and expression skills, the ability to analyse complex texts, organized and reasoned presentation of ideas, and the ability to discuss a wide

range of issues. (b) A broad education, including knowledge about world-views and cultural heritages, basic concepts and research methods, current affairs and art. (c) Knowledge in curricular subject matters. (d) Cognitive skills evident in reflective and critical rationality, mental flexibility and creativity, the identification of relevant contexts and the ability to judge facts and values. (e) A philosophical approach which fosters caring for truth and justice, together with scepticism of whatever is being taken for granted and clarity and method in thought and expression. (f) Artistic literacy, taking pleasure and finding meaning in experiencing art works as well as in exercising one's creative imagination and artistic skills.

***(6) developing teaching techniques in which 'the tree of knowledge' becomes the students' and the community's 'tree of life';***

Instruction and learning in schools should therefore have the following qualities: (a) Substituting an educational development program for the discipline-based school curriculum as the school's main content basis. (b) Meaningful teaching in touch with the students' actual world and with current affairs. (c) Creating a 'pedagogic Eros' and an 'academic drama' by teachers who evidence enthusiasm for manifestations of

truth, justice and beauty. (d) Translating knowledge into life literacies that allow learners to identify the value-laden messages of issues discussed in class and to plan their actions with greater reason and responsibility. (e) A holistic approach relying on multiple, and interpersonal, intelligences. (f) Diverse assessment approaches related to the whole gamut of student's abilities, functions and contributions, avoiding any reduction of their personality to extraneous standards.

***(7) ensuring a safe and hospitable physical infrastructure.***

The school's physical layout should facilitate the achievement of personal and cultural goals as well as communicate respect for humanistic and environmental values: (a) Safety of buildings, teaching aids and playgrounds. (b) Hospitable and aesthetic architecture as well as investment in design, facilities, artwork and vegetation. (c) Open and roomy spaces that optimise options for independent study, social interaction, and small group dialogue.

## **CONSTRUCTIVE AND AFFIRMING BEHAVIORS**

Ryle (2009:101) stated that "human behavior are dispositional concepts, since the vogue of the para mechanical legend." Having defined character in terms of behaviors that have a

positive influence on others, need to say more precisely what behaviors are truly constructive and affirming, highly influential, and ideally universal. here is a useful overview (Klann, 2007:7).

First are the behaviors implied in what is known as the "**Golden Rule**": Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. The Golden Rule is essentially universal, inasmuch as it is found in all the major religions in the world. It tells us to use the same behaviors toward others as we would want them to use toward us. At a minimum this means treating others with respect, dignity, and equality, being sensitive to their needs and emotions, listening to them, paying attention to them, and so on.

The "**Silver Rule.**" The Silver Rule says that we should not treat others the way we would not want to be treated. Whereas the Golden Rule is active, the Silver Rule is restrictive, not using behaviors on others that we do not want to be used on us. the Silver Rule provides a clearer perspective and understanding than the Golden Rule. We know how frustrated and angry being treated in these ways can make us. We also know what we would think of someone who consistently did so.

Another perspective is provided by the "Law of Reciprocity," which says that the way you behave toward and treat others is the way they are likely to behave

toward and treat you. Leaders who behave in an unseemly manner open themselves to this law.

Kohlberg's theory reinforces the concept of character and moral development as an ongoing, lifelong process. Other theorists have seen this development as a process in which, throughout our lives, our moral perceptions and values are formed and reshaped by various experiences, communications, rules, laws, conventions, moral teachings, rewards, recognitions, punishments, and so on (Simon, Howe, & Kirschenbaum, 1995).

### **THE FIVE E'S: A FRAMEWORK FOR CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT**

The five "Five E's" (Klann, 2003a): example, experience, education, environment, and evaluation.

**Example,** example refers to a leader's influence on others through their observation of the leader's behaviors. It is the most powerful way to develop character because it leverages the natural human tendency to emulate the behavior of individuals who are respected, held in high esteem, or in positions of authority. Within any organization the behaviors of these leaders set the standard for everyone else.

**Experience,** experience refers to developing leadership character by

exposing leaders to new and challenging leadership work. This can include a variety of assignments, such as serving on a task force or special project, moving to positions with increased or different responsibilities and scope, heading a start-up or fix-it, or shifting from operations (line) to staff or vice versa. Experience also includes activities like attending a highly experiential leadership development training course—for example, the Center for Creative Leadership's globally renowned organizational simulation, The Looking Glass Experience. Experience also refers to the developmental possibilities of hardship or failure.

**Education,** education refers to providing knowledge and training to a leader related to leadership character development. Organizations can set up formal and informal training that focuses on relevant behaviors and how they demonstrate character, the potential pressures on and challenges to character resulting from such things as performance expectations and market competition, and the short- and long-term implications of a lapse of character. Education might include discussions of dilemmas and scenarios that involve difficult moral or ethical choices.

**Environment,** Environment is essentially the organizational culture and its values system, both formal and

informal, in which a developing leader functions. An organization's environment plays a huge role in either encouraging or impeding the character development of leaders. You can shape your organization's culture to support and promote constructive leadership behaviors.

**Evaluation**, there are many ways to apply the feedback, performance appraisal process, and disciplinary practices of an organization to develop leadership character. In their own behavior, people will generally pay closest attention to things for which they know they are being held accountable. Leaders will pay close attention to these areas of behavior that are being rated in the ongoing course of performance appraisals and decisions regarding merit increases, bonuses, and promotions. This accountability can play a key role in the process of developing leadership character.

## CONCLUSION

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