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FEATURE

Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Values: Revealing the Invisible

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***Abstract** - "Back to values" has been a significant trend in school systems during the past few years. While the secular school system continues to debate on how to go about teaching values, Adventist teachers are encouraged to continue the deliberate integration of values through their own modeling, the use of planned and unplanned curriculum activities, and appropriate pedagogical practices. This article highlights the necessity of inculcating values in schools, and describes how teachers may utilize both the "overt" and "covert" curriculum through selective pedagogical practices. Integration of faith and learning using biblical principles, which include all values, is identified as the practice that Adventist educators have been using to make a difference in the lives of students.*

Schools play a significant role in the development of students. Realizing this, educators are constantly looking for ways to improve the quality of education. How do educators improve the quality of education? One answer is by striving towards the common goal for schools, which Miliband (2004) put very simply yet succinctly as "teaching the right things in the right way with the right values" (p. 1). This paper attempts to address the importance of values as taught and lived by teachers, especially in the context of Adventist education.

Teachers Make a Difference

Teaching values has been a growing theme in education during recent years. Even a casual search of research literature in education indicates the surge of interest in this theme. What teachers do explicitly and implicitly in and out of the classroom has a definite impact on the values students learn. This is the view reported by The Curriculum Corporation (2003): "The extent to which teachers actually practiced shared values had an important influence on students' values development" (p. 9). Many educators support this view that teachers, indeed, make a difference in the formation and transformation of values among learners at all levels of schooling.

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To use one example, Downey, an American educator, explained the challenges that schools face in this modern world by pointing out that “a school teaches in three ways; by what it teaches, by how it teaches, and by the kind of place it is” (as cited in Miliband, 2004, p. 2). Apparently, the three ways Downey was referring to are (1) curriculum—what school teaches, (2) pedagogy—how it teaches, and (3) values—by the kind of place it is. In other words, quality education is possible when curriculum and pedagogy interact and support the learning of values in deliberate and meaningful ways. Teachers have a critical role in making this happen.

For Christian educators, the implications of such interactions are obvious. Holmes (1975) referred to it as providing a “climate of faith and learning” (p. 82). He emphasized that teachers hold the keys to a climate of learning. Teachers inspire students, and students, in turn, inspire their peers resulting in a climate of learning. “It is important that the teacher be transparently Christian as well as an enthusiastic and careful scholar, and that he [she] not compartmentalize the two but think integratively him[her]self” (p. 83).

From the above discussion, it is clear that there exists a need to see a unification of the three important aspects of school life: curriculum, pedagogy, and values. Adventist education has always emphasized such unification and teachers are encouraged to do so. Although all teachers consciously or unconsciously teach values through their teaching, Adventist teachers consider it their responsibility to share values through teaching. More often than not, however, Adventist teachers seem silent about this unique feature of their teaching.

Adventist teachers need not be diffident about their “Father’s business.” That what happens in schools has a long-term impact on the learners is evidenced through the true-life stories in books such as *College Faith* (1995) and *More College Faith* (1997) edited by Ronald Knott. Another example is the report of *Valuegenesis* (Gillespie, 2002), which is a study of more than 18,000 students of schools in North America. In this report, Gillespie pointed out evidence of “change and progress we have in nurturing a rich and growing faith life among the children and youth in Adventist schools” (p. 12). It is time to reveal or open up and share how Adventist teachers go about making a difference in the lives of their students. The difference they make, I suspect, weighs heavily on building a belief system and the formation of attitudes, which are part of values. If you are an Adventist teacher, perhaps you will find your notes matching with most of what you are about to read about the nature and significance of values.

What are Values?

The definition of “values” is not singular. Nevertheless, a good working definition would be useful. Halstead and Taylor (2000) define values as “the principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behavior, the standards by which particular actions are judged as good or desirable” (p. 169). This matches with McGettrick’s (1995) explanation that “. . . a value is a set of principles which are consistent and inform and direct our thoughts, actions and activities” (p. 1). The essence of these definitions is that values have a rational or cognitive nature and can be expressed through behavior. Hill (2004) points out that values are the ideals that give meaning to an individual’s life, that are reflected through the priorities that the person chooses and act upon consistently. He further argued that such priorities must help people in deciding how they will live. He felt that it is important to move from “knowing the good to be desirable” to “desiring to do the good” (p. 5).

Relationship Between Values and Actions

Mariani (1999) used a four-layered pyramid (see Figure 1) as an example of how our value or belief system affects our actions. Our beliefs affect the attitudes towards what is happening around us. Attitudes affect the decisions we make and eventually our actions. Quite obviously, the top layer is the visible of the four. Just like an iceberg, however, this is only a part of the structure. Therefore, what is seen in action, be it outside or inside the classroom, is simply the tip of the iceberg. In other words, what we see in action is the result of the decisions that we make and these decisions are influenced by our attitudes, which in turn, are influenced by our belief system (Ridley, as cited in Mariani, 1999). This explanation helps us understand values in a more useful way.

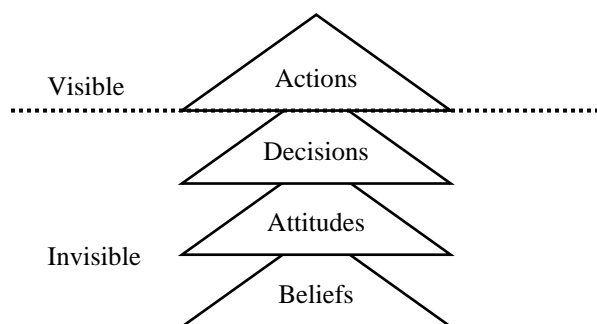


Figure 1. Relationship between beliefs, attitudes, decisions and actions.

According to McGettrick (1995) there are some fundamental shared values which can be summarized this way:

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- respect for human dignity and the world in which we live
- care about the welfare of other people
- integrating individual interests and responsibilities in the community
- having a sense of self-identity and integrity
- reflecting on social, moral and religious choices
- seeking peace, justice and truth in all areas of life (p. 5)

Examples of values cited by other experts include love, equality, justice, respect, responsibility, compassion, courage, patience, and honesty besides many other attributes. Adventist teachers take on the responsibility of helping students internalize these values. Since the stage of internalizing the values comes as a culmination of a series of preceding stages of learning, it is important to understand how values are learned.

Inculcation of Values

Young children learn values through external sources such as home, school, church, media and other influences. These avenues which mainly serve as models have a lasting impact on the young person. As the individual grows, values learning transforms into a more autonomous activity in which the growing person begins to structure a personal value system. At this point, the individual is looking for help, initially to understand the self, and eventually to form external value-laden views. This growing inner need is what teachers and significant others can fill. Teachers meet this need of the learners using the tool of curriculum, presented in formal and informal ways.

Since Adventist education is holistic, values are an indispensable part of the curriculum. Values are related to both cognitive and affective dimension of human behavior. Interestingly, there seems to be quite a contrast in the way values are learned in the West and in the East. According to McGettrick (1995), generally, thinking in the Western world is characterized by action while in the East much attention is given to contemplation and reflection. Forming values, particularly in Eastern societies, is very philosophical and requires self-examination. As Socrates reminds us, “The unexamined life is not worth living.” Although self-examination alone is not sufficient for values formation, it is an important beginning step in the formation of values. No wonder there has been a growing interest in dealing with the “inner self,” as McGettrick puts it, especially in the Western World.

The inner self includes self-esteem, the spiritual dimension of one’s life, attitudes and values. The Adventist educational system sees the worth of teaching values, both explicitly and implicitly. Often such education may be specifically termed character education or spiritual and moral development. What do teachers use to make this happen? That leads to the concept of curriculum or the “what” of education which inculcates values.

Curriculum

What a school teaches the students must be the first and foremost concern of educators. One of the benchmarks of a quality program is the curriculum or “what” is taught. Teachers directly or indirectly share values through the three general curriculum approaches, namely, the formal curriculum, the informal curriculum, and the hidden curriculum. For a balanced curriculum, all three approaches are necessary, and should work together toward a common goal.

The Formal Curriculum

The formal curriculum, according to Ryan (1993), is “usually thought of as the school’s planned educational experiences—the selection and organization of knowledge and skills from the universe of possible choices” (p. 17). This curriculum is basically treated at a cognitive level. Yet the content of formal curriculum is value-laden and teachers knowingly or unknowingly share these values with the students through interactions in the context of instruction. This is true regardless of the subject matter of the curriculum. Certain values are better emphasized in specific content areas.

In subject areas such as history and literature, it is possible to find what is good (and bad) in people. For example, *To Kill a Mockingbird* would shed insight into what is truly noble while *The Diary of Anne Frank* can help us understand the danger of racism (Ryan, 1993, p. 17). Similarly, scientific or mathematical subject areas would lend themselves to focusing on values of adhering to rules, persistence and the use of methodical approaches. The domains of art and music may enhance values of expressiveness and accuracy. Content provides opportunities, rather than limitations for Adventist teachers wishing to teach values.

Besides the direct transmission of built-in values in the content areas, teachers also have opportunities to integrate spiritual or religious values in the formal curriculum. More commonly known in the Adventist context as the integration of faith and learning (IFL), this approach weaves into content areas, faith-related values in every subject area taught. More will be discussed about this later in this paper.

The Informal Curriculum

Informal activities are a valuable part of the overall curriculum. Most schools offer opportunities for voluntary participation in activities in “areas such as social action, service in the community, raising funds for good causes, and so on” (McGettrick, 1995, p. 3). Such learning experiences are included in the informal curriculum and can present important values to students. Often these are called extra-curricular or co-curricular activities. Such learning opportunities

are visible and planned. Being mostly action oriented, students learn values most rapidly through these experiences. The real-life nature of these learning experiences is often more impressive to the minds of the learners and can have a lasting impact.

The Hidden Curriculum

The above two approaches to curriculum may be termed together as the “overt” part of the curriculum. But what is not visible is just as important and it is called the hidden or the “covert” curriculum. This is the third and the most powerful approach for sharing values. Of the three curriculum approaches, the understanding of this concept seems limited among the public in general. Somehow there seems to be a need to “reveal” the mystery of the hidden curriculum. According to Mariani (1999), “it seems this ‘submerged’ curriculum is largely unknown, rarely spoken about, and very often underestimated” (p. 2). Anderson (2001) felt that “writing about the hidden curriculum concept is usually motivated by a single goal—to make explicit and visible what was formally invisible” (p. 1). Therefore a short description of this not-so-well-known concept is useful.

Philip Jackson is traced to be the first to use the term “hidden curriculum” in his book, *Life in Classrooms*, written in 1968. A plethora of definitions has plagued this concept ever since. Examples of definitions include “those unacknowledged and unplanned lessons that are ‘caught rather than taught’” (Clabaugh, 2000, p. 1) and “those things which are taught implicitly and which do not appear in the formal curriculum” (Livesay, n.d., p. 1). These definitions seem to imply that hidden curriculum is not what is written in the school objectives, but what the students learn from the school atmosphere, teachers’ attitudes, and many other factors in the school climate and ethos. Hidden curriculum is unseen, yet it must be considered to be as important as the formal curriculum (Ryan, 1993). For as Clabaugh (2000) points out, even though the hidden curriculum is not usually formally assessed, it gives the “most lasting lessons” in student learning (p. 1).

Teachers have a gigantic role in sharing values through the hidden curriculum. Ahola (2000) states that “the concept of the hidden curriculum has been strongly connected to pedagogy” (p. 2). She suggests that the hidden curriculum must be integrated within the formal curriculum in a conscious manner. At the conscious level, teachers must pay attention to the impact of some of the following classroom applications of hidden curriculum as identified by the Centre for Educational Development and Media (1996):

- Teachers’ expectations of students
- Teachers’ interaction with pupils, including discipline

- Allocation of tasks, equipment and resources to students in the classroom, school and playground
- Relationships of teachers and staff to each other
- Rules, casual remarks, reinforcements, and punishments (p. 1)

In their study, Powney and Schlapp (1996) found that hidden curriculum was used more than formal teaching by teachers to foster values in primary schools. The awareness and understanding of the hidden curriculum pose great advantages for the teacher. First, it helps to review their personal attitude towards students. Second, a whole new experience emerges, as the teacher becomes the listener, reflector, and mediator instead of the traditional dispenser of knowledge. Adventist teachers are familiar with these and similar experiences and responsibilities relating to the hidden curriculum.

Pedagogy

It is interesting to see how curriculum lends itself to teaching values. But curriculum is only one avenue for learning values. Pedagogical aspects, or the “how” of teaching values in education, is a second, vital area. Teachers constantly grapple with the pedagogical questions of how to teach the subject and why they should teach it differently to different groups of students. Shulman (1987) referred to this as pedagogical content knowledge and defines it as a unique blend of pedagogy and content. Experienced teachers combine pedagogy and content so well that the subject content and teaching are no longer separate. Such teachers use a range of teaching styles and strategies to extend the knowledge and skills of their students.

Teachers cannot help but impart values “in one way or another in the normal course of their activities. . . . What we consider ‘good,’ ‘right,’ or ‘important’ constantly guides our practice, whether consciously or not” (Carbone, as cited in Gudmundsdottir, 1995, p. 3). Since pedagogical considerations are related to learning of values, it is interesting to distinguish between novices and experts in teaching values. Is there a difference in the way values are taught by novices and experts? If so, what distinguishes novice teachers from expert teachers? Important insights are available from research.

Novices and Experts

While myriad factors identify expert teachers, one important distinction is the way they integrate values into pedagogy. Expert teachers assign values a central place in their pedagogical practices. While novices are capable of expressing their values in the discipline of their teaching, they “have not had the opportunity to fine-tune the relationship between their orientation and legitimate pedagogical strategies,” as pointed out by Gudmundsdottir (1991, p. 7). Expert

teachers bring to their teaching what they value and cherish in their subject matter as well as what they value in life as a whole.

Teaching without integrating values, as Greene (as cited in Gudmundsdottir, 1991) indicated, is evidenced by “indifference” or lack of care and concern. Such teaching is devoid of passion and focus. Good teaching, on the other hand, is characterized by a sense of purpose and direction. Values take a central place in such teaching. How do Adventist teachers integrate values into teaching? This brings the discussion to the important concept of integration of faith and learning (IFL), a familiar concept among Adventist circles.

Integration of Faith and Learning

Rasi (1993) provides one of the clearest descriptions of IFL. To him IFL is

A deliberate and systematic process of approaching the entire educational enterprise from a biblical perspective. Its aim is to ensure that students are under the influence of Christian teachers and by the time they leave school will have internalized biblical values and a view of knowledge, life, and destiny that is Christ-centered, service-oriented and kingdom-directed. (p. 10)

Oppewal (as cited in Korniejczuk, 1998) identified “two ways of integration in the formal curriculum: (1) forming a Christian interpretation or assessment of secular subjects; and (2) placing the subject matter across the academic disciplines, so that the content is interdisciplinary, the Christian perspective is operated at the level of organizing the topic, and the inclusion of biblical materials is part of the subject” (p. 387).

The most powerful means of IFL is the teacher’s life. The hidden curriculum has much to do with this. Christian schools and colleges have the responsibility of “purposely and consciously making faith connections throughout the formal or planned program of study” (Korniejczuk, 1998, pp. 389, 390). But without living a life that implements in practice what one is teaching in theory in the classroom, the power of the formal curriculum to impart values to our students is limited.

Some educators realize that all academic disciplines do not lend themselves equally to IFL. The more personal the discipline to humankind, the closer it is to the individual and easier it is to integrate faith in teaching that area. The following ranking of subject areas gives a clearer picture of the locus of integration from closest to farthest in integrating faith (St. Olaf College Self Study Committee, as cited by Korniejczuk, 1998, pp. 385, 386):

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- Theology
 - Philosophy
 - Literature
 - Fine arts
 - History
 - Social sciences
 - Natural sciences
 - Logic, language, mathematics

Teachers of any subject may find numerous avenues to share values. In the hands of a God-inspired teacher, I believe all subjects will lend themselves to suitable faith integration. Suitable teaching strategies and creating a positive climate for learning will enhance IFL in the so-called difficult-to-integrate-faith subjects. For example, in the study of mathematics, the teacher may use cooperative learning strategies which require the use of social skills such as encouragement and valuing others' points of view (Gaikwad, 1996). In teaching history the use of role play, followed by discussion will enhance values learning in a limitless way.

Adventist teachers deliberately integrate faith into learning. Several factors are listed by Korniejczuk (1998) that are related to deliberate implementation of IFL by a teacher: (1) knowledge of IFL, (2) interest in implementing IFL in the formal curriculum, (3) planning of implementation, (4) management of concerns and (5) difficulty of the subject to accomplish the implementation (p. 405). The Adventist educational system supports and encourages the use of IFL by teachers. The inclusion of IFL courses in education at the tertiary level and the provision for in-service training for those teachers who are not trained in IFL are evidences of this.

In conclusion, teaching values need not be a puzzling and mysterious process. Adventist teachers consciously and unconsciously teach values through both curriculum and pedagogy. Being conscious of what they are doing is helpful to teachers in monitoring their own value system and their classroom practices. For Adventist teachers it is imperative that they live what they teach and integrate faith into learning. This is simply a part of living their profession!

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