Values games for values education and values-oriented dialogic communication in the practice of Estonian schools

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Key words: values education, values development, interactive tool, ethical sensitivity

Short abstract

Values education needs to develop moral awareness and clarification ability of students for dialogic communication on values with other people. Tartu University, Centre for Ethics has developed values games and methodology for values discussions in school. Values games are centred around moral dilemmas with different choices and players choose the solution in the narrative they would likely choose in real life, with none of the solutions being ideal. Although the values games have several limitations, it is very promising in supporting values education and values-oriented dialogic communication in school as well as skills to participate in dialogic democratic processes.

Introduction

In values education, it is important to develop both moral awareness and moral clarification ability (Rest 1984) of the student. However, as Sutrop (2015: 190) states, it is clear "one cannot live the good life without other people". Inasmuch it should help them develop good character and develop their own moral agency, it should also prepare them to live and interact in value-laden and -pluralistic society. Hence, skills for dialogic communication on values, especially on the case of moral disagreements, with other people is vital (Sutrop, 2020).

Objective

The presentation discusses how values-based dialogic communication and skills for values discussions can be supported in schools through values games. The presentation reflects upon the experience of Centre for Ethics, Tartu University development of values games methodology and adaption of the teachers' values game (2011) and student game "Discovering Values" (2012) in Estonian schools.

Method

For teachers to be able to facilitate the methods supporting values-based dialogic communication with students, we argue that educators need to experience the method itself, which is why Centre for Ethics, University of Tartu (CEUT) has developed both teachers' values game (2011) and students' game "Discovering values" (2012) – two types of interactive

tools that enable and encourage teachers and students to reflect and communicate their value choices. Values games as a tool are based on moral dilemmas that provide different possible choices. The protagonist of the narrative in the moral dilemma is faced with a decision point. The players (students and/or teachers) are asked to read the narrative and choose the solution they would most likely choose in real life. The provided solutions are constructed in a way that none of them are ideal in order to facilitate discussion and to motivate the players to justify their choices to each other and, if possible, to reach a consensus decision.

The methodology of the values games derives from values clarification methodology (Kirschenabum 1977; 2013) and efficient strategies for ethics education (e.g. discussion of cases (Zucchero, 2008), collaborative working (Tammeleht et al., 2019) and the notion that ethical sensitivity and awareness can be developed (Rest, 1986). Since the game presents a situation that already contains a choice of values to the teacher's path and students, the moral sensitivities about situations in life are only implicitly trained in this game. The methodological complexity of the value game is primarily in constructing a narrative that contains a dilemma and providing solutions. In the latest version of the game (2020) called "Estonian Values Choices", Centre for Ethics has developed a package of solutions, where the options are related to four directions of moral philosophy: rule ethics, utilitarianism, care ethics and ethical egoism.

In Estonian context, the student game "Discovering values" has shown promising results in supporting the values-oriented dialogic communication (VODC) for supporting multicultural learning environment according to the qualitative interviews done with teachers who had experiences with both VODC management and teaching in a multicultural classroom (Nummert et al., 2022). However, the teachers reported that "students need support in a deep reflection of values and autonomy to have their say", i.e. general competences for VODC (Nummert et al., 2022: 75).

Conclusion

Although the narrative-based dilemmas game has several limitations including supporting students' autonomy and reflection skills for them to be able to participate in dialogic communication focused on solving moral disagreements, the methods is very promising in supporting values education and learning the skills needed to participate in dialogic democratic processes. More research is needed to evaluate the effect of the method on moral development of the students.

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ECVA 2023 Conference Submission

Title: From Europe to America and Back Again: Classical Education as an Enduring and Exemplary Form of Character Education

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Abstract

Education in the US long relied upon a liberal arts, great books approach, derived from the UK and Europe, as the best way to cultivate intellectual and moral virtues. Today, this form of education is called "classical education" and it is making a comeback on both sides of the Atlantic, yielding opportunities for collaboration. My presentation will consider the history and research relevant to classical education as well as my work with students and teachers from the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, and Slovakia. I will argue that classical education is not just a niche, but an exemplary form of character education.

Summary

Key words: classical education, character, motivation, practical wisdom, transatlantic cooperation

Introduction: In the 19th century, the editor of one of Harvard University's Red Books claimed that so many graduates fought and died to end slavery because of the liberal arts, great books education that they had received. This education gifted Harvard graduates with the practical wisdom to know how to fight injustice and the courage to do it.

Historically, certain Americans studied *European* philosophy, literature, music, and visual art in order to cultivate spiritual, civic, moral, and intellectual virtues. Education in liberal arts, great books, and *character* was of a piece.

This education expanded in the US as it receded in Europe, even though, in the US, the character element was eventually overshadowed by critical thinking skills. As a small number of liberal arts, great books programs were established in the EU (thanks to the Bologna Process), individuals from the US began assisting European institutions with teaching what was, from the US perspective, a fundamentally European education.

At the same time, character education was emerging again in the US and the UK in the fields of psychology and education, sometimes with a basis in one philosopher's great works, namely, Aristotle's. In the US in particular, character education has again been married to great books, liberal arts education, now dubbed "classical education."

My presentation will evaluate the intersection of character, liberal arts, and great books education—summarized here as "classical education"—in several European contexts, covering my work, from over a decade, with students and teachers from institutions in the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, and Slovakia, encompassing bachelor's, secondary, and elementary programs.

Objectives:

> 1. To outline different *controversies* and *educational approaches* touching upon character, liberal arts, and great books education when working with students and teachers from different European cultural contexts
>
> 2. To consider important consistencies across all approaches, revealing of the nature of classical education
>
> 3. To evaluate classical education as an exemplary form of character education
>
> 4. To consider possibilities for fruitful future collaboration across the Atlantic

Methods: I will briefly cite select historical sources and psychological research. However, my primary focus will be on observations from my work with students and teachers from the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, and Slovakia. The presentation will include brief lecture, slides, and discussion.

Conclusions: Some objections to classical education mirror objections to character education generally, that it is, e.g., ethnocentric, élitist, authoritarian, antiquated, conservative, etc. One or more of these concerns emerged with each of the different groups of Europeans with which I have worked and there are responses (e.g., that great works are ethnocentric can be addressed by pursuing principles applicable to works regardless of culture, that teaching character by means of them is authoritarian can be moderated by running seminars that give ample room for student autonomy, etc.).

At the same time, the study of great works *when taught well* can address key issues in character education that may partly close the moral knowledge–action gap, touching upon intrinsic motivation and practical wisdom, e.g., inspiring a love of excellence and giving models worthy of emulation while at the same time challenging us to consider not just other cultures, but other historical periods, so that we can appreciate the problems of the moment and of our local community *as well as* the perennial problems and truths concerning justice and human nature essential for developing and exercising practical wisdom. Classical education is therefore not a niche form of character education, but an exemplar of it.

But there is still much to learn by working together: North Americans and Europeans may discover that their shared heritage can help them cultivate the virtues necessary to responsibly confront current and future problems and to flourish.

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Character Education Through Poetry

Short abstract

In this presentation I will perform an analysis of an interviews series that I conducted with teachers and specialists in poetry teaching, for my recent PhD project (2022), in order to gain insights into using poetry in teaching, the phenomenon of classroom teaching, and assessment of running a poetry programme designed to cultivate virtue, in secondary schools in Iceland. The conclusion suggests that, through certain classroom interventions, the medium of poetry offers the best way to cultivate the emotional components of moral education, and the potential co-production of emotional sensitivities in teachers and students.

Summary

As a continuation of the findings of my PhD project on Character Education Through Poetry, which I completed this year at the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, in this presentation I will perform an analysis of an interviews series that I conducted with teachers and specialists in poetry teaching, in order to gain insights into using poetry in teaching, the phenomenon of classroom teaching, and assessment of running a poetry programme designed to cultivate virtue, in secondary schools in Iceland

The outcomes that emerge from the finding can be categorized with respect to four overarching themes that identify the role and possibilities for utilizing poetry for character education in the Icelandic school system. These four themes are *Freedom*, *Creativity*, *Wonderment*, and *Time*. In a practical sense, the Icelandic curriculum poses some obstacles, but can also be seen as offering opportunities.

The conclusion is that there needs to be a more thorough explanation of the role of character education when running a poetry programme in the context of the Icelandic language subject within Icelandic schools. This finding carries general implications for the use of poetry to stimulate virtues in other countries as well, especially when this is done within subjects that are not pre-designed or designated as 'character-educational' historically.

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The Emotional Components of Moral Education

Short abstract

In this presentation I explore the similarities between Wittgenstein's and Dewey's approaches to education, in order to make a contribution towards the philosophy of education. Concerning Wittgenstein's ideas of language and Dewey's treatment of experience, relatively little has been said about the language of learning. While their critique of knowledge is similar, their rejection of the spectator's view of knowledge, can be utilised to present a comprehensive system or approach for educational practice, built on the language of learning and the (internal and external) experience of education. To conclude: Moral education is about helping students understand the whole web of concerns and considerations relevant to moral functioning in the world.

Summary

The objective of this presentation is to explore the similarities between Wittgenstein's and Dewey's approaches to education, in order to make a contribution towards the philosophy of education. This will be done through three secondary objectives.

1. The first is to explore the general concept of education.
   This objective deals with the concept of education in a general manner, and sets the foundation for the project.

2. The second is to define the language of learning and its role in the experience of education. This objective explores Wittgenstein's ideas of language and Dewey's treatment of experience. This is important because within education, relatively little has been said about the language of learning.

3. The third is to unite the findings from the previous objectives to construct a theory on the mastery of practice in education. This objective builds on Wittgenstein's ideas about a form of living and Dewey's pragmatism. While their critique of knowledge is similar, this objective should encompass their rejection of the spectator's view of knowledge, according to Quine, and also present a comprehensive system or approach for educational practice built on the language of learning and the (internal and external) experience of education.

<u>Title of Paper</u>

<u>Perspectives of autistic young people on a sense of purpose and on their futures</u>

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Abstract

Introduction

My PhD study explores the perspectives of autistic young people (AYP) relating to a sense of purpose and on their futures.

Objectives

I aim to share AYP's experiences and understandings of a sense of purpose. I hope to stimulate dialogue with European colleagues on the potential benefits of engaging AYP with this construct.

Method

Ten participants aged 16+ contributed, from two school settings in England. Using hermeneutic phenomenology, data was collected via semi-structured interviews and focus groups/ individual follow-up meetings.

Conclusions

AYP's voices convey powerful and poignant accounts, challenging pre-conceptions and offering insights on their thoughts concerning their futures.

Summary

My participatory PhD research project explores a sense of purpose as encountered by autistic young people (AYP). This paper hopes to encourage dialogue with European colleagues in an area of work that is innovative with autistic youth. A significant question behind the study is whether contemplating purpose and explicitly focussing on purpose with these young people, might be useful to them on their pathway to adulthood.

In Western Europe and the US, life purpose is characterised as an individual and an agentic activity. Yet considering one's purpose is frequently associated with helping and supporting others, i.e., thinking beyond the self; and with civic education (Bauml et al. 2023). Data collected in the study indicates that AYP focus both on the self and oftentimes on others. Hence, I argue for its relevance to character and virtue education.

Purpose (sometimes conflated with 'meaning') is recognised as significant by key authors, mainly situated in the US, (e.g., Damon and Bronk, 2003)). Research on life purpose with adolescents and emerging adults diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) is nascent (Quinn et al. 2019). Purpose has been associated with important life benefits, e.g., a longer life span and greater life satisfaction. It is recognised to be an important predictor of physical and mental health (McKnight and Kashan, 2009; Pfund and Hill, 2018). However, after 2004, advice to English schools on the teaching of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education has ceased to include reference to students reflecting on purpose in their lives. Curriculum guidance and structures seem to add few other opportunities for a specific focus on purpose. Despite flexibility in special schools, an explicit focus on purpose does not appear to feature prominently there either. AYP suffer from higher anxiety and greater mental health challenges than their non-autistic peers (Ghaziuddin et al. 2002). This study's originality lies in

exploring whether encouraging AYP's engagement with the positive psychological asset of purpose might help in mitigating against this. The project addresses a lack of in-depth qualitative studies in this field.

Ten AYP, aged 16+ years, from two specialist ASD institutions, in Southern England took part in semi-structured interviews, then focus groups/ individual follow-up meetings. They engaged in frank, open, and philosophical conversations about purpose based on past experiences and envisaged futures. Also providing their own perspectives, AYP's views were gained on future work in the field including potential barriers to purpose and how to overcome these. After working with participants, using hermeneutic phenomenology, I am in the analytical process of constructing interpretations to inform educational professionals, educational practice and towards future research. The process of analysis is based on key principles described by Braun and Clarke (2022), adapted suitably for the study.

My discussion will focus mainly on the interpretations gained so far and particularly on two of the participants, their voices sometimes challenging assumptions made by adults about their lives and how they wish to live them. Although the findings are not generalisable, the conversations are poignant and rich in meaning, providing insights that were not predictable. The participants express their familiarity with the ways in which they are vulnerable, as well as the importance of developing strategies to overcome their worries about their futures, as one says: ... 'Because you cannot exactly go to the broom cupboard in your job when its stressful'... Their expression of empathy for others and their appreciation of developing good relationships with others is often central to them.

Key words

purpose, participatory, hermeneutic phenomenology, autistic

Redesigning schools through character education:

The case of vLACE and PRIMED in Spain

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Short abstract

Many school challenges and difficulties are rooted in a school design that has generated a culture that does not support the optimal development of all stakeholders. The character education movement includes a variety of approaches that propose design principles to generate a type of community in which the development of good character is promoted. One prominent initiative to promote the implementation of these design principles in the USA is the vLACE and PRIMED leadership programs. This paper recounts a research project in which these programs have been translated, adapted, and implemented in Spain, discussing the outcomes obtained.

Summary

Introduction

Schools face many challenges and difficulties, most of which are rooted in a school design that has generated a culture or climate that does not support the optimal development of all stakeholders. The character education movement includes a variety of approaches that propose design principles to generate a type of community in which the development of good character is promoted (Berger 2003; Berkowitz, 2021; Elbot & Fulton, 2007; Lickona, 2004; Novick et al., 2002). One prominent initiative to promote the implementation of these design principles in the USA is the vLACE and PRIMED leadership programs, developed during the last 25 years in the Center for Character and Citizenship, at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Objectives

Even though this kind of leadership programs are relatively common in the USA, they are almost non-existent in Europe. It is pertinent to find out if these programs can be

translated and adapted to another language and to investigate if they can have a significant impact in generating this type of school communities in Europe.

Method

The first section of this paper recounts a research project titled *Character education leadership program for Mexican public schools* (Dabdoub et al., 2020), supported by the Templeton World Charity Foundation from May 2020 to April 2023. The project included the translation to Spanish, adaptation to Mexican culture, and implementation of the vLACE and PRIMED leadership programs, with a particular emphasis on Servant Leadership (Salgado & Dabdoub, 2022). The leadership teams from six public schools participated in the leadership programs from June 2021 to May 2022 in Guadalajara, Mexico, gathering a total of 30 participants. After completing the courses, each leadership team prepared a project to redesign their school and generate a new culture to promote character development. The first section of the paper also describes the practices and strategies included in these projects, showing how they align with the 11 Character.org Principles (Lickona, 1996) and the PRIMED Model for character education (Berkowitz, 2021).

The second section of the paper narrates the development of a spin-off of the project developed in Mexico. A team from the University of Navarra has delivered the vLACE and PRIMED programs in Madrid from September 2022 to July 2023, trying to replicate the same intervention done in Guadalajara but in a self-sustainable way, without any financial aid besides the participant's tuition. In this edition, twelve charter and private education centers participated, gathering 26 participants. An independent website was created for this spin-off and four videos have been released with testimonies of the school principals participating in vLACE, explaining the impact of this initiative in their own character and in their leadership:

- Website: Liderazgo en educación del carácter
- Video 1: Promotional video.

- Video 2: Why is this course different?

- Video 3: What were you looking for?

- Video 4: What are you more grateful for?

Conclusions

Finally, the second section of the paper categorizes and describes the testimonies received from the school principals, trying to identify the major outcomes of this intervention and advocating for this kind of initiative to promote character education in Europe.

Keywords: Character education, Leadership, PRIMED model, 11 Principles of effective character education, School culture and climate.

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Collaborative governance in the university residential settings

to promote character development

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Short abstract

Based on the theory and experience generated at the school level, the university residential settings can be designed to generate communities that contribute to the character development. Collaborative governance is one of the most relevant practices implemented in this kind of institution and is determinant in the generation of an institutional culture. This paper has two objectives: 1) to learn about the implementation of collaborative governance in university residential centers in 5 countries; and 2) to analyze the results through the lens of prominent approaches to moral and character education to make recommendations to help this practice generate a culture that favors character development.

Summary

Introduction

Promoting character development by designing communities to create a nourishing and moral culture or climate is a relatively common approach at the school level (Berger 2003; Berkowitz, 2021; Elbot & Fulton, 2007; Lickona, 2004; Novick et al., 2002). However, this is an infrequent approach at the university level, even though there are many and diverse initiatives seeking to foster character development without emphasizing the design behind the culture or climate.

Based on the theory and experience generated at the school level, university residential contexts can be designed to generate communities that contribute to the character development of their residents. Colegios Mayores, the Spanish version of the traditional European colleges, are a prominent model that can inspire similar centers in the rest of the world.

Objectives

Collaborative governance is one of the most relevant practices implemented in Colegios Mayores, and one that is determinant in the generation of an institutional culture (Dabdoub et al., 2023). Collaborative governance consists of students participating in the government of the community through leadership and management roles, consultation and deliberation processes, and/or decision making, following the mission and values of the community and contributing to its common good (Dabdoub et al., 2023). Whether collaborative governance has a positive, null, or negative impact on character development depends on how it is designed and implemented.

Although the Colegios Mayores have a long tradition of practicing collaborative governance, almost none of them have a formal statement that includes a detailed description of the educational goals pursued, the structures and processes implemented, or an assessment plan for their goals (Oliva, 2010). Furthermore, little or no effort has been made to enhance this practice with the theory and experience of prominent contemporary moral and character education approaches, such as the Just Community approach to moral education (Power, 1988; Power & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2008) or the PRIMED model (Berkowitz, 2021).

This paper is part of the project *Leveraging Colegios Mayores for moral development in higher education through the Just Community approach*, funded by the Association for Moral Education (Dabdoub et al., 2022). It has two objectives: 1) to learn about the implementation of collaborative governance in university residential centers in 5 countries; and 2) to analyze the results through the lens of prominent approaches to moral and character education (Just Communities, PRIMED) to make recommendations to help this practice generate a culture that favors character development.

Method

1. Organize an online Data Gathering Meeting (DGM) with representatives of Colegios Mayores and similar European Colleges to discuss and gather documentation on collaborative governance developed after 2010.
2. The results of the DMG will help to design and apply a survey for Directors of Colegios Mayores to gather data of the actual implementation of collaborative governance practices.
3. Analyze these data in order to find how the Just Community approach can inform this practice to improve its moral development potential.
4. Elaborate a guide, in at least Spanish and English, with the fundamental prescriptions of the Just Community approach theory and with PRIMED model to design, implement, and self-assess collaborative governance practices.
5. Organize an International Online Symposium (IOS) to present the guide and make it known to the network Colegios Mayores and to representatives of similar institutions in other European countries.

Conclusions

This project is extremely significant because it will create necessary resources for educators to leverage the character development potential of this institution and positively impact the lives of thousands of students in Spain and in many other countries with similar institutions.

Key words: Colegios Mayores, Character development, Just Community approach to moral education, PRIMED model for character education, University residential settings.

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Title: How might moral emotion develop in KS2 (7-11 years)?

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Key words: practical wisdom, moral emotion, metacognition, meta emotion, development

Abstract: This paper focuses on the development of moral emotion - a key component of practical wisdom - in the KS2 (7-11 years) age group. Through a literature review, I propose that moral emotion can be conceived in two ways. Firstly, in the Aristotelian sense of emotion fused with reason. Secondly, from a psychological viewpoint, moral emotion is comprised of empathy, sympathy and compassion. I demonstrate how both conceptions share parallels with the widely researched fields of metacognition and meta emotion, and as such these are used to suggest potential development approaches for moral emotion. It is hoped that the findings can inform future evaluative research and classroom practice for moral emotion.

Summary: This literature review seeks to elucidate the concept of moral emotion for the purpose of finding fitting development practices for the KS2 classroom (ages 7-11). A rehearsal of moral emotion's parent concept - practical wisdom - is first provided in order to clarify the educational purposes and benefits of the research: the Aristotelian practical wisdom acts as an over-arching virtue that guides all other virtues towards moral ends (Darnell et al., 2019; Kristjánsson, 2018). It is increasingly viewed as a cornerstone of character education that holds a lot of promise in addressing many of the challenges of the current social climate (e.g. misinformation and conspiracy; a lack of trust and agency in the professions). As of yet, practical wisdom is an under-researched concept that merits far greater attention.

Moral emotion - a key component of practical wisdom - is conceptualised in two main ways. Firstly, on an Aristotelian reading, moral emotion is when emotion becomes fused with reason through a combined process of habituation, mentoring and critical reflection, towards moral ends (Kristjánsson, 2021; Sherman, 1991). Secondly, drawing mainly on psychological research, empathy, sympathy and compassion are singled out as key motivators of prosocial action due to their developmental salience in the chosen age group (7-11 years) (Hoffman, 2000; Malti et al. 2009; Malti & Krettenauer, 2013). Empathy is defined as the emotional capacity to perceive an emotion in another and feel a similar emotional response (Eisenberg, Spinrad, and Knafo-Noam, 2015). Despite lacking in motivational and behavioural components, empathy is included in the conceptualisation of moral emotion as it has been shown that it can still lead to prosocial action (Batson, 1991; Eisenberg et al., 2015; Knafo et al. 2008). Moreover, empathy is viewed as a developmental precursor to sympathy and compassion, which become more reflective and critical in middle childhood, therefore more likely to result in moral action. Sympathy becomes builds on empathy with feelings of sorrow and concern for the other, motivating towards moral action (Eisenberg, Spinrad & Knafo-Noam, 2015). Stronger still, compassion includes the desire to relieve the suffering of another (Miller, 2006).

The above conceptualisation of moral emotion resonates substantially with the fields of metacognition and meta emotion (predominantly emotion regulation). The fusion of emotion with reason requires intrapersonal and interpersonal awareness and critical reflection that lead to better informed judgements. Likewise, this awareness and self-regulation would likely support the transformation of indiscriminate empathy into the more mature sympathy and compassion. Since there is an absence of research into the development of moral emotion in the chosen age group (7-11 years), metacognition and meta emotion are used as a lens through which to consider suitable development approaches for moral emotion. A review of recent studies from these fields indicate the following strategies and variables: structured thinking activities (STA's); teacher-student interactions (TSI); achievement emotions (AE); mindfulness; mentalising; and professional development (PD).

This review has hopefully facilitated a new way of looking at moral emotion's development through the parallels of metacognition and meta emotion that have already been acknowledged as beneficial in other areas of education (Dignath, Buettner, & Langfeldt, 2008). It is hoped that the above strategies may help to inform subsequent research and improve teacher training, as well as provide ideas for classroom exploration. Within the concept of practical wisdom, it is possible that moral emotion can now be viewed as more easily malleable when viewed through the lens of metacognition and meta emotion, potentially leading to improvements in character education initiatives.

Understandings of character and virtue education in Latvia: insights from school practitioners' narratives

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Abstract

This presentation provides the historical and conceptual background of the keynote about the challenges and opportunities for character and virtue education in Latvia. The specific goal of the study was to propose a redefinition of the terms 'character education' and 'virtue education' that would be congruent with current school actors' views in Latvia. Two strategies were used: first, an historical overview of moral education in Latvia from the end of WW2 till 2016 was implemented, as a context for an empirical research (second strategy) based on conceptual analysis and synthesis of school actors' narratives.

As regards the historical overview of moral education in Latvia, content analysis of two relevant teacher training books, three collections of scientific papers, and 367 characterizations of students was used. Latvia, as other post-Soviet countries, experienced cardinal transformations of moral value-systems encompassing the reorientation from socialism throughout liberal and conservative ideology to new-liberal and human inclusive models over a period of 70 years. The initial strong focus on the five pillars of Soviet education (Soviet patriotism, socialist humanism, collectivism, discipline, and strength of character) evolved to a focus on harmonic and holistic personality development. These historical transformations are at the origin of many topical challenges in moral education policy, theory and practice. The main steps of this process will be unfolded in the presentation.

As regards the empirical research, the study used narrative analysis and synthesis of the most relevant insights found in the texts of 700 school actors collected in Latvia in April–May 2018 through a questionnaire. The research question was: 'What understanding of character education and virtue education do the school education actors express in their narratives?' The narratives addressed pupils' diverse attitudes, relationships, behaviours, and actions. Moral education was said to be practically implemented through symbolic (short-term) and substantive (long-term) actions oriented to pupils' internalisation of values and virtues. Participants' understanding, interpreted through the hermeneutic analysis and synthesis of their narratives, was rooted in the individual dominant of character education and the social education of virtues.

There are differences and similarities between this comprehension of character education and virtue education and other understandings of these terms. For instance, in the Anglo-Saxon world, the idea that 'the terms "character education" and "virtue education" are interchangeable' (Kristjánsson, 2013, p. 271) prevails, but the debate over 'what counts as character' and, more specifically, whether character traits or virtues must have a moral and relational component, goes on (Berkowitz, 2021; Watts et al., 2021; JCCV, 2022).

A specific contribution of this study is that the comprehension of character education and virtue education may be differentiated. While, in Latvia, character education has an individual dominant and can be morally neutral, virtue education is necessarily moral because it has a social dominant. The results of this study point to a new direction for moral education: 'the education of a morally virtuous character', as a synthesis of character education and virtue education.

As a conclusion, it is necessary to account for the variety of understandings of character education and virtue education at different levels of the education system, which has its historical roots in

the way it was ideologically, socially, and pedagogically legitimized in academic discourse and pedagogical literature. We believe that this study may have broad implications for countries with comparable socio-cultural backgrounds that are working to build effective international partnerships to address character education and virtue education in lasting ways. Latvian Council of Science project "Effectiveness research of an online curriculum for virtue education in Latvian educational institutions (from grades 1 to 12)", number lzp-2021/1-0385.

Short abstract

This presentation is structured in two sections: first, an historical overview of moral education in Latvia from the end of WW2 till 2016 will be presented. Then, the results of a conceptual research regarding the understandings of 'character education' and 'virtue education' in 2018 will be presented and conclusions will be drawn. The results point to the education of a morally virtuous character, as a synthesis of character education and virtue education. Latvian Council of Science project "Effectiveness research of an online curriculum for virtue education in Latvian educational institutions (from grades 1 to 12)", number lzp-2021/1-0385.

Transformative experiences, moral growth and cyber technology

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One of the most essential moments in one's moral growth or regress is what philosophers and psychologists call formative and transformative experience. It consists of a moral agent's getting into "touch" (one could speak here of a kind of moral perception) with certain moral values in a way that radically transforms the agent's moral beliefs, attitudes, or behaviour. Moral education has traditionally included various methods of evoking experiences of this kind, for example, active participation in morally good actions, taking part in team sports, looking up to moral exemplars, or reading (listening to) heroic literature.

In modern days yet another possibility of evoking transformative moral experience seems promising. A large number of young children and teenagers, at the expense of socializing in traditional ways, or reading valuable literature, spend more and more time playing computer games. From the ethical point of view, most computer games seem to be, at best, neutral or have a negative impact on moral character.

Our aim is to show that the technology underlying digital gaming, thanks to its ability to evoke deep immersion of players in the reality of games, if wisely used, may be helpful in creating conditions for a new kind of transformative moral experience. We will start with a thought experiment of a person undergoing (sometime in the future) a transformative experience leading to her recognition of the evil of slavery. Through deep immersion in the special scenario, she experiences, in first person, what it is like to be a slave maltreated by her owners and, more importantly, faces the injustice of slavery as if she was a real victim of it. The experiment will allow us to discuss the essential elements of this kind of experience, explain why it is so powerful in enabling moral development, and show how it may be artificially evoked by the use of computer gaming. We believe traditional ways, e.g., through immersion in literature, are powerful tools in moral education, however, adding yet another way, which seems promising and attractive to children and adolescents today, should not be neglected as well.

Key terms: moral perception, transformative moral experience, heroic literature, computer games

Abstract

Our presentation focuses on the possible use of computer games to evoke transformative moral experiences. We understand the transformative experience as a form of moral perception in which a person is touched by specific moral values that leads her to understand certain moral truths in a way that strongly motivates her to change her moral actions, attitudes, and consequently her moral character. We are going to argue that the technology standing behind computer games, thanks to its ability to induce children to take other people's perspectives and identify with them, might be a promising tool in moral education.

Title: Character Education in the University: Current Approaches from the Oxford Character Project

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Abstract: The Oxford Character Project has been focused on character education since 2012, and running its own programmes on character and leadership with postgraduates at the University of Oxford since 2014. The current paper will introduce the work of the Oxford Character Project, providing an overview of i) the pedagogy developed by the Oxford Character Project; ii) each of the three programmes run by the Oxford Character Project (The Global Leadership Initiative, The Global Leadership Challenge, and The Global Leadership Summer School); iii) the current longitudinal mixed-method research techniques utilised to evaluate the programmes; and iv) some preliminary results.

Summary:

The Oxford Character Project, based within the University of Oxford, has been running character education programmes for postgraduates since 2014. As part of this, researchers at the centre, along with collaborators at Wake Forest University, North Carolina, have developed and published 7 strategies for the character development of postgraduates. These seven strategies are as follows: 1) habituation through practice; 2) reflection on personal experience; 3) engagement with virtuous exemplars; 4) dialogue that increases virtue literacy; 5) awareness of situational variables; 6) moral reminders; and 7) friendships of mutual accountability.

These 7 strategies are applied across three major programmes run by the Oxford Character Project. The flagship programme, The Global Leadership Initiative, is a 16-week programme which takes aspiring leaders through a course entirely focused on developing leaders who are wise thinkers as well as wise leaders. There are three streams of this programme, in which the programme material is tailored for three specific areas of work. These are: Technology and Innovation; Business and Entrepreneurship; and Law and Public Policy. In collaboration with St Gallen Symposium, Switzerland, we also run the Global Leadership Challenge, a week-long challenge through which young leaders design action projects, with a vision to help students align their personal values and professional aspirations through responsible leadership. Finally, The Global Leadership Summer School is a new 1-week intensive adaptation of the established GLI programme, again run in three streams. Throughout these programmes, the Oxford Character project engages approximately 220 students each year from a wide variety of disciplines, backgrounds, experience and nationality, helping them develop to become virtuous, impactful leaders.

The researchers at the Oxford Character Project apply both longitudinal quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to measure the impact of our programmes. We collect data from participants before the programme begins, after the programme has concluded, and follow up with them 3-months after the programme has concluded. In these surveys, we administer a battery of psychometric tests to explore how students may experience changes in various outcome measures. The tests we apply include: The VIA-96-M (McGrath, 2019); The Intellectual Humility Scale (McElroy et al., 2014); The Situated Wise Reasoning Scale (Brienza et al., 2017); the Brief Resilience Scale (Smith et al., 2008); the Claremont Purpose Scale (Bronk et al., 2018); The Harvard Hope Scale (VanderWeele et al., forthcoming); and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985). This data can be compared with that of control participants. The qualitative data collected takes two forms: 1) short form qualitative evaluation forms and; 2) one hour long semi-structured interviews conducted with alumni of the programme.

Initial statistical tests have showed that GLI participants experience some increases in bravery, curiosity, gratitude, humour, kindness, zest, intellectual humility and purpose as a result of taking part in the programme. The three different streams of the programme further experienced some unique changes that will be discussed in more detail. There are several challenges that will be discussed in the paper, including research design limitations, and future directions the Oxford Character Project is taking, such as designing a 10-year longitudinal study.

The Colegios Mayores: an opportunity for character education at the University

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Abstract

The Colegios Mayores are longstanding educational institutions in Spain that have contributed to the formation of outstanding personalities in culture, politics, and science. As universities face criticism for their inability to provide comprehensive education, these institutions are regarded as a space of resistance. This qualitative case study examines eight Colegios Mayores by analyzing their activity reports in order to identify successful educational practices that promote character formation and liberal education. By shedding light on the value of these living spaces, the research offers insights that can be transferred to other spaces within the Spanish higher education system.

The Colegios Mayores are one of the longest-lived educational institutions in the Spanish university tradition. These centers, born more than six centuries ago, have contributed throughout history to the formation of outstanding personalities from the world of culture, politics, and science and to the promotion and strengthening of the Spanish University. Today, when national and international voices question the ability of the University to provide a comprehensive education beyond the mere professionalization of its students (Esteban Bara, 2022; Fulford, 2022), the Colegios Mayores are presented as a space of resistance to this phenomenon. These institutions' significant educational activity creates an ideal opportunity to explore ways to achieve a character education for Spanish university students.

Despite the solid historical and educational tradition that characterizes these institutions, the academic interest that they have raised has been scarce. However, in the last few years, several investigations have revealed a renewed interest in studying these institutions, given their enormous potential to offer a liberal education that achieves character formation. Thus, Torralba (2022) identified these centers as ideal spaces for the cultivation of virtue, Naval (2022) considered these centers as learning spaces, Dabdoub et al., (2023) pointed out the educational experiences that take place in these centers and make them communities of practice and Ibáñez (2023) analyzed from a hermeneutic-interpretative approach the potential of these spaces from a liberal education and character education perspective. Furthermore, this academic interest in these institutions also converges with a defense of the value of these centers from the political sphere, concretely through the protection of these centers made by the Organic Law of the University System (Cortes Generales, 2022), which asserts the vital contribution made by these institutions to the integral formation of students.

This research explores the educational practices carried out in the Colegios Mayores to identify practices common to liberal education and character education. Therefore, this research pursues a two-fold objective. On the one hand, due to the little knowledge that exists regarding the educational potential of these institutions, this investigation aims to show the tremendous formative value of these living spaces. On the other hand, considering the renewed interest that is taking place in Spain regarding character education, this study aims to enlighten successful pedagogical practices that take place in these institutions, and that can be transferred to other spaces of the Spanish Higher Education system. For this purpose, qualitative case study research has been carried out by analyzing documentary sources. Specifically, the activity reports of the 2021-2022 academic year of eight Spanish Colegios Mayores have been analyzed. Following a research approach based on grounded theory, different categories of analysis have emerged. These categories show how these university centers can be considered as highly educational spaces that offer their students numerous formative experiences related to both liberal education and character education, such as personal tutoring programs and opportunities to exercise servant leadership or to exercise critical thinking.

It is concluded that the educational practices found in the Colegios Mayores offer numerous opportunities for their students to cultivate essential virtues. Therefore, these institutions provide important insights for rethinking character education in Spanish Higher Education.

Keywords: *residential life; character education; humanities; university housing*

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Multicultural character education: A philosophical analysis of the need for multicultural perspective in neo-Aristotelian character education

A. Introduction

This paper argues for the need and a possible way of involving multicultural perspective in neo-Aristotelian character education. Well-being as the aim of education has grabbed a great deal of attention by governments and scholars in philosophy of education. Within those theories, Aristotle's eudaimonia theory has the most potential for offering a concrete way of cultivating virtue to lead a flourishing life. Neo-Aristotelian character education is one of the practical ways of actualising Aristotle's eudaimonia theory. Apart from illustrating the characteristics and contents of Aristotelian and neo-Aristotelian character education, I argue that there is nearly no discussion about multicultural elements in current Aristotelian or neo-Aristotelian character education. With the trend of globalization, multicultural element is an inevitable aspect at schools. Weaving more multicultural considerations into neo-Aristotelian character education can help to promote it.

B. Objective

In this paper, the main purpose is to use a multi-discipline focus to discuss how to make neo-Aristotelian character education more applicable in modern society with a multiculturally sensitive perspective. Complementing the ongoing discussion between philosophy and social psychology, this paper aims at offering a possible way to weave multicultural perspectives into current neo-Aristotelian character education.

C. Method

Philosophical analysis is the method in this paper.

D. Outline

There are three main sections in this paper. In the beginning, the constructs of well-being and education are explored. This section will point out the salience of Aristotle's theory in promoting student's well-being. Secondly, the need for weaving a multicultural perspective into neo-Aristotelian character education is discussed. A

brief illustration of character education in Europe will be given first. Then, it will be followed by an illustration of Aristotelian and neo-Aristotelian character education. Admittedly, neo-Aristotelian character education has expanded the range of traditional Aristotelian character education, for example, by putting more emphasis on abilities such as creativity or open-mindedness, which will help students to flourish in modern society. There is no enough discussion, however, about multicultural perspectives. Civic education and multicultural education have paid attentions to this trend, but not character education. If we want to promote character education, it is necessary to involve multicultural perspective in neo-Aristotelian character education. The last section will flesh out the possibilities of weaving a multicultural perspective into neo-Aristotelian character education from the perspective of social psychology. Firstly, I will explore Aristotle's works and argue that Aristotle leaves some spaces for multicultural elements. For example, 'the golden mean' allows for differences between different people. Aristotle does take individual difference into consideration, therefore, although he does not possess a concept of an individual's personality in a modern sense. Moreover, 'phronesis' (practical wisdom) is another key concept in Aristotle's thought. People need phronesis to make the right moral choice, which seems to call for multicultural variations. Social psychology's perspective will be involved in this section to help offer some guidelines for a multiculturally sensitive neo-Aristotelian character education.

E.   Conclusion

This paper presents the role of neo-Aristotelian character education in leading student towards a flourishing life and how to actualise this goal more effectively with the help of multicultural considerations in character education. With a multicultural perspective, neo-Aristotelian character education can be more influential and more multicultural groups of students can find their own way to flourish.

Key words:
Character education, multicultural sensitivity, Aristotle, social psychology

Short abstract:

This paper argues for the need and a possible way of incorporating a multicultural perspective in neo-Aristotelian character education. With the historical trend of globalization being ever-present in modernity, multicultural elements form an inevitable aspect at schools. Weaving more multicultural considerations into neo-Aristotelian character education can help to promote it beyond its current cultural boundaries. This paper adopts the method of philosophical analysis to explore some relevant theories in philosophy and social psychology. With a multicultural perspective as an additional ingredient, neo-Aristotelian character education can be more influential and more multicultural groups of students can find their own way to flourish.

Some requirements for cultivating human flourishing in Europe today

The aim of this paper is to indicate some conditions for cultivating human flourishing in Europe today, enhancing the potential of its culture and dwelling on the figure of the high school and university teacher.

I.   Education must be integral. A sectorial or exclusively moral education, closed to the question of the meaning of life, of transcendence is insufficient, because it is narrow and unmotivating, risking lapsing into notionism and moralism.

The teacher educates if he or she is in turn educated by the living memory of people and events. The educator must have a clear idea of the good for themselves even if they do not necessarily have to express it explicitly in their teaching. Aiming with their whole self at the end-meaning of life they mature in a unified and articulate way. Two conditions hold:

1. Synchronic-communal dimension. A good education is fostered by participation in a community that tends to be broader than the intellectual one made up of people of different roles and ages in society. There is a need for knowledge of contemporary reality mediated by people who implement it themselves.

2. Diachronic-historical dimension. To educate means to properly propose the past through the living testimony of the teacher. Only in this way can a critical understanding of the past be achieved. The European tradition has distinctive values and the ability to criticize itself. It is a matter of breaking the absolutization of the present as an impenetrable cloak that is the risk of today. One can acknowledge the value of the past and learn from it, while being aware of its limitations. What unites us with people of the past is more than what divides us. There is no such thing as an absolute progress or regress, there is not equally progress in every field and hasty progress can have negative effects at least in the short term.

II.   How to educate by teaching?

1. A good place to start are masterworks, through the concrete experience of beauty (e.g. Michelangelo's *Pietà*). Beauty always constitutes a synthetic moment (the universal in the particular) and maxims today in a largely iconic culture. There is a primacy of awe, intellect combined with affectivity over rational argumentation, which is important but comes later. In fact, for millennia art has been religious (even when it exalts political power) and is naturally open to the ethical-political and metaphysical dimensions. Starting from the work of art concretely, its historical, ethical-political, metaphysical, and religious dimensions can be made explicit at a later stage.

2. Beauty allows one to be open to the past, empathizing with the feelings of humanity and its moral dilemmas (ethical dimension).

3. It is a matter of emphasizing the role of metaphysics, educating a sense of awe versus centering on science alone. The questions of metaphysics are broader than those of science. To absolutize the scientific approach is already to make metaphysics. Furthermore the sciences do not answer the fundamental question about the meaning of life and metaphysics has its own arguments that are not those of science.

4. The religious demand for the salvation of life is ineradicable and stands in necessary relation to that of morality. It arises when the demand for meaning of life, encountering the metaphysical dimension, becomes a radical demand for meaning addressed to the mystery itself. The negative sides of historical religions should also be emphasized, without downgrading the positive demand from which they arise.

The expected result is to foster the emergence of a person who is aware of history, open to the future, attentive to the present, but also capable of relativizing it.

Key words: integrality, past, aesthetics, metaphysics, religion

Abstract

The paper aims to deal with some of the requirements of the high school and university teacher for human flourishing education in Europe in the particular contemporary cultural situation marked by absolutization of the present and a lack of metaphysical awareness. The aim is to propose a figure of teacher that adequately takes into account the social and historical dimensions and opens to the mystery of existence. An integral educational method capable of enhancing the moral, metaphysical and religious dimensions from the aesthetic experience of a concrete masterpiece is suggested. The expected result is to foster the emergence of a figure aware of past history, open to the future, attentive to the present, but also capable, if necessary, of relativizing it.

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Cultivating a Discriminate and Informed Understanding of the *Virtue* of Gratitude in Educational Contexts

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Gratitude is undoubtedly one of the success stories of positive psychology. It has become a staple of positive psychological interventions in educational contexts, as practising gratitude not only has reliable beneficial effects for the individual (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Emmons & Mishra, 2011; Lambert, Fincham & Stillman, 2011), but it also helps to build social bonds (Algoe, Haidt & Gable, 2008; Algoe, 2012).

In this paper, two notes of caution are sounded about promoting gratitude in educational contexts. First, appropriate sensitivity is needed when practising gratitude in the classroom. For example, 'counting one's blessings' may lead to positive affective responses for most people, However, reflecting on benefits may not always be agreeable or satisfying for everyone depending on their circumstances, and social comparisons could be heightened unhelpfully. Similarly, 'grateful reframing' (the intentional reinterpretation of an event or experience as something for which to be grateful) could potentially lead to young people discounting understandable negative reactions rather than owning the full range of their emotions (Morgan, Gulliford & Carr, 2015). Gratitude might then function as a kind of 'defence mechanism'.

The second note of caution concerns the importance of foregrounding the cultivation of gratitude as a *virtue* (Gulliford, 2018; Carr, Morgan & Gulliford, 2015). Practices such as Seligman's 'Gratitude Visit' have been found to be successful components of positive educational practices, reliably increasing happiness and reducing depression (Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005). However, gratitude must be taught in a way which foregrounds its status as a virtue (Navarro & Tudge, 2020), that needs to be cultivated with an awareness of its relation to other moral principles and virtues with which it may even conflict (Jackson, 2016). When gratefulness is cultivated primarily to boost an individual's subjective wellbeing, moral reasons for promoting gratitude may be overlooked, and what gratitude requires of us in relation to our benefactors could be neglected, resulting in an impoverished conception of gratitude.

Keywords
Gratitude
Gratitude interventions
Positive psychology
Virtue

Short Abstract

This paper sounds two notes of caution about promoting gratitude in educational contexts. Reflecting on benefits may not always be satisfying for everyone depending on their circumstances, and social comparisons could be heightened unhelpfully in the classroom. Furthermore, 'grateful reframing' could potentially lead to young people discounting understandable negative reactions (Morgan, Gulliford & Carr, 2015).

The second note of caution concerns the importance of foregrounding the cultivation of gratitude as a *virtue* (Gulliford, 2018; Carr, Morgan & Gulliford, 2015). Gratitude must be taught in a way that foregrounds its status as a virtue (Navarro & Tudge, 2020). When promoted primarily to boost subjective wellbeing, moral reasons for cultivating gratitude may be overlooked, and what gratitude requires of us in relation to our benefactors could be neglected, resulting in an impoverished conception of gratitude.

Title: Is good character all that counts? A general factor of character explains most of the variance in participants' life satisfaction

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Abstract (100 words)

Character strengths predict many positive psychological outcomes but no one studied whether a general factor of character might explain these associations. Using two samples (14,364 and 944 participants) and a bifactor model, we show that the specific character strengths are not associated (with few exception) to life satisfaction, mental health, and distress symptoms, but the general factor consistently related to all the outcomes. These results highlight the need to better understand what this general factor really represents to finally capture the mechanisms linking character strengths between each other and with external outcomes.

Summary (500-600 words)

Introduction: Character strengths have received attention from psychological researchers and clinicians because their importance for individuals' well-being, growth, and self-actualization appears to be compelling. Research on character strengths, however, is still in its infancy, and there remains much to be done to overcome the limitations encountered so far and reach a broader consensus on their validity and meaning. For instance, character strengths were initially described as 24 strengths belonging to six overarching virtues, but this structure was rarely confirmed statistically, and different studies tended to find new and not-replicated factorial structures. In addition, the diversity of methodological approaches applied to study the structure and external validity of character strengths may make it more difficult to precisely comprehend what character strengths are (both theoretically and statistically) and what they do (what outcomes they relate to and what role they perform). A solution to this issue could be to theoretically think of character strengths in terms of a bifactor model (Ng et al., 2017), or in other words, to picture them as composed of on the one hand a general factor – emerging from the positive correlation between all strengths and capturing what we may refer to as "good character"– and the 24 specific character strengths on the other hand.

Objectives: A bifactor approach provides an opportunity to test whether the common factor predicts external outcomes or whether specific strengths (also) make unique contributions. Indeed, this common factor may have an important predictive role, possibly overshadowing that of specific character strengths. If that is the case, we would argue that the general factor is what counts and character strengths should be modelled and approached accordingly, but further research will be needed to fully understand the origin and the meaning of the general factor.

Methods: To this aim we fitted a bifactor model on two different samples (14364 and 944 participants) and used it to predict life satisfaction (sample 1), mental health, and general distress (sample 2). All the analyses were run in R using the package '*lavaan*' and a structural equation modelling approach.

Results: Results show that a bifactor model fits the data well (or even better than competing models) in both the datasets. Additionally, regression analyses show that -when the general factor of character plus

the 24 character strengths are contemporary added as predictors of life satisfaction, or mental health, or general distress- only the general factor substantially predicts the dependent variables. The only exceptions were hope, zest, and gratitude.

Conclusions: We can generally argue that character strengths are composed in part of variance common to all of them ("good character"), which is consistently effective in sustaining individuals' well-being and general mental health, and in part of specific variance pertaining to each unique character strength, which is generally not positively associated with well-being and general mental health. These results may undermine the validity of previous findings on the predictive role of specific character strengths (and their measurement), but simultaneously support the approach taken by psychologists working on strength-based interventions and unveil what really counts among character strengths: good character. Studies are now needed to further understand the common factor of character.

Keywords: character strengths; life satisfaction; mental health; bifactor; measurement

Story-Based Character Education: Opportunities to Learn from and Enhance Character Education Practice in Primary Schools

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Summary

Stories have long been used as a vehicle to teach about character and virtue. Insight into the efficacy and potential of using stories for this purpose can be gained through reviewing historical approaches, theory, and research studies. However, while historical and contemporary theory and research on this topic can be illuminating, there has been a notable absence of research into the perceptions and approaches of those who arguably have the best understanding of children's learning: classroom teachers. This paper discusses the findings of a research study which examined how, and the extent to which, primary school teachers in England *value* and *use* stories as a vehicle to teach character education. The practical implications of the research findings are discussed, focusing on (a) how story-based character education might be enhanced through the training and development of teachers; and, (b) how knowledge of primary school teachers' approaches might shape future research in the field.

The research study followed a quasi-mixed design in which there were two strands running sequentially. In strand one, predominantly quantitative data were collected through a survey which was administered to primary school teachers online. In strand two, qualitative data were collected through one-to-one semi-structured interviews with primary school teachers. The research findings offer new insight into how primary school teachers value and use stories as a vehicle for teaching character education, including how teachers' perceptions and approaches align with those documented in the existing literature. As such, the findings highlight areas of current practice that corroborate, but also add qualification to and extend, existing knowledge in the field.

Stories were highlighted as the *primary* and *most useful* vehicle that primary school teachers have at their disposal to develop the character of their pupils. The findings also reveal that primary school teachers seek to facilitate pupils' learning from short stories through

questioning, discussion, and other reading-related activities. While some of the approaches used by primary school teachers appear to overlap with those documented in the existing literature, the story types used in primary schools differ to the story types advocated in some research-informed and contemporary approaches. Primary school teachers utilise short, simplistic stories and appear to refrain from using more detailed narratives. As a result, it is contended that opportunities to develop capacities associated with the moral imagination and virtue literacy, such as the ability of pupils to deliberate and reason about competing virtues in story and real-life contexts, may be missed.

The findings also reveal that very few primary school teachers have received training in using stories to teach character education, despite the majority reporting that they use stories for this purpose at least once a week. While primary school teachers are conscious of some of factors that have previously been found to influence children's learning from stories, such as the age of story characters and similarity of story contexts to pupils' lives, the potential detrimental effects of fantastical story content are not acknowledged to the same extent. These findings have implications for the future training and development of primary school teachers; there appears to be a need for professional development in the use of stories to teach character education and related areas in schools. There may be potential to enhance practice through engagement with the existing theory and research literature which points to the value of using rich story characters and contexts as a basis for developing virtue reasoning and deliberation.

Key Words

Stories, primary/elementary education, character, virtue, approaches

Short Abstract

This paper focuses on opportunities to enhance story-based character education. It first discusses the findings of a research study which examined how, and the extent to which, primary school teachers in England *value* and *use* stories as a vehicle to teach character education. Some of the practical implications of the research findings are then deliberated, focusing on (a) how story-based character education might be enhanced through the training and development of teachers; and, (b) how knowledge of primary school teachers' approaches might shape future research in the field.

Teaching character in classroom through dialogic approach: empirical findings

Romana Martincová[1], Martin Brestovanský[1], Eva Bačkorová[1]

Abstract

The aim of the paper is to describe how teachers implement character education through a dialogical approach (Alexander, 2008) during practice of Ethical education lessons. Using the method of microethnography (Bloome & Power Carter, 2013), we investigated the success of implementing a dialogic approach to the moral reflection phase by observing indicators of dialogic teaching and analysing the ways teachers structured moral reflection. The observations were compared with the theoretically anchored structure of moral reflection (Wisenganger & Brestovanský, unpublished). At the same time, we analysed how teachers thematised virtue in the reflection phase. The research sample consisted of 5 teachers, the data were the transcriptions of video-recordings achieved during their lessons. Findings show that there are strong ties between the quality of the sensitization stimulus (evocation) and the emergence of triadic communication, which is the most significant factor in the student's learning through dialogue.

Summary

As part of further teacher professional development, we used the method of microethnography (Bloome & Power Carter, 2013) to investigate the success of implementing a dialogic approach to the moral reflection phase by observing indicators of dialogic teaching and analysing the ways teachers structured moral reflection. The observations were compared with the theoretically anchored structure of moral reflection (Wisenganger & Brestovanský, unpublished). At the same time, we analysed how teachers thematised virtue in the reflection phase. The research sample consisted of 5 teachers, the data were the transcriptions of video-recordings achieved during their lessons.

Methodological seminars and webinars for ethical education teachers organized by the research team were included into the research project. The teachers were instructed to transform their own teaching approaches to dialogic teaching, deepening the content with elements of virtue ethics.

After completing the training, teachers were given the opportunity to experiment with the acquired knowledge in instructional practice, while receiving support from the research team in the implementation steps. Lessons were recorded and the videos were transcribed and analysed through three categories of observed indicators: a) dialogic teaching (quality of teachers' questions, quality of students' answers, triadic communication); b) structure of moral reflection (phenomenological and personalised questions); c) thematising a virtue. Teachers reflected on their lesson experiences with a researcher using in-depth analysis of selected video sequences after each lesson.

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The results show that the teachers were gradually able to introduce dialogic elements into the teaching to an increasing degree, but most of the sequences still did not contain a sufficient number of cognitively demanding, open-ended questions to the students (questions that required thought and an elaborated response), which does not encourage the students to give answers containing justification or argument. Triadic interaction appeared rarely. Argumentation and longer statements by students were increasing slightly, however, students´ one-word answers or the use of learned phrases still prevailed. At the same time, the teachers' questions focused on virtues only to a small extent, mostly in an implicit form. The problem was also manifested by the students´ low verbal capacity to explicitly verbalize the goodness recognized in sensitisation stimulus, or by their focus on the absence of virtue rather than its presence. There were strong ties between the quality of the sensitisation stimulus and the emergence of triadic communication, which is considered the most important factor in the student's learning in dialogue (Šeďová et al., 2016).

In order to improve the quality of teaching in ethical education, it is necessary to strengthen the holistic dimension of the educational approach: the implementation of only partial isolated components (dialogic teaching, properly used structure of moral reflection, thematization of the elements of virtue ethics) does not create sufficient dynamics of the class group with significantly enriching conclusions and decisions affecting the practical life of the students. In addition, this dynamic is influenced by a large number of contextual factors teachers´ attitudes, the classroom climate, and the school environment, which cannot be separated from the teaching process, and which constantly influence its course and effectiveness. For ethical education, the key parameter is the culture of the school, which is either set to support the development of character or, on the contrary, marginalizes this topic, which is manifested at all levels (leadership, teaching staff, students, parents). In the classroom context, an important factor influencing the educational process is the teacher's modelling relationship with the students (the quality of their interaction). However, dialogic approach as an instructional approach is one of the manifestations of this paradigm shift.

Key words: ethical education, moral reflection, dialogical teaching, character education.

A REASONABLE ETHICS FOR EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Jonathan is our fictional character. He is at an important crossroads of his life. He must make a decision about his educational path, taking into account a few important factors. Being more sensible than the average of his peers, Jonathan wants to gather the necessary – intellectual and moral – resources to tackle at least three major problems of adolescence in contemporary liberal-democratic societies: the allures of 'video-society', consumerism and self-centeredness. In short, he already understands that wasting too much of his time in watching videos on his devices, letting his choices be directed by desires of new goods of all kinds and dedicating too much time and attention to himself only, are choices which limit the flourishing of his life. He is vaguely aware that his personal flourishing should include at least improvements in knowledge and understanding, fulfilling relations with his fellows, developing a balanced emotional life. Also, looking at his parents and other relevant models he knows that in the future he must be able to acquire standing and recognition in his working life and to establish some sort of continuity of life between himself, his parents and his eventual children.

Jonathan's aspirations as a student appear reasonable in a contemporary liberal democracy. We should now locate ourselves on the side of educators and check what is on offer in educational theory with respect to his perspectives of flourishing. Jonathan's school principal has a few relevant choices to make. (1) Should they design an ideal-based theory for education or should they remain closer to real life and its problems? (2) Should a curriculum be designed having in view, first, personal flourishing or what society demands? (3) If we design a curriculum for personal flourishing, can we use an objective account of character and the virtues or would this account be charged with paternalism? (4) If we consider society demands first, how to adjudicate between the competing accounts coming from liberal, utilitarian, libertarian, or conservative quarters? (5) Finally, what should be the relative positions and authority of families, school and the state?

Overall, once we achieve some picture from the previous questions, it is desirable that Jonathan completes his education curriculum achieving some presuppositions that will ground his personal flourishing, whatever the concrete choices he will make in real society. Self-development through character education is important for him, whatever the political direction of public policies (see 4 above). I conclude that it is reasonable to say that a liberal-democratic society can be only improved by character education because each person so formed will care more about their personal flourishing and their flourishing as a community. Society demands should be contempered to the demands of personal flourishing, while public flourishing can make sense on this view only if aligned with the latter.

Title

Moral reasoning strategies and wise career decision making at school and university: Findings from a UK-representative sample

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Short abstract (93 words)

Schools often teach students employability skills and prepare them for the working world, but quality education should also offer personal development. We asked 491 adults about their previous career decision-making processes and measured current levels of flourishing. We found that individuals who previously used character-based reasoning in their career decisions were more likely to currently be flourishing. Consequentialist reasoning weakly and infrequently correlated with flourishing, and deontological reasoning was negatively correlated with flourishing. The study suggests the need to focus on developing students' moral character in careers provision, complementing current character education offerings.

Long abstract (577 words)

Context:

In order to ensure that schools are providing their students with a well-rounded education, UK schools are required to help students understand the working world and gain employability skills. This means that schools must educate students about the job market, the skills and qualities that employers look for, and how to prepare for and succeed in the workplace. By incorporating these lessons into their curriculum, schools can equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in their future careers.

Problem:

The aim of education is not just limited to helping students prepare for the working world. Education aims to enable students to flourish in all aspects of their life, long after they leave school (see Kristjánsson, 2020). This means that the education system should not just focus on providing

students with job readiness skills, but it should also consider their overall well-being and personal development. In light of this, students' career decisions should be made with the aim of promoting long-term flourishing, which extends beyond just career readiness and educational attainment.

The Current Study:

In this survey study, we asked a representative sample of UK adults (N = 491) to reflect on their career decision-making processes at school and at university. We also measured current levels of objective (e.g., financial security) and subjectively (e.g., subjective well-being) assessed flourishing. The open-ended career decision reflections were coded deductively for three moral reasoning strategies: virtue ethical, consequentialist, and deontological. Individuals who use virtue-based reasoning considered how their career choices will align with their moral identity. Those using consequentialist reasoning weighed the potential outcomes and consequences of their choices. Those using deontological reasoning focused on whether their career choices adhered to rules, principles, norms or duties.

Analyses:

Participant demographics were first compared with census data to ensure sample representativeness. Two moral philosophers then coded qualitative responses to questions about career decision-making strategies, with high agreement between both coders (95.54%). Using correlations and structural equation modelling (SEM), we then examined the association between the propensity for using each moral reasoning strategy in past career decisions and current levels of subjective and objective flourishing.

Findings:

Virtue ethical moral reasoning in relation to career decision-making correlated with aspects of flourishing most strongly and frequently. Consequentialist reasoning weakly and infrequently positively correlated with aspects of flourishing. Deontological reasoning either did not correlate with flourishing at all, or negatively correlated with flourishing. The same general pattern of relationships was borne out in the SEM, with moral reasoning strategies predicting objective and subjective flourishing equally well.

Implications:

The findings of the study have important implications for careers provision in the UK and abroad. The results suggest that the reasoning strategy used by individuals when making career decisions during their school or university years is a crucial factor to consider in the current practice of careers provision in schools and universities. These results highlight the need for careers provision to focus on helping students to understand and develop their own moral reasoning strategies, rather than simply providing information about job opportunities or salary expectations. By doing so, careers provision can help students to make informed and meaningful career decisions that are not just based on practical considerations but also on their own personal values and long-term goals. These findings indicate that incorporating a focus on moral reasoning strategies into careers provision would be in line with best practices, complementing existing character education offerings, which could lead to better outcomes for students in the long run.

Teaching how transmit values through literature

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Summary

Many teacher training schools include a subject in which future teachers learn how to teach values through literature. This paper presents a practical case of a didactic innovation implemented in the "Literature and Values" subject, taught to students of the Early Childhood Education degree at the Francisco de Vitoria University.

Educational intervention

To improve student learning, the teaching objectives and methodology were reorganized, beginning with the review of the goal of the subject from an "expanded reason" perspective. The aim was to teach students to understand their own life and the teaching profession as a work of art and a moral praxis. We wanted the students to have an ethical and aesthetic experience that would allow them to discover their future teaching profession as a literary and, specially, as a performative exercise.

Methodology of research

A quantitative and qualitative assessment of the results of the intervention was made. We present comparative results gathered from the student surveys on their assessment of the subject and on the methodologies used throughout the course. We used the analysis of variance (unifactorial ANOVA), based on the qualitative analysis, to identify if students had changed their perception on the subject and to verify if the new teaching methodology produced a significant change. We also present qualitative results that identified the positive and negative elements of the educational intervention.

Discussion and conclusion

The quantitative and qualitative evidence show that the didactic innovation we carried out had positive results. The students value the practical learning method of this subject: learning by doing. They also value positively that the subject is related with the exercise of their future teaching profession and with the motivations for which they have chosen to be teachers. They are aware that their profession involves educating children in virtues and values, so they must practice them. They recognize that literature is an excellent vehicle to educate children in virtues and values.

Regarding the didactic methodologies, the students don't seem to have one preference: 1) they positively value the master classes when they address relevant topics and feel challenged by them, 2) they also value the practical exercises such as writing a story or telling it to a child, as well as performing a children's theatre play. 3) However, they express their difficulty in working on a team, especially if it involves doing it outside of class hours. 4) They expressed that methodologies such as project-based learning, gamification or the use of

rubrics for evaluation have not been particularly useful for their learning. 5) However, they recognize that some activities have favored interpersonal relationships and enriched their virtues.

In conclusion, changing the goal of the subject and relating it to the vocation and profession of the teacher had a positive impact on learning. In addition, when there is a good interpersonal relationship between students and teacher, the teaching strategies are better embraced and achieve effectively their learning objective.

Keywords: value, virtue, literature, teacher training, didactics

Abstract

This paper presents a practical case of a didactic innovation implemented in the "Literature and Values" subject, taught to students of the Early Childhood Education degree at the Francisco de Vitoria University.

The teaching objectives and methodology were reorganized from an "expanded reason" perspective. The aim was to teach students to understand their own life and the teaching profession as a work of art and a moral praxis.

A quantitative and qualitative assessment of the results of the intervention was made. The intervention had a positive impact on learning. The students had an ethical and aesthetic experience.

Character Education Conference 2023

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Title: 'Revising the Definition of Virtue Literacy: A Comprehensive Framework for Character Education in Primary Schools'

<u>500 words</u>

Introduction

The aim of this proposal is to present a revised definition of virtue literacy that can be taught in primary schools, with a focus on supporting the character development of children at a pre-practical wisdom stage. The current focus on character education in primary and secondary schooling has been met with limited attention given to the development and delivery of virtue literacy. This proposal seeks to address this gap by providing a clear and practical framework for primary schools to cultivate virtue literacy in children, with the goal of shaping them into responsible and moral agents. The revised definition will draw on current psychological research and emphasise the enhancement of virtue knowledge and understanding, perception, the constitutive function, and virtue reflection.

Objective

The main aim of this proposal is to revise the definition of virtue literacy and provide a clear and practical framework for primary schools to support the character development of children at a pre-practical wisdom stage.

Method

The method of this proposal involves a comprehensive review of current psychological research on character education and the development of virtue literacy in children. This review will inform the revision of the definition of virtue literacy, highlighting the key components necessary for primary schools to support the character development of children. The revised definition will emphasise the enhancement of virtue knowledge and understanding, perception, the constitutive function, and virtue reflection, with the goal of laying the foundation for cultivating practical wisdom in children. The method will also include a practical implementation plan for primary schools, providing guidance on how to deliver the revised definition of virtue literacy to 7-8-year-old children in a clear and accessible manner. The implementation plan will also consider any potential implementation challenges and provide solutions to overcome these barriers.

Summary

The revised definition of virtue literacy proposed in this proposal differs from the definition provided by the Jubilee Centre in several ways. Firstly, the revised definition is tailored specifically to 7-8-year-old children, who are at a pre-practical wisdom stage of

understanding. The Jubilee Centre definition, while comprehensive, may be too complex for this target group. Secondly, the revised definition places greater emphasis on the enhancement of virtue knowledge and understanding, perception, and the constitutive function proposed by Darnell et al. (2019). This emphasis reflects current psychological research which shows that children at this age are not yet capable of reasoning between conflicting virtues and requires a more robust approach to lay the foundation for cultivating practical wisdom in the future. Finally, the revised definition adds virtue reflection as a central component in developing moral agents. This component is designed to encourage children to reflect on their actions and thoughts, promoting the development of personal responsibility and a sense of moral agency. In conclusion, the revised definition provides a clear and practical framework for primary schools to support the character development of children and to cultivate practical wisdom in the future.

5 keywords – Education, Virtue, Character, Schools, Children

<u>100-word Abstract</u>

The revised definition of virtue literacy is tailored to 7-8-year-old children and places greater emphasis on enhancing virtue knowledge and understanding, perception, the constitutive function of virtue reasoning, and adds virtue reflection as a central component. This definition is informed by current psychological research and is designed to lay the foundation for cultivating practical wisdom in children. The revised definition provides a clear and practical framework for primary schools to support the character development of children and cultivate personal responsibility and a sense of moral agency. It differs from the Jubilee Centre definition by being more accessible to the target group, placing greater emphasis on key components and adding virtue reflection as a central component.

Title: *Entangled Phronesis and the Four Causes of Emulation: Developmental Insights into Role Modelling*

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Abstract
A new theory of emulation is emerging through the combined efforts of philosophers, psychologists and educationists. Using a previous argument reconceptualising emulation as a moral virtue as a philosophical springboard, in this paper, I build a more robust case for how emulation *qua* role modelling works in practice through appeal to Aristotle's account of causation: the four causes. I argue that reconstructing the four causes, and synthesising them with emulation, helps us better comprehend it as a quadripartite causal process, and further suggest that emulation is driven by entangled *phronesis* – a form of rational moral communication where exemplars share their practical wisdom with learners.

Key words
Role modelling, emulation, Aristotle's four causes, *phronesis*, moral development

Summary
A new theory of emulation – the method by which one learns from moral role models – is emerging through the combined efforts of philosophers, psychologists and educationists. In a previous paper, I set the scene for this theory by proposing a reconstructed neo-Aristotelian account of emulation as a moral virtue. Inspired by Aristotle's focus on emulation *qua* role modelling as a method of virtuous character development in both his *Rhetoric* and *Nicomachean Ethics*, but noticing there was something amiss in his and his neo-Aristotelian sympathisers categorisation of it as purely a virtuous emotion, I proposed it be reconceptualised as a moral virtue in its own right. Put simply, virtuous emotions – as elements of virtues – comprise: perception, thought (cognition), physical feelings and a *behavioural suggestion*. However, as virtue proper must include *virtuous action*, and virtuous emotion necessitates only a *suggestion* to said action, as a matter of logical coherence emulation must also include action because it is explicitly associated with *virtue* development.

Whether in Europe or beyond, understanding emulation as a moral virtue is educationally salient because it provides a conceptual umbrella with which to explain and clarify the *whole process* through which one develops *both* virtuous emotion and action, i.e., virtue, from moral exemplars. Indeed, since pedagogically speaking role models are required to develop virtue, and inevitability teachers *just are* moral role models to pupils, this creates a substantial empirical case for role modelling to be taken seriously by teachers and teacher educators. Yet despite its prominence as a central method of virtuous character development, proponents of virtue ethics remain conflicted as to the precise mechanisms which facilitate learning from exemplars – a conundrum which is no doubt exacerbated by Aristotle's renowned lack of explicit guidance on the matter.

Assuming my previous argument is convincing, in this paper, I thus build a more robust case for how emulation *qua* role modelling works in practice through appeal to Aristotle's account of causation: the four causes. Historically revered for their explanatory power, I employ the four causes to strengthen the foundations of this emerging theory by using them to expound emulation as a quadripartite causal process. By first proposing a temporally ordered four-causal account of virtue, I argue that the four causes of emulation comprise:

- **the efficient cause:** the moral agent's perception of the exemplar's virtues as representative of a moral ideal;
- **the formal cause:** the *phronetically* informed evaluation that these ideals are worthy of emulation, possible to acquire and deserved;
- **the material cause:** *physically feeling* the distress *and* admiration, associated with one's lack of the desired quality, i.e., the role model represented ideal;

- **the final cause:** virtuous action concerning ends - putting the role model represented ideal of virtue into practice.

I also argue that emulation is driven by entangled *phronesis* – a mechanism which enables immature moral learners to acquire virtue by sharing in the *phronesis,* i.e., practical wisdom, of a role model and their blueprint of a flourishing life. Essentially a form of rational moral communication, I propose that the degree of entanglement depends upon a learner's phase of virtuous character development, and accordingly divide emulation into two types: *pre-phronetic* 'habituated emulation' and *phronetically-informed* 'complete emulation'. Since the journey from habituated virtue to full virtue is a lifelong process, my position implies that a form of emulation could persist, albeit in developmentally sensitive ways, throughout a person's life.

Taken together, the four causes, as described, add explanatory power and methodological vigour to emulation *qua* role modelling, and in this paper, I apply this philosophical argument to a possible account of how teachers are emulated by students in a European classroom context.

Leading Character Education in Schools: Designing an Online CPD Programme

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Key words
Character education, teacher education, professional development, schools.

Short Abstract
This paper presents the design approach, programme content and evaluation of the Jubilee Centre's online character education Continued Professional Development (CPD) programme, *Leading Character Education in Schools*. The programme forms the concluding part of the Jubilee Centre's *Teacher Education* research project, exploring how teachers are prepared and supported to meet the moral and ethical demands of their role. Currently over 3,000 educational leaders have registered from 65 countries. This paper will make recommendations for how a framework for future research and design methodology for producing large online teacher training programmes can be developed.

Summary
This paper presents the design approach, programme content and evaluation of the Jubilee Centre's online character education Continued Professional Development (CPD) programme, _Leading Character Education in Schools_. This paper will make recommendations for how a framework for future research and design methodology for producing large online teacher training programmes can be developed.

The programme, launched in April 2020, builds on school-based research conducted by the Jubilee Centre since 2012 and addresses recent developments in education policy. The programme forms the concluding part of the Jubilee Centre's _Teacher Education_ research project, exploring how teachers are prepared and supported to meet the moral and ethical demands of their role. Currently over 3,000 educational leaders have registered from 65 countries, and numbers continue to grow.

Research was conducted, with over 450 UK teachers, to ensure the programme is structured in a way that will help the user get the most from their online learning experience. The virtual learning environment supports a flexible learning journey which encourages the user to immerse themselves in the research, activities and resources provided. As part of the design approach the programme was developed with Headteachers and character leads from eight U.K. schools who have first-hand experience of implementing character education in schools. To ensure the programme was rigorously evaluated a pilot, with over 90 practitioners from six countries, was conducted and showed that 100% of participants felt the programme had impacted positively on their practice and that they would recommend it to others.

The *Leading Character Education in Schools* CPD programme empowers teachers and senior leaders with the knowledge and resources to answer the two key questions often asked of character education: 'How do you do it?' and 'What does a *School of Character* look like?' The programme enables teachers to engage with research in the field of character education and provides a 'window' into eight UK schools that have been recognised for their character education provision. It also provides teachers with the knowledge and practical tools to evaluate and enhance their school's character education provision so that they are better equipped to become a leaders of character education within their school and community.

The research methodology, design and evaluation approaches discussed within this paper demonstrate a successful approach for developing innovative and challenging online professional learning opportunities for teachers and schools in regard to character education. It makes recommendations to others wishing to develop similar online environments to enable teachers and schools to develop their understanding and practice of character and virtue.

TITLE: "Transformative Virtues in Character Education"
AUTHOR: Matilde Liberti
AFFILIATION: University of Genoa. FINO (Northwestern Italian) PhD Consortium and *Aretai* Centre on Virtues.

ABSTRACT

I will argue that character education cannot do without a particular set of virtues – "transformative virtues" – that allow agents to revise their existing ethical paradigms in light of new ethical affordances. These virtues are the meta-virtue of *phronesis*, and a cluster of intellectual virtues divided between virtues of "wholeness" and virtues of "mental flexibility". The urge is that pupils not only undergo ladder-like moral development, but also cultivate the possibility to *transcend* what they internalized throughout the steps of their moral development.

KEYWORDS: transformative virtues, intellectual virtues, *phronesis*, education

SUMMARY

In this paper I will defend the importance of a set of virtues that Bina et al (manuscript) identify as "transformative" insofar as they provide the agent with the necessary tools to revise and potentially disrupt existing moral paradigms and, thus, be open to moral progress.
A provisional list of transformative virtues can be traced as follows:

1. *Practical wisdom.* Notwithstanding current disagreement on how to make sense of *phronesis*, all accounts agree that practical wisdom has, among others, the following crucial functions: to provide the ability to perceive the salient ethical features of a given situation; to guide the agent in adjudicating among conflicting moral requirements of a given situation and, more controversially, among conflicting goals of different virtues; to offer an orientation to the goal(s) which constitute(s) a good and flourishing life; to guarantee some form of emotional regulation, which brings emotions in line with one's moral judgment (Darnell et al., 2019: 18-20).

2. *Virtues of "intellectual wholeness"* (Baehr 2021), such as intellectual integrity, honesty, humility, transparency, self-awareness, and self-scrutiny, which all play a key role in questioning one's beliefs in light of new evidence, as well as in allowing the agent to "own" her new moral configurations.

3. *Virtues of "mental flexibility"* (Baehr 2021), such as imaginativeness, creativity, intellectual flexibility, open mindedness, agility, and adaptability, which all play a key role in the reconfiguration of one's ethical paradigms to the extent that is required.

Let us put this into practice. There are situations in which, given our existing moral paradigms, we experience some sort of cognitive dissonance when it comes to making sense of the situation at hand, and this is especially true when individuals are still in the process of developing as moral agents. Imagine a teenager who interiorized the principle that one should never steal, but who, one day, witnesses a homeless man stealing a loaf of bread from a supermarket. She feels somehow conflicted about it; she still thinks that stealing is wrong, but she also

feels that something *else* is wrong in what she has witnessed, something potentially overriding. *Phronesis* is what allows her to make sense of these new affordances of the situation (stealing-as-wrong, but also starving-condition-as-wrong), as well as what guides her towards a new reconfiguration of her moral paradigm (stealing is wrong, but there are situations in which what is *salient* is that people are starving). However, the whole job of revising one's own ethical paradigm cannot be just on *phronesis'* shoulders; virtues of mental flexibility allow the teenager to be open to revision, and to revise her moral configurations in a creative way ("thinking outside the box") to the appropriate extent (she does not need to throw away all her principles, just to see them under a new, more complex light); at the same time, virtues of intellectual wholeness allow her to be motivated to undergo such revision, but also to do so in a way that she would still perceive as *hers*.

In conclusion, the current proposal is that a projects that centre on character education should aim at fostering transformative virtues, since they are the tool that pupils need in order to develop as morally autonomous, sensitive and integral agents. Projects such as the Intellectual Virtues Academy at Long Beach[1] are a promising starting point; an European counterpart should integrate it with the morally transformative tools proposed in this paper.

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[1] "Intellectual Virtues Academy" Public School at Long Beach https://www.academylongbeach.org/

ABSTRACT

The Virtues of *Studiositas* and Friendship
or
About Saving the School in Europe

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Schools in Europe are attacked by sloth and indifference, although students and teachers persevere in desiring truth and love.

The objective of this paper is to participate in the attempt at clarifying the nature of studiousness, as the virtue that enables one to pursuit knowledge, and its relationship with friendship.

After exposing what *studiositas* and friendship are and how they connect, we engage in a case study, interviewing students at a Portuguese school, so as to verify how they experience those two factors of their academic life. We conclude by comparing the conceptual framework with the findings of the interviews.

SUMMARY

The crisis[1] in European schools seems a crack in the heart of what a school is: a place of studiousness and friendship. There is a gap between the cognitive energy of teachers and students and reality, and a weakness within the student-teacher relationship. Those flaws separate learning from friendship, making it difficult for both students and teachers to experience joy, which implies learning and friendship. Across Europe, teachers speak of difficulties in motivating students to learn and to study. The cognitive competences appear to encounter less stimuli during classes, and students often report feeling uninterested and indolent towards academic proposals. As to relationships, Newman's "heart to heart" experience[2] seems in many cases not possible, with students closed within a "teen mentality"

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that begins sooner and that estranges teachers in "another world". Teachers are themselves many times living lives of personal solitude, and schools are for many only the labor place, with indifferent or coconspirator human schemes, and not a community of friends.

These fissures may let in some light about what the human heart desires within school life, for knowledge and relationships cannot be reduced to ideologic abstractions or to pragmatic instrumentalizations [3]. Breaking those tight schemes implies opening crevices that can put us on track of a more adequate European school experience. Learning and cultivating friendship seem to be the two main features of a school community.[4] Freedom to engage in such an attempt is one of the main requisites of a new school experience, adequate to fulfill the aspirations of both European teachers and students.[5] Trust between students and teachers is essential[6].

We first explore how the virtue of studiousness[7] can enlighten the teaching-learning experience; then we consider friendship as a school virtue. We then analyze the interviews of students and teachers in a Portuguese school to access their experience of studiousness and friendship.

Finally, we draw conclusions about school virtues challenges.

Key Words: studiousness, friendship within schools, educational crisis, education of virtues.

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A comprehensive, blended learning program for educational leadership

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Abstract

This proposal contributes to an emerging field of virtues-based leadership development in the educational context. A comprehensive, blended learning program for educational leadership (BE-IDOL) is proposed, aimed at promoting the holistic development and flourishing of teachers through the cultivation of moral, civic, intellectual, and performative virtues. The program will combine remote and face-to-face training, All Spanish teachers and educational institutions of any formative stage will be able to benefit from it. The effectiveness of the program will be evaluated through a longitudinal study, with a control group and an experimental group. The BE-IDOL program is an important first step to promote virtue-based leadership in the Spanish educational context.

Key words: virtues, leadership, educational leadership, flourishing, teachers.

Introduction

Although several research have evidenced the role of character strengths in well-being, life satisfaction and mental and physical health (Proyer et al., 2013), the design and development of approaches to help people in the development of character strengths is still necessary. In this sense, education, whose value becomes evident with the growth of people and their contribution to the benefit of society, must guide towards directions aimed at helping to lead fulfilling lives as citizens, professionals, and human beings (Arthur, 2019; Brooks et al., 2019; Kristjánsson, 2020).

Schools and universities should promote intentional, planned, conscious and reflective character education (Kristjánsson, 2020), offering good models of educational leadership that guide students to know, desire, think and act well (Fernández y López, 2022).

While there is a disease of producing excess theory without convincing empirical evidence about practices to promote leadership in the educational context (Antonakis, 2017), and most of the leadership and leadership development studies focus on instrumental outcomes, such as performance, academics agree that the major responsibility of leadership is to create the conditions within which people can flourish (Newstead et al., 2020). The concept of virtue seems to be implicit in leadership (Newstead, 2022), and a leader's virtuous behavior demonstrates the enactment of good leadership (Newstead et al., 2020). Therefore, leadership must be developed and performed from virtue in order to contribute to the human flourishing (Newstead, 2022).

Excellence in moral and technical virtues is necessary for ethical and effective leadership, and to cultivate and teach virtues it is essential to understand them explicitly and practice them consciously (Newstead, 2022), so the main objective of this proposal is to design a program focused on the flourishing of teachers as a key aspect in the development of good educational leaders, understanding "good" as a synonym of virtue.

Methods

Based on the theoretical framework of virtue ethics, a comprehensive, blended learning program for educational leadership (BE-IDOL of its Spanish acronym) is proposed, aimed at promoting the holistic development and flourishing of teachers through the cultivation of moral, civic, intellectual, and performative virtues.

The BE-IDOL program assumes that all people have a character that is composed of virtues in potential (Newstead et al., 2020), that virtues are essential for good leadership, and that virtue and leadership are both life-long development efforts (Murphy, 2018; Annas, 2012) that entail intra- and inter-personal work (Newstead et al., 2021). These ideas become especially relevant in the educational context, where teachers must be a model for their students and contribute to their flourishing and fulfillment.

A longitudinal study is proposed, with a control group and an experimental group. The second group will receive the BE-IDOL program which, although expected to be mostly online, will combine remote and face-to-face training. Mixed evaluation methods will be used to test the effectiveness of the program and to obtain rich and complete information.

All Spanish teachers and educational institutions of any formative stage will be able to benefit from the program.

Conclusions

The BE-IDOL program is an important first step to promote virtue-based leadership in the Spanish educational context providing teachers the tools they need to develop their character strengths related to leadership so that they can contribute to the flourishing of their students.

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Moral identity and cognitive development – theoretical model

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Abstract

Define moral identity is very hard according to both construct – identity and morality. It is possible to say that moral identity involves the importance of morality to the individual´s identity witch depends of cognitive development. According to Lapsley (2008), Sahao, Aquino, Freeman (2008) and Moni, Jordan (2009) moral identity can be classified as social cognitive perspectives. In our study we try to find out way how to better understand development of moral identity through development of personal identity (Marcia, 1966; Berzonsky, Neimeyer, 1994) and cognitive development – specifically need of cognitive closure (Kruglansky, 1989, 1990) which is dimension related to person´s motivation with respect to information processing and judgment. On moral identity we can see as chronically accessible moral schemas, or self-important social identity or commitment to moral social roles or moral self-representations in autobiographical memory or moral ideal self, but we must focus on the identity styles model and motivation of person.

Key words: moral identity, styles of identity, need for cognitive closure, judgment, morality, identity

SUMARY

When we are talking about moral identity it is necessary to think about moral behaviour and moral judgment together. So development of the morality depend of cognitive development. Need for Closure is concept related to person´s motivation based of information processing and judgment. Elevating the need for closure hrough time pressure increased person´s tendency in stereotypically driven judgments (Kruglanski, Freund, 1983). According to many research need of closure is related to the judgmental confidence, need to make a quick decision and reflection in decisiveness of judgments and choices. So we can put this concept into The Self Model (Blasi, 1984) which contents three components

1. person not only decides the right or moral way how to act by making moral judgment, but also makes judgment of responsibility;
2. criteria for making moral judgments arise from moral identity;
3. person´s tendency to strive for self-consistency – motivational impetus for moral action.

According to Berzonsky (1994) we can extent identity status from the identity styles model focused on processing identity-relevant information: informational, normative and diffuse-avoidant. Normative-oriented person adopts moral principles seem consistent with norms held by others he/she cares about. Person with an informational orientation grapples with moral principles to determine which of them should define him/her. Diffuse-avoidant orientated person procrastinates thoughts of moral principles and is driven more by situational factors. So, we can see identity styles differ may facilitate processes of moral identity formation. Also moral identity is important source of moral motivation – may be the best predictor of moral commitment (Damon, Hart, 1992). According to this conceptualization this mechanism mus include self-consistence, autobiographical memory, goals and moral schemas (Blasi, 2004; Reimer, 2003; Colby, Damon, 1992; Narvaez, Lapsley, 2005 etc.). Moral schema include prototypes such as mental image of moral person, representations for morally relevant behaviour and possible selves. Narvaez, Lapsley (2005) compared adolescents and children. They said children have fewer moral schemas, so they are less elaborate and less accessible for information processing. This is similar to cognitive development and need for closure. So children are less able to promptly and appropriate respond to moral situation. We can say, that moral maturity is form of expertise. Also we can find individual variability in the degree of moral prototypes (Hardy et al., 2009; Aquino et al., 2009). People differ in the their imagination of moral person according to their cognitive accessibility for information processing (Bizer, Kroznick, 2001; Stets, Carter, 2006). Resource for our work are models of moral identity formation – Bergman (2004), Damon (2000) and Hart (2005). Bergman and Damon´s models are based on character perspectives and Hart´s more on social cognitive perspective, which includes individual and contextual predictors in moral identity development. He said that relations between moral identity and mediating factors (moral cognitions, self, identity and opportunity for moral actions) are reciprocal.

So in our model we combine these components and also offer way how to measure individual variables.

Title of the paper: *PULSE: A Service-Learning Course to Promote Character Development in College Students*

SUMMARY

Introduction

The PULSE program is a service-learning course for undergraduate students at Boston College (a Jesuit university in the United States). This course covers the Philosophy and Theology credits of the students' core curriculum requirements. It lasts one-academic-year. It involves weekly attendance to three hours of lecture sessions, one hour of discussion, and twelve hours of service in a community partner (usually, a non-profit or an NGO). This program's goal is, as stated on its website, "to foster critical consciousness and enable students to question conventional wisdom and learn how to work for a just society." However, we consider that this program accomplishes something more in the students, i.e., character development. This program's uniqueness is based on the symbiosis it establishes between the students' a) theoretical engagement with classical and contemporary works of philosophy and theology; b) service with a community partner who attends issues of social injustice; and c) reflections through different assignments such as discussion sections, journals, or reflections papers. We call this the PULSE pedagogical triad.

Objectives

This paper aims to make a twofold contribution to the field of character education. Firstly, it aims to understand how the symbiosis of this pedagogical triad promotes character development in the students involved in this program by connecting it to contemporary neo-Aristotelian literature on epiphanies and habituation. Secondly, it aims to opens a space of reflection as to whether and to what extent it is possible to replicate this program in other parts of the world, specifically Europe. Are they organizational, cultural, and academic obstacles in European universities that would not allow a program such as PULSE? If so, can we rethink the program without losing its essence and create a European version?

Method

We will divide the paper into three main sections to accomplish these objectives. Throughout the first section, we will present the main—and unique—characteristics of the PULSE program, and set it in the context of both the contemporary literature regarding service learning and the reality of other service-learning courses offered in the United States. Secondly, we will address how these

features contribute to the character development of the students who take the course. To do so, we will root our analysis of the PULSE's educational experiences in Kristjánsson's account of Aristotle's "disenchantedness," and the educational role of epiphanic experiences. Finally, we will sketch some proposals regarding the possibilities of implementing service learning programs in European universities.

Conclusions

We conclude that PULSE is a unique program in which theory and praxis are intertwined in a way that allows for character development in the students. The service experiences generate the "epiphanies" which correspond to what Kristjánsson refers to as the aesthetic and moral dimension of "wonder" and "contemplation", as opposed to the mere intellectual dimension of "awe." Besides, we conclude that a program like this could be replicated in the socio-cultural contexts of European universities. However, we are aware that our analysis in this paper is fundamentally theoretical and requires data support. For further endeavors, we would like to design a study based on one cohort of the PULSE program collecting data to evaluate the growth in habituation and phronesis among those students.

Short abstract: The PULSE program is a service-learning course for undergraduate students at Boston College (a Jesuit university in the United States). In this course, students learn about philosophical and theological works and put them in relation to social justice issues. This theoretical activity is complemented by a portion of service and different reflection activities in which the theoretical is connected with the practical aspect. We consider that this program promotes character development. This paper aims to evaluate how this is accomplished and whether it is possible to replicate this program at European universities.

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Prosocial character education – friendship as challenge for phronesis based character education

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Abstract

In contemporary neo-Aristotelian conceptions of character education, phronesis occupies a key position. In phronesis based conceptions friendship is understood as a tool, a method of more effective virtue education, or as a product of it.

The main aim of this paper is to clarify the theoretical basis for the concept of prosocial virtuous character. Paper explains 1) the importance of friendship as a key component in character education; 2) the relationship between phronesis and friendship (Aristotle)/friendship love (Aquinas) 3) the virtue of friendship love as an integrative virtue. This approach is based on the centrality of habituation and participation in virtuous practice, specifically the practice of friendly love, in character education. The basis of virtue education is not knowledge of the good, but participation in the good.

Key words: friendship, phronesis, prosocial character, participation in the good

Summary

In contemporary neo-Aristotelian conceptions of character education, phronesis occupies a key position. More formal aspects of virtue (such as integrity, self, identity, balance...) are emphasized. However, several important issues arise in such conceptions: the question of the knowledge-action gap, and the related question of the link between phronesis and habituation (as a prominent tool for the acquisition of moral virtues). Also important is the fact that, in phronesis based conceptions, friendship is understood as a tool, a method of more effective virtue education, or as a product of it.

The main aim of this paper is to clarify the theoretical basis for the concept of prosocial virtuous character. It will be necessary to 1) show the importance of friendship in character education, not only as a "tool", a "method" or a relational setting, but as a key component; 2) clarify the relationship between phronesis and friendship (Aristotle)/friendship love (Aquinas) 3) clarify the virtue of friendship love as an integrative virtue.

The paper sequentially analyzes and critically evaluates psychological conceptions of prosocial behavior and thought (Eisengerg, Carl, Roche). It notes the potential but especially the limits of the moral ambivalence of prosocial approaches: the inadequacy of sentimentalist-based approaches to the ethics of care (Noddings, Kittay, Held, Slote). It also analyses the cognitive or deontological orientation of contemporary character-based approaches. These are approaches that emphasize either phronesis as the only integrating component or performative virtues (based on will and social expectations, social normativity).

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In the context of these approaches, the position of habituation and participation in virtuous practice, specifically the practice of friendly love as a uniquely human phenomenon, is explored. We assume that in the Aristotelian-Aquinas tradition, action enacted in a virtuous way has a significant position in the education of virtue. Friendship, friendly love, is that human activity in which man realizes his humanity, and this activity is directed towards the life of the community. Virtue in the sense of personal traits is understood here as a „secondary" consequence, which is achieved through a gradual process of participation in the good. Primary in the education of virtue is not the knowledge of the good, but participation in the good. Among the many virtuous experiences, the experience of the good in its truly human - friendly - form has a unique position. In such an approach, virtue as a personality trait is not an end in itself, nor is it the ultimate goal of moral development.

In the same way, then, the position of phronesis in the architecture of the virtuous personality needs to be reconsidered. The integrating virtue is not primarily phronesis but rather friendship love. Although phronesis is always a constitutive part of the moral virtues, the primary, teleological virtue is friendly love. Fronésis is not understood here as an independent virtue whose role would be to integrate the other virtues "externally" with each other. On the contrary, its main task is to find, in a given situation, the concrete means that will enable the realization of the best good amid other good alternatives.

The primary process of character education is habituation, understood as the experience of the good through the doing of the good. The development of cognitive and affective processes (phronesis and joy) are secondarily integrated around habituation. In these contexts, the dimensions of gift and gratitude emerge as key.

The importance of friendship as a central and integrating component of character education is elucidated in the conclusion. We also describe how the concept of prosocial moral character has the potential to offer solutions to a classic problem.

Title of the paper: Character education of the sick person. A new challenge for Europe

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Character education of the sick person. A new challenge for Europe

Summary

In *The virtuous patient*, Karen Lebacqz describes illness as an "unwelcome intruder" (Lebacqz, 1992) which involves changes in one's life, in how the subject perceives themselves, and in how they are perceived by others. The body for example plays a fundamental role as it is the first and most important instrument through which we present our identity to the world. Changes in the body, however, are not the only ones: chronic illnesses can change the times and dynamics of life; they can change the way through which we experience our relationships; and they can also change a person's internal dispositions. Thus, also a person who has always been exemplary patient in all domains of their existence might, for example, find the shortest waits of the new everyday life frustrating because the body no longer cooperates as it did before, or because every pause feels like a moment taken away from what remains of life. In other words, we might say, as Havi Carel and Ian J. Kidd have pointed out that severe illnesses are "transformative experiences" (Carel & Kidd, 2020).

Although illness can be simply traumatic, and it can negatively transform the subject, leading them to experience feelings of loss, chronic sorrow, frustration, guilt, anger, loss of connectedness, and struggling with change; there are however subjects who react positively to suffering, developing new character strengths and virtues. As a proof of this, there are many works such as that of Mystakidou et al. (2008) which have shown that a disease can destroy a person's life, relationships, roles, values, beliefs, and so on, or it can induce a positive transformation thanks to adaptive coping and "post–traumatic growth" (PTG). People who report PTG tend to be positively transformed by their disease, acquiring new character strengths and virtues such as a better appreciation of life, spiritual change, compassion toward others, improvement of problem-solving skills, and so on (Panjwani & Revenson, 2021). Virtues, however, not only represent a resource that the subject can develop as a result of experiencing a condition such as illness; they can also help the subject in facilitating the coping process and in the development of PTG. The development of virtues also appears to significantly reduce the likelihood that the subject will develop symptoms commonly

associated with anxiety and depression, such as a sense of worthlessness; low self-esteem; loss of meaning and life purpose, etc., thus improving perceived well-being (e.g. Nisa & Rizvi, 2016; Tomita et al., 2017).

Despite this is reported in literature, there are still too few protocols that deal with fostering a grow in character; moreover, there are too few facilities in Europe that work on patients' virtue education. Also, existing protocols such as Charles Snyder's Hope Therapy or Max Chochinov's Dignity Therapy are concerned with working on one trait and not on a cluster of virtues useful for dealing with suffering and illness. In this sense much more could be done in order to make patients experts in managing their condition, so as to raise perceived levels of well-being. Virtue care ethics in this sense can represent a resource. An appropriate setting for character education might be simultaneous palliative care, which understood before all other branches of medicine that every dimension of a person's need must be taken care of if the patient's life is to be truly improved.

Keywords: Coping with suffering, patients virtues, expert patients, virtue care ethics, character education in Europe.

Short abstract

Although illness can be a traumatic experience, and it can lead the subject to experience feelings of loss, chronic sorrow, frustration, guilt, anger, loss of connectedness, and struggling with change; there are however subjects who react positively to suffering, developing new character strengths and virtues. Character development and moral flourishing can help patients in dealing with suffering and illness, helping them to experience higher levels of well-being. Therefore, more effort should be done in Europe to design and propose protocols that work on educating the character of the sick person and on patient's moral flourishing.

TITLE: Subjects that study human openness to transcendence: Positive impact on the development of character
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Short abstract: The aim of this paper is to analyze the beneficial or detrimental impact on the development of character of subjects that study human openness to transcendence within humanistic university education. Particularly the impact on the development of human virtues that facilitate living together in society, the concern for the common good and the relationship between individual and collective happiness. The aim of this paper is to analyze the beneficial or detrimental impact on the development of character of subjects that study human openness to transcendence within humanistic university education. To this end, firstly, it will try to expose some of the intellectual trends that address the relationship between the humanistic dimension of the university, openness to transcendence and character development; secondly, it will identify some of the currents that address these relationships but from a humanism closed to transcendence. Thirdly, we will analyze the arguments of both and try to draw conclusions about their logic and intellectual consistency, as well as their vital impact.

Long abstract

The tremendous economic and technological development of the world has generated new ways of conceiving university realities, some very functional and focused on the transmission of knowledge (driven by a very commercial vision); others, rooted in the traditional vision of university education, which tends to greater abstraction and more theoretical speculation, with less practical projection. At present, many universities think about the development of teaching taking into account future challenges and the changing social context of training, conditioned by job opportunities, the economy, social trends and technological discoveries, such as GP chat or the search for sources on the Internet, which generate a new way of conceiving teaching and learning in an integral sense.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the beneficial or detrimental impact on character development of subjects that study human openness to transcendence within the humanistic university education. In particular, the impact on the development and experience of human virtues that facilitate three aspects: the members of a society try to live harmoniously together; an active and committed personal concern for the common good is developed; the relationship between individual happiness, that of other people and that of the community is revealed.

As a method of work, the various positions and their argumentation will be presented and then the understanding of university education of each one will be analyzed and the effects of both on the development of character will be compared. Reference will be made to the different university models developed over time in different parts of the world.

In the first place, an attempt will be made to present some of the intellectual currents that address the relationship between the humanistic dimension of the university, openness to

transcendence and the development of character: authors, educational and world vision, argumentation and anthropological vision.

Secondly, we will identify some of the currents that address these relationships but from a humanism closed to transcendence: diffusion in today's society, authors, educational and anthropological vision, argumentation....

Thirdly, the arguments of both will be analyzed and conclusions will be drawn after establishing several comparisons on their logic, intellectual consistency, practical applications, the concept of virtue and character, as well as their vital impact. Among the final conclusions we will try to argue that the subjects of study that study openness to transcendence as an object or favor it in its dynamics, enrich the character of the educated persons and develop their capacities of relationship, personal search and search for meaning.

The role of (school) choice in the promotion of civic virtue and character development

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Short Abstract: 100 words
Keywords: Civics, Character, School Choice, Education

Much of the literature on virtue and character development focuses on the role of educators and parents. Rightfully so, parents and educators must work in common cause in the moral development of children. Nevertheless, little attention has been given to the role school systems play in fostering relationships and ethical learning communities. That is, the structure of the system itself may lend itself more or less to the fostering of relationships that enable character development. In this theoretical analysis, I offer a framework for understanding how school systems and school structures may help or hinder civic virtue and character development.

Summary: 500 to 600 words with 4-5 key words

What is the purpose of a public school education? It depends on who you ask. In the 2019 Phi Delta Kappan (PDK) poll, 53 percent of American parents indicated the main goal should be academics. In comparison, just 37 percent of American teachers chose academics. A plurality of teachers, 45 percent, believed the primary goal of public schooling was to prepare students to be good citizens. Just 28 percent of parents agreed. Parents, for one reason or another, are leery of public schools teaching their children values or civic duty. Indeed, 40 percent of parents do not think civics should be a required class; 80 percent of teachers think it should be. As the PDK poll points out, a good number of parents, 29 percent, are concerned that civics classes might include political content they disagree with. These numbers are higher for evangelical Christians (37 percent) and Republicans (35 percent).

Yet, if we asked these same groups of people whether they want their children or students to be good, ethical people, we would likely see similarly high rates among both parents and teachers. Why then, do we see such differences in the purposes of schooling or the need for civics instruction? It is possible that the problem is a lack of trust; more to the point, a lack of community. In his description of a healthy school community, Berkowitz (2012) offers the following traits that define community:

1. A group of people
2. With a shared commitment,
3. And a shared identity,
4. And a shared set of pro-social, ethical norms
5. Resulting in an emotional bond to the community and its members
6. That all lead to serving, supporting, and protecting the community and its members. (p. 112)

Given the polling results, it seems likely that many school systems are not healthy learning communities. They fail on at least one of the six points laid out by Berkowitz.

Much of the literature on promoting positive school communities focuses, rightly, on the impact school leaders and teachers can play. Hoerr (2019) for instance writes, "the job of principals is to work with teachers to create a culture of trust and growth. A school's culture is forged by principals and teachers working collaboratively." Similarly, researchers have noted the important role parents play. Lickona (1988), for instance, states, "schools and families must come together in common cause. Working together, these two formative social institutions have real power to raise up moral human beings and to elevate the moral life of the nation" (p. 35). Little attention, however, has been given to how the structure of the system itself may itself help or hinder the relationship between schools and families.

In this paper, I explore how the structures of educational systems can help or hinder the promotion of civic virtue and character development. By examining the extant literature on

character development, this paper offers a theoretical framework for school systems that are

more equipped to promote these important skills and traits.

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Character Education and Right Giving: A Closer Look at Liberality

Abstract:

Being helpful is, indisputably, a positive and desirable character trait, and sharing one's wealth can be of much benefit to others. However, according to Aristotle, the virtue of liberality requires knowledge of whom, when, and what to give. This paper aims to explore characteristics of the virtue of liberality, with giving away money on the streets as a prime example of a problematic case. The main question to be answered is, what kind of character education do we need, to learn true liberality? Both collective and personal challenges of proper sharing will be outlined, followed by propositions of education towards liberality and *right giving*, based on contemporary accounts of practical wisdom and practical experience of the author's work with the homeless.

Summary:

In Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle stated that "the liberal man [...] will give the right things to the right persons at the right time [...] in short, his giving will have all the characteristics of right giving." What exactly is *right giving* and how can we learn it? Why is it important for us to care if our giving is right or wrong?

In this paper, my main objective is to introduce the virtue of liberality, based on Aristotle's account, put it into a modern context, and offer some solutions to challenges for character education toward liberality. While being liberal may look easy in today's world, with hundreds of online fundraising websites, I will argue that there are everyday situations in which to be truly liberal poses a serious challenge and requires consideration, commitment, and practical wisdom to be helpful and not harmful. By combining Aristotle's account of *right giving*, recent

studies on practical wisdom, with special emphasis on its constitutive function (Kristjansson, Fowers 2022), and personal work experience as a streetworker with homeless, I examine some of the potential implications of the idea of true liberality for character education. It can be argued, that being liberal requires more consideration than we might usually think, and that more attention on recognizing what values our everyday actions support, should be applied.

Homelessness is one of the biggest contemporary social issues in many of the large cities in Europe. The problem itself has many different causes and characteristics, and the people affected by it vary in their degree of functioning, however, for the majority of us, people begging on the street are the most visible and sometimes the only example of homeless. Confronted with such a situation, we might feel obligated to give them some money or to buy them food. It can be argued, however, that this kind of help is counterproductive, not only creating an unhealthy relationship in which one party has a significant superiority over another but also further trapping a begging person in their situation, encouraging them to beg again. People should work collectively towards a society in which no one has to beg, to suffice their basic needs. This can be achieved only through a character education, aimed at equipping people with tools to help them to cope with the sight of extreme poverty adequately. This is, by any means, not to say that we should be indifferent to someone fainting from hunger or thirst, however, in such a situation an ambulance and comprehensive social assistance are more in place. In many situations, what is most needed is a sensitive acknowledgment of a person in front of us.

To help someone by giving away some of our wealth, instead of a mindless drop of change, we ought to not only anticipate the potential consequences of such a transfer but also stop for a moment and carefully consider the person's needs. One of the challenges that any project of character education must face is how to sensitize people to really see and try to understand the other person.

Keywords: liberality, right giving, character education, poverty, begging

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Paper proposal ECVA conference

Authors: Emma Cohen de Lara, Vianney Domingo, José M. Torralba (University of Navarra)

Title
Civic Humanism Center. Establishing a research and transference center on liberal education, character development, and professionalism in Spain

Abstract (100 words)

This paper explains how the insights from professionalism studies can help recover humanistic and character education in universities in the French tradition, beginning with the Spanish experience. Specifically, the case of the Civic Humanism Center for Character and Professional Ethics at the University of Navarra is presented in terms of (a) its three lines of work: models of liberal education, university mentoring and character development, and professionalism and ethical leadership; (b) the activities it has begun to develop; and (c) the perspectives on the impact it may have in the Spanish university environment and, in general, in universities belonging to the French tradition.

Summary

The mission of the university has been a matter of intellectual and academic debate over the past decades. Its proper function is under discussion (Kerr 2001). There is growing criticism of the career-focused and disciplinary orientation it has taken, i.e., that its main educational aim is to prepare students for the job market. he contemporary university seems to have forgotten or neglected other educational aspects that were once considered essential, such as liberal and humanistic formation or civic and character education (Bok 2020).

In response to this situation, a number of initiatives have emerged in recent years to promote liberal and character education at the university level. Examples of liberal education are the Great Books or Core Texts programs which, from the United States, are spreading to other countries (Cohen de Lara – Drop 2017). An example of character education programs for university students, either as an extracurricular activity or integrated into the curriculum of each degree, is led by the Oxford Character Project (Brant – Brooks – Lamb 2022).

These initiatives allow the recovery of one of the traditional missions of the university: that of educating students at the personal level, which, together with doing research and educating professionals, forms a basic triad. In the education of the person, two areas can be distinguished, which are complementary: intellectual growth through general humanistic education (or core curriculum) and the cultivation of character through curriculum design or participation in certain specific activities (Jubilee 2020).

In universities of the French tradition, which is the norm in Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Latin America, the professionalizing orientation of education is stronger than in those of the

German or Anglo-Saxon traditions. For this reason, the recovery of the mission of educating persons is more complicated (Torralba 2022).

In the Spanish context, the Civic Humanism Center for Character and Professional Ethics at the University of Navarra has recently been established as a center for research and transfer that aims to help universities to offer an education that meets the three missions mentioned earlier. The rationale guiding the work of the Center is the following. Studies of professionalism show that in order to be a good professional it is not enough to acquire a technical qualification, it is also necessary to develop certain intellectual and character qualities (Pellegrino 2002, Jubilee 2016). Since it is not simple, nor perhaps realistic, to pretend to change the institutional model that universities already have, one possibility to improve the kind of education they offer is to argue that in order to offer sound professional preparation, general humanistic formation and character development should also be part of a university education.

This paper explains how the insights from professionalism studies can help recover humanistic and character education in universities in the French tradition, beginning with the Spanish experience. Specifically, the case of the Civic Humanism Center for Character and Professional Ethics at the University of Navarra is presented: (a) its three lines of work (models of liberal education, university mentoring and character development, and professionalism and ethical leadership); (b) the activities it has begun to develop; and (c) the perspectives on the impact it may have in the Spanish university environment and, in general, in universities belonging to the French tradition.

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Title: Virtues in Promotion of Meaning in Life
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Summary:
Meaning in life is widely recognized in contemporary psychology and philosophy literature as vitally important to human flourishing and happiness (Routledge and FioRito, 2021; Stavrova and Luhmann, 2016). However, the issue of how meaning in life should be conceptualized and consequently how it can be brought about and supported is a matter of debate. One influential theory of meaning in life formulated by Susan Wolf (2010) argues that meaning in life is generated by the constructive linking of subjective preference and objective values. While it has been contested in philosophical discourses for, among other things, its conceptual vagueness, in this paper I demonstrate that a particular version of this theory, which I call an "integrated" theory, can successfully address a number of conceptual challenges. Moreover, I argue that faith, hope, and love can be interpreted as virtues that promote meaning.

One previous criticism of integrated theories of meaning in life is that the subjective component (often described as "fulfillment" or "engagement") is vague and ill-defined (Metz, 2013). In response to this criticism, I offer an account of the subjective component of meaning in life as consisting in what I call "endorsement." On this modified view, it is not enough for the agent of a meaningful life to find her objectively valuable activities and relationships subjectively "fulfilling" or "engaging." Instead, she must endorse her objectively valuable activities and relationships. To endorse one's values is to identify with them and to be willing to be evaluated as a success or failure to attain and promote those values. A person who lives this way has a meaningful life because she identifies with her values and endorses them as her own. I call this stance, which integrates powerfully the objective and subjective, authenticity (Hanson & Kaftanski, 2022). That there is a close relationship between the subjective and objective components of meaningful life is supported by available data. Recent psychometric data obtained through the use of the Comprehensive Measure of Meaning (Hanson & VanderWeele, 2021) based on the integrated view of meaning of life, confirms that both subjective and objective dimensions of felt significance contribute to meaning in life.

Given the importance of meaning in life to a good life, an urgent issue for ongoing study is what can promote meaningfulness. My argument about endorsement suggests that authenticity is in fact a virtue, indeed the primary virtue or proto-virtue that promotes meaningfulness. I describe authenticity and suggest how it can unlock other related virtues of faith, hope, and love that also promote meaningfulness. Drawing on the 19th-century Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, I show how his accounts of faith, hope, and love can be interpreted not merely as the classical theological virtues but as virtues in promotion of meaningfulness. For Kierkegaard, these three virtues have two features in common. The first is what I call "non-self-exculpatory self-acceptance" (Hanson, 2022). Faith, hope, and love allow us to live with ourselves and our choices (hence they are a matter of "self-acceptance"). The person of faith and hope and love is at peace with themselves, but because they are committed to genuinely valuable ideals that they endorse as their own, they admit and accept their failings to express these values consistently (hence they are "non-self-exculpatory"). The second feature these virtues have in common is that they do not target any specific outcome but rather reorient us to the availability of meaningfulness. The person of faith, for

example, does not have faith that anything in particular will come about; they rather have faith in what is yet to come. The person of hope does not hope for any particular expectation that could be disappointed; they rather refuse to be disappointed. The person of love does not love any one person; they love everyone. In this sense the virtues that promote meaningfulness do not rise or fall on the basis of an evidential calculus. They are responsive to evidence, but they can still be sustained because they allow us to actively seek out meaning even when our particular beliefs, hopes, and loves are not what we originally imagined.

Abstract: This paper formulates a theory of meaningfulness beneficial to flourishing life and conceptualizes a set of virtues that generate and support this crucial factor of well-lived life. More specifically, I defend a version of an integrated theory of meaning in life against a recent criticism that the theory's subjective component is vague and ill-defined. I propose that the subjective component consists in endorsement of the objectively valuable goods of one's life, making them one's own in accord with the proto-virtue of authenticity. Drawing on the work of Kierkegaard, I show how faith, hope, and love can also be interpreted as virtues that promote meaning. These virtues have in common that they allow a person living a meaningful life to accept themselves and to orient themselves toward further sources of meaning.

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Proposal for a paper presentation
Character and Virtue, Education in Europe: Challenges and opportunities. Madrid, Spain, June 28th–30th, 2023.

Cultivating virtue literacy in visual arts classes: Reflection on a fine-arts intervention for moral education in an upper-elementary school setting in Iceland.

Keywords:

Visual arts, moral education, Aristotle, virtue literacy.

Abstract:

This paper disseminates the results of focus-group interviews with teachers and pupils in Iceland that participated in an intervention in visual arts classes that aimed at cultivating virtue literacy, critical thinking, and moral deliberation through pupils' creativity and discussions regarding moral topics. Pupils and teachers generally welcomed the ethical approach of the project, but thematic analysis revealed challenges to implementing moral education in a traditional school setting. The results suggest that although the value of the arts for moral reflection and deliberation is undisputed, interventions for moral education need to consider the local school culture and the characteristics of pupils and teachers.

Summary:

The paper presented here is the last part of my doctoral research project. Other results from my research have been published elsewhere; an analysis of pupils' reflections on artworks (Waage, 2020b) and an inquiry into pupils' paintings (Waage, 2020a). The theoretical framework behind the research project is based on Aristotelian character education (Kristjánsson, 2015), the research of the Jubilee Centre for Character & Virtues (see, e.g., 2022), and literature on the value of the arts in educational contexts (see, e.g., Eisner, 2002; Dewey, 2005). The intervention aimed at cultivating virtue literacy, critical thinking, and moral deliberation through a) discussions about various artworks with ethical topics and b) pupils' artistic creativity inspired by their reflections and experiences of courage and friendship. The intervention took place in eight visual arts classes of 13-year-old pupils with the participation of four visual arts teachers.

For this paper, data was collected through four focus-group interviews: three with pupils shortly after the intervention and one follow-up interview three years later with the teachers that participated in the intervention—as the project has since been used as learning material in visual arts classes. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed with thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic analysis of the interviews revealed that despite the general beneficial value of the arts for human cognition (see, e.g., Dewey, 2005; Aristotle, 1988; Eisner, 2002; Langer, 1987; Kitcher, 2022), results of interventions can be dependent on local school culture and personal differences of pupils and teachers. For instance, the thematic analysis revealed the force of pupils' habits when confronted with unconventional approaches—such as the focus on ethics—in established school subjects. Further down the road, pupils welcomed the opportunity to work on projects that allowed for creative liberty regarding their reflections and experiences. While some pupils welcomed the opportunity to think and reflect on moral issues, they said that the constraints of working with virtues selected by the project leader could hinder them from delving deeper into moral issues because of their diverse interests and meaning-making regarding the virtues. For instance, while discussing *courage* is challenging for some, others might find it more difficult to reflect on *patience* or *humility*. Some pupils also suggested the project was time-consuming and might restrict opportunities for more conventional visual arts projects.

The teachers were delighted to participate in the project, and they recognized that while the moral content of the project was met with scepticism at the outset, pupils' attitudes became favourable as the project progressed. Working with moral issues in the visual arts classes was generally unfamiliar for the pupils as they were used to more conventional artistic projects in visual arts classes. Also, they noted a significant gender difference in attitudes and commitment to the project. However, that difference appears similar to the expected difference regarding other school subjects. The teachers noted that, in general, pupils' interest in, e.g., sports or their future prospects could have an impact on implementing moral education in the classroom.

The results suggest that although the value of the arts for moral reflection and deliberation is undisputed, interventions for moral education need to consider the local school culture and the characteristics of pupils and teachers. In the presentation, I will discuss these challenges and suggest approaches that might be feasible for implementing moral education in art classes.

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Character education programmes in Primary school: A systematic review

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

The school, as an educational organisation, should also be responsible for contributing to the education of character. However, when an educator decides to educate the character of his students, he may encounter these difficulties: what is the ideal character model, which way to educate, and how to do it?

The theoretical framework -after comparing the connection between character education, virtues, values, positive psychology, and emotional education- justifies the formation of character based on virtue. Virtues are defined as good operational habits (Caro, 2020) and people are defined by how we live, i.e., what we do frequently (Fuentes and Sánchez-Pérez, 2020). Therefore, we consider that virtues can shape our character. In this way, the first two questions could be answered: the ideal model of character is that of the virtuous person; and character is educated through virtue. However, the third question remains unanswered: How to educate character in the school? To answer this question, we could ask: Are there any publications on programmes to be applied in Primary Education that can guide teachers in educating the character of their pupils? According to Sánchez-Serrano, Pedroza-Navarro, and Donoso-González (2022), this type of question can be answered through a systematic review.

OBJECTIVES

The main aim of this paper is to search which programmes on virtue-based character education can be found in Spanish-speaking world. This is specified in the following objectives: to conduct a systematic review of character education programmes for the Primary Education stage; and to analyse the character education programmes found.

METHOD

The method used to search for character education programmes was a systematic review, following the PRISMA protocol. Searches were conducted using the stated keywords (character education or virtue, programme or plan and Primary or Elementary Education), showing 975 results in total. All these results were filtered using the following inclusion criteria:

- Being current, i.e., from 2014 to the present (January 2023)
- Being in Spanish
- Showing a programme of character education through virtue.
- Being contextualized in the Primary school
- Being open access

After applying these criteria, only one publication was selected. For this reason, it was decided to expand the systematic review by accepting character education programs related to emotional education and positive psychology (8).

CONCLUSIONS

It is significant the few articles (only 1) that were found on character education based on virtue. This may reflect the underdevelopment of character education in Primary Education in the Spanish-speaking world. In addition, to determine the quality of the theoretical underpinning of the 9 publications finally selected, it was analysed whether they cited recognised authors in the field of character education or positive psychology. The results showed a great disconnection between the practical proposals and the theoretical studies.

On the other hand, as shown in the theoretical framework, the use of the terms virtue and value have different connotations. The term value does not imply action and requires extrinsic recognition, while the term virtue is implied by actions and is valued in itself (having a transcendental dimension) (González-Guinocchio, 2020).

Of the 9 publications, 2 of them did not use the words virtue or value at any time, sticking to emotional education. Of the remaining articles, the term value was used much more frequently than virtue, and only one article -related to positive psychology- mostly used the terms virtue or strength of character.

After this systematic review, it is observed that in the Spanish-speaking world there are very few published proposals on virtue-based character education, and they are not linked to consolidated research and theoretical foundations in this field.

Keywords: Character education, programme, positive psychology, and Primary school.

SHORT ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to search for programmes on virtue-based character education that can be found in a Spanish database (Dialnet).

A systematic review was carried out to select publications that show a virtue-based approach to character education in Primary Education. When only one result was found, it was decided to broaden the inclusion criteria to select those programmes related to emotional education. After expansion, a total of 9 publications were found.

Furthermore, this paucity of results may reflect the low level of implementation in the primary classroom. There is also little theoretical basis for the practical proposals.

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Bildung, Imagination, and Character Formation: Reviving the Humboldtian Ideal that Supports Character Formation and Addresses the Motivation Gap in Moral Education

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Abstract
This paper argues that operations on mental images in imagination can help learners form and acquire conceptual knowledge around morally and intellectually desired virtues and character traits and skills and motivate learners to utilize this knowledge in practical settings. As a framework for this argument, I take the Humboldtian model of education, which integrates the epistemological and moral aims of education to form a whole person. To achieve their educational goals, teachers embark on a process with learners of designing mental images of learners' perfected future-oriented representations, which include sets of virtues and character traits necessary for their holistic development.

Summary
In this paper I consider the Humboldtian model of education built around the concept of *Bildung* to conceptualize how mental images and imagination can be utilized in moral education. The role of mental images in various domains of human life has been heavily explored in various disciplines. Research in behavioral psychology demonstrates a positive role of mental images and imagination in psychological interventions and therapies (Cowden et al. 2021; Bryant et al. 2005); research on human planning emphasizes the role of mental images and imagination in everyday human life (Hoch 2022; Suddendorf & Corballis 2007; Hayes-Roth & Hayes-Roth 1979; Miller, Galanter & Pribram 1960); recent conceptual work in philosophy brings to light an important link between mental images, imagination, and morality (Kaftanski 2022). Humboldtian *Bildung* (Schneider 2012) assumes that education is about facilitating a transformative process of self-development in learners in order for them to become virtuous persons. It is a bi-directional process, curated by an educator, of an internalization of the external and an externalization of the internal mediated by a mental image. In this process the learner forms an image representing one's desired (perfected) future-oriented state and learns about moral and intellectual virtues and other character traits conducive to the realization of that ideal image in their life. As these images of future-oriented mental representations of the self are invested with plans, values, and desires (they are about me and I am emotionally attached to them), they exercise motivational influence on their beholders. These images serve four functions: 1) they encompass values central to their holders (expressive of the person as a moral agent); 2) they shape positive identities (transformation of self-perception from being "a victim" to being "a survivor" in the context of trauma and other psychological-moral challenges); 3) they serve as points of orientation for decision-making (how is this action expressive of my values?; how will this action shape my character?); 4) they help visualize mitigating strategies and recovery plans. In effect mental images a) build moral awareness and attention, b) motivate individuals to learn (internalize) virtues, c) facilitate guided moral habituation conducive to moral action, and d) strengthen cross-situational consistency in the learner's externalization.

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Cultivating virtue literacy in visual arts classes: Reflection on a fine-arts intervention for moral education in an upper-elementary school setting in Iceland.

Keywords:

Visual arts, moral education, Aristotle, virtue literacy.

Abstract:

This paper disseminates the results of focus-group interviews with teachers and pupils in Iceland that participated in an intervention in visual arts classes that aimed at cultivating virtue literacy, critical thinking, and moral deliberation through pupils' creativity and discussions regarding moral topics. Pupils and teachers generally welcomed the ethical approach of the project, but thematic analysis revealed challenges to implementing moral education in a traditional school setting. The results suggest that although the value of the arts for moral reflection and deliberation is undisputed, interventions for moral education need to consider the local school culture and the characteristics of pupils and teachers.

Summary:

The paper presented here is the last part of my doctoral research project. Other results from my research have been published elsewhere; an analysis of pupils' reflections on artworks (Waage, 2020b) and an inquiry into pupils' paintings (Waage, 2020a). The theoretical framework behind the research project is based on Aristotelian character education (Kristjánsson, 2015), the research of the Jubilee Centre for Character & Virtues (see, e.g., 2022), and literature on the value of the arts in educational contexts (see, e.g., Eisner, 2002; Dewey, 2005; Langer, 1957). The intervention aimed at cultivating virtue literacy, critical thinking, and moral deliberation through discussions about various artworks with ethical topics. The emphasis was on pupils' artistic creativity inspired by their reflections and experiences of courage and friendship. The intervention took place in eight visual arts classes of 13-year-old pupils with the participation of four visual arts teachers.

For this paper, data was collected through four focus-group interviews: three with pupils shortly after the intervention and one follow-up interview three years later with the teachers that participated in the intervention—as the project has since been used as learning material in visual arts classes. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed with thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic analysis of the interviews revealed that despite the general beneficial value of the arts for moral education (see, e.g., Dewey, 2005; Aristotle, 1988; Eisner, 2002; Langer, 1957), results of interventions can be dependent on local school culture and personal differences of pupils and teachers. For instance, the thematic analysis revealed the force of pupils' habits when confronted with unconventional approaches—such as the focus on ethics—in established school subjects. Further down the road, pupils welcomed the opportunity to work on projects that allowed for creative liberty regarding their reflections and experiences. While some pupils welcomed the opportunity to think and reflect on moral issues, they said that the constraints of working with virtues selected by the project leader could hinder them from delving deeper into moral issues because of their diverse interests and meaning-making regarding the virtues. For instance, while discussing *courage* is challenging for some, others might find it more difficult to reflect on *patience* or *humility*. Some pupils also suggested the project was time-consuming and might restrict opportunities for more conventional visual arts projects.

The teachers were delighted to participate in the project, and they recognized that while the moral content of the project was met with scepticism at the outset, pupils' attitudes became favourable as the project progressed. Working with moral issues in the visual arts classes was generally unfamiliar for the pupils as they were used to more conventional artistic projects in visual arts classes. Also, they noted a significant gender difference in attitudes and commitment to the project. However, that difference appears similar to the expected difference regarding other school subjects. The teachers noted that, in general, pupils' interest in, e.g., sports or their future prospects, could have an impact on implementing moral education in the classroom.

The results suggest that although the value of the arts for moral reflection and deliberation is undisputed, interventions for moral education need to consider the local school culture and the characteristics of pupils and teachers. In the presentation, I will discuss these challenges and suggest approaches that might be feasible for implementing moral education in art classes.

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Proposal for ECVA conference, Madrid, 28-30 June
Deadline: 28 February 2023
Authors: Emma Cohen de Lara, Rodrigo Banda Lazarte, Vianney Domingo Ribary, Javier Gómez Martín, Javier García Manglano, Álvaro Lleo de Nalda, José María Torralba
Please note: Cohen de Lara, Domingo, Torralba plan to attend

Leadership as Service:
The experience of developing a character education program for university students in the Spanish context

Abstract (100 words)
The aim of the Leadership as Service Program (LASP) is to provide extracurricular opportunities of character education to university students. LASP has been developed as a pilot-program at the University of Navarra. It fits with the overall mission of the university to provide students with an integral education to help students flourish and contribute to society, and dovetails with the scientific insight that "emerging adults" — defined as young people of the ages 18-29 — are in a critical period of moral development (Arnett 2000, 2014). The LASP program is modeled on the Oxford Global Leadership Initiative and designed to fit in the Spanish educational context. In this presentation, we will explain the program and highlight how the program is adapted to the Spanish educational context.

Summary (500-600 words)

In Spring 2023, the Civic Humanism Center launched a pilot-program of character education for upper undergraduate students of the University of Navarra: The Leadership as Service Program (LASP), in collaboration with The Oxford Character Project. As with the Oxford Global Leadership Initiative (GLI), this program develops the concept of "leadership as service" from a neo-Aristotelian perspective (cf. Kristjánsson, 2015). Aristotle defined good character by means of a set of moral virtues or excellences. A good leader is someone who is able to serve others because: 1. The leader has developed a virtuous character and, thus, has the necessary intellectual, moral, social and performative virtue or character traits, such as prudence, humility, resilience, and gratitude; 2. The leader is attuned to relationships and capable of prioritizing relationships over other, more competitive, goals such as profit, winning, and success.

In order to develop a successful program, we adapted part of the curriculum of the Oxford Global Leadership Initiative to the specific educational context of Spanish upper undergraduate students and designed some new contents. For our pilot-program the specific educational context is the School of Economics and Business of the University of Navarra in Spain. We adapted the program emphasizing a dialogical approach that positions local actors as experts (Kirshner & Polman, 2013). In our presentation, we explain the adaptations and rationale for the adaptations.

The first adaptation concerns the name of the program 'Leadership as Service'. The understanding of good leadership as based on personal growth and serving others is already employed by the Dean of the School of Economics and Business, Prof. Ignacio Ferrerro (Meyer et al. 2019). The Dean supported LASP from the beginning, has facilitated the implementation of the program in his School, and is a member of the LASP team. The name *Leadership* as service was deemed to be particularly appealing to students in economics and business.

A second adaptation is that we integrated an existing and effective, but possibly underused mentoring program TU&CO (Lleo et al. 2020). The mentoring program is based on a list of competences, such as 'optimism', 'taking initiative', or 'emotional regulation', that overlaps with the virtues that have been selected for LASP. The program is also compatible with the aim of LASP to provide opportunities for personal development in a more intimate setting, in that the mentoring program facilitates one-on-one relationships with the students. Institutionally, the main author of the mentoring program, Prof. Álvaro Lleo de Nalda, welcomed the integration and is a member of the LASP team.

Thirdly, LASP follows the GLI Initiative in seeking to foster the virtues of practical wisdom, service, purpose, humility, resilience, and gratitude. LASP trains practical wisdom with a separate seminar as well as understanding it as a virtue that runs through the other virtues. For now, LASP has left out other virtues, such as hope and honesty, mainly because we are currently running LASP as a pilot-version that lasts for only two months.

In our presentation, we present the process of developing LASP, its implementation and the adaptations and additions to GLI. We conclude that LASP provides students with a structured and safe environment for personal growth, and that the success of the program so far is in large part based on the design of the GLI and its methodology (Lamb et al. 2021), and on its adaptation to the particular institutional context of the University of Navarra following a method of dialogue with, and empowerment of, local actors.

(573 words)

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"Know-Thyself", but how? Using personality feedback to increase self-knowledge about trait morality

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Summary

Introduction: Moral behavior (e.g., paying taxes, treating others with respect) is crucial for maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships and for the functioning of societies. Therefore, finding ways to promote moral behavior is paramount to solving some of the most pressing problems facing today's societies. One promising way to promote moral behavior is to take a person-centered approach and stimulate the individual's propensity to behave in such a way. Indeed, most people have a desire to change their personality in a socially desirable way, and such motivation can also trigger actual personality development. However, particularly in the moral domain, individuals have a pervasive bias toward seeing themselves as more moral (e.g., honest, compassionate) than their actions warrant. This lack of self-knowledge, known as self-enhancement, can undermine corresponding desires to change for the better. Providing individuals with personality feedback, which gives them information about their personality in relation to that of others, can be a useful way to increase self-knowledge in the moral domain, i.e., help individuals develop a more accurate perception of their own morality and, thereby, potentially instill desires to change. However, no research to date has systematically examined how personality feedback needs to be designed to be effective. For instance, are people offended by personality feedback in the moral domain (especially the negative one)? Do they find it useful?

Objectives: The present study will combine quantitative and qualitative methods to assess how well personality feedback is received with respect to trait morality, defined as the general tendency to think, feel, and behave according to ethical principles. More specifically, we will investigate feedback acceptability and credibility, together with participants' thoughts on trait morality and its importance. We will also measure change goals before and after receiving the feedback.

Method: Participants (approx. 30 students) will complete an online self-report measure of trait morality (covering honesty, humility, fairness, compassion, and gratitude) and invite 3-5 well-acquainted others to provide informant reports. During a laboratory session, participants will receive detailed feedback on their trait morality that is based on both their self-report and the aggregated informant reports. Participants will then reflect on the feedback in a one-hour semi-structured interview conducted by an experienced psychologist. Specifically, participants will discuss their thoughts and feelings about the feedback, as well as their opinions about its accuracy and credibility, and their goals for future change in trait morality. Participants will also complete a post-interview questionnaire about their perceptions of the feedback.

Conclusions: The findings will inform future research on how to design personality feedback so that participants do not feel offended by it but rather develop goals to change in desirable ways. Also, it will provide insights to researchers and practitioners interested in how to increase self-knowledge using personality feedback most effectively. This will then open the way for research on the effect of self-knowledge on moral behavior. Data collection is underway and will be completed by April 2023.

Keywords: trait morality, feedback, acceptance, self-knowledge

Short Abstract

Personality feedback is a useful way to improve self-knowledge in the moral domain, that is, helping individuals gain a more accurate perception of their own morality. However, no study investigated how personality feedback needs to be designed to be most effective. In this study, we will examine individuals' perception of personality feedback based on both self-reports and aggregated informant-reports by combining quantitative (self-report questionnaires) and qualitative (semi-structured interviews) methods. The results will inform future research on personality feedback in the moral domain and provide initial insight on its role with regard to change goals.

Challenges and opportunities for character education in Slovakia

Andrej Rajský[1], Martin Brestovanský[1], Marek Wiesenganger[1]

Abstract

The first part of the paper is focused on experiences with the 30 years old history of character education (CE) in Slovakia (the practice of the ethical education school subject) and describes examples of schools of character. Authors also explain the current process of the state curriculum reform in Slovakia by which they are responsible for developing the segments related to CE. The second part of the contribution presents the latest plans for the progress in CE in Slovakia, including development of evaluation instruments, supporting the CE in teaching practice through mentors and programs of further teacher development, offering specific trainings, and establishing Filia, NGO.

Summary

The article deals with Slovak experience in character education, while briefly touches on its 30-year rich history, illuminates theoretical and empirical research in this area in Slovakia, and brings examples of existing character schools (the schools educationally designed with strong emphasis on the students´ moral character development) and extracurricular long-term projects that include a significant character component, e.g. Great Works Academy. The first part of the contribution finishes with focus on the current curriculum reform process (2022-2026), which has ambition to place much more emphasis on moral character development than ever before.

In the second part, the paper will address the questions of what should be worked on and what decisions and actions should be taken to bring character and virtue education in Slovakia to the higher quality level and to the forefront of public attention: creating and validating the evaluation instruments, networking and sharing the experiences across country, establishing the position of the character education mentor in Regional Centres of Support of Teachers, further professional development of teachers in general as well as of the ethical education teachers, developing a basic design of "school of character" and concept of "university of character" (strengthening the elements of character education in higher education).

The Department of Educational Studies guarantees the study programmes of ethical education, civic education and social pedagogy at Trnava University, which gives it the opportunity to introduce the neo-aristotelian character education strategies directly into the preparation of future teachers. This includes an update of the content of the education of teacher students as well as a creating an offer of specific trainings, such as "virtue cards games", adventure experiential courses etc. In order to be able to cross the borders of university education, the *Filia NGO* was established (2022).

In the context of all these activities, we greatly welcome the establishment of the ECVA as an environment for international networking and strengthening international exchange in the study programs of character education, e.g. through E+ programs.

Key words: Slovakian experiences with moral and character education, state curriculum reform, teacher professional development, character schools.

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Title: Rise of Community Groups in British Left-Behind Neighbourhoods: An Opportunity for Collective Phronesis.

Abstract

The last decade in the UK has seen a surge of community groups forming in reaction to deprivation, which we will argue form examples of collective *phronesis*. Our understanding of collective *phronesis* will use Narbonne's conception while considering Kristjánsson's possible challenges to strictly political interpretations. This rise in community action and devolution is an opportunity for further contact and dialogue between virtue ethics and the emerging community power network. The analysis will be based on secondary resources - like reports and interviews conducted by social researchers and large national charities - and interviews with leaders of these community groups.

Summary

Since the economic crisis of the late 2000s, as well as David Cameron's introduction of austerity measures, the United Kingdom has been witnessing a surge in active community groups. This impressive growth has occurred in reaction to the progressive downfall of a 70-year model of social welfare, in which the state was expected to manage every aspect of our social lives and viewed citizens as passive recipients of social utility and benefits. The decline of this model, due to a plurality of factors such as demographic ageing and economic shocks, has sunk some of the most ailing communities into unseen levels of destitution. However, against all odds, certain individuals within these left-behind communities have decided to come together to take action into their own hands. As the state recedes, a new community-powered movement is taking over.

We would like to show the parallels between the actions of these community groups in left-behind neighbourhoods and recent discussions around the Aristotelian notion of collective *phronesis*. Aristotle's *Politics* was designed in light of the Greek city-state, i.e. a political organisation which characteristically didn't exceed a few thousand members, and which, we purport to show, is better instantiated in these small-scale ethical communities than in modern large-scale political organisations such as the nation-state. Through an in-depth analysis of three community groups, we will argue that collective *phronesis*, i.e., shared moral sensibility and deliberative excellence, can emerge in local contexts despite the fierce challenges posed by socioeconomic deprivation. This is best illustrated through an example: a community group based in an ethnically diverse area of Bolton bridged cultural differences and grew the local economy by reviving an abandoned church to host a thriving hub for social and economic activities. The group was able to coordinate the autonomous deliberations of different individuals - sometimes with different cultural worldviews -, which not only resulted in effective collaboration towards a common good but in the ethical betterment of the actors themselves.

Interpretations with regards to the nature and range of collective *phronesis* usually vary a lot according to the specialisation of their proponents: political philosophers (Horn 2016, Narbonne 2020) will generally insist on the democratic implications of *Politics* III.11, while moral philosophers (Kristjánsson 2021) will more naturally tend to emphasise in what way this important passage stands in continuity with Aristotle's characterisation of individual *phronesis* in his *Ethics*. We will argue that these community groups provide us with a great opportunity

to combine the main strengths of both accounts. In describing the role played by a few outstanding community leaders, we will respect Kristjánsson's requirements for a substantial continuity between individual and collective *phronesis*: perception of the ethical salience of a situation, ability to resolve conflicts, possession of a conception of flourishing, integration of emotions. On the other hand, in shedding light on the shared sensibility and deliberative background in which their actions take place, we will cater to the more politically oriented interpretations of the notion.

The community-powered movement in the United Kingdom has led to and has been enabled by well-established national institutions like New Local, Local Trust, as well as the activity of senior political voices. Local Trust, for example, spearheads a £150 million project in which 150 local communities each receive £1 million to regenerate their areas from the bottom up. The charity has since then opened Community Leadership Academies to enhance community groups through training and mutually beneficial exchanges between local leaders. This represents a great opportunity for enhanced dialogue between virtue ethics, local community groups, national charities, and political actors.

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How could narrative environmental ethics shape moral characters of Anthropocenians?

Virtue is one of the longest-debated terms in the history of ethics and as such has been subject to various interpretations. In general, a virtue is defined in moral philosophy as a character trait or disposition that enables us to realise ethical goodness. The foundation to virtue ethics was laid down by Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics*. However, the modern revival of the virtue discussion is attributed to Anscombe (1958) and her paper on *Modern Moral Philosophy*, in which she criticised the contemporary moral discourse for its focus on moral deeds instead of moral character. After the publication of the paper, many philosophers started discussing virtues and analysing moral character from more modern perspectives. An example of such discourse is the discussion on so-called environmental virtue ethics (for example Sandler 2007; Treanor 2014; Cafaro 2004; van Wensveen 2000). These works proves that we need to adjust moral competences to the challenges we face. I argue that environmental virtues should be perceived as dispositions that enables one to do right things, for the right reason, and in the right way. Thus, they could help a moral agent to address the ecological crisis humanity is facing.

Virtue is probably the most applicable concept of ethics, the practical aspect of virtue theory is included in most virtue ethics concepts (see: Annas 2011, Hursthouse 1999, Foot 2001, Slote 1995). However, a proper virtue theory should be accompanied by adequate moral education. In my talk I will discuss how environmental virtue theory could be conveyed through narration. Brian Treanor emphasizes the role of narration, which is a very useful tool in the personal development of moral agency. One form of narration is the personal narration that helps us give meaning to our actions; it helps us to understand the events in our lives. "Thus, we use narrative (…) to understand life retrospectively" (Treanor 2014: 181) and understand it in a bigger context. Personal narration is important not only for oneself: it can serve as a source of inspiration for others. It can be seen as a very vivid example of ethical beliefs, as is the case with Thoreau's *Walden* (Cafaro 1999: 109–110). This book is an example of a sort of self-

creation where each and every act is understood in the wider context of self-development in union with nature. The story is a very personal journey in which the main character explores his authentic self and develops a moral character. Thoreau's narrative could be a narration that will help to shape moral character. His own flourishing, and the message he wants to convey are huge inspiration and could serve as useful educational tool. In my talk I will present how the narration could serve conveying environmental virtues and shaping moral character that includes environment as a moral object. I will present the theory behind the concept as well as the ways of its practical application in terms of what are criteria of selecting proper narrations for environmental education, which environmental virtues should be included into the educational programs, and how to make narrative theory effective.

Abstract

The aim of my talk is to answer the question if environmental virtue ethics (EVE) could be incorporated to educational programs? In the first part I will present environmental virtue ethics and show that environmental virtues are a virtues that are needed to respond in a right way to the challenges that Anthropocenians meet. In the second part I focus on possibility of incorporating environmental virtues to education using concept of narration. My analysis will be conducted from ethical perspective.

Moral identity and cognitive development

PhDr. Andrea Baranovská PhD. – Department of Pedagogical Studies, Paedological Faculty of Trnava University in Trnava

Abstract

Define moral identity is very hard according to both construct – identity and morality. It is possible to say that moral identity involves the importance of morality to the individual´s identity witch depends of cognitive development. According to Lapsley (2008), Sahao, Aquino, Freeman (2008) and Moni, Jordan (2009) moral identity can be classified as social cognitive perspectives. In our study we try to find out way how to better understand development of moral identity through development of personal identity (Marcia, 1966; Berzonsky, Neimeyer, 1994) and cognitive development – specifically need of cognitive closure (Kruglansky, 1989, 1990) which is dimension related to person´s motivation with respect to information processing and judgment. On moral identity we can see as chronically accessible moral schemas, or self-important social identity or commitment to moral social roles or moral self-representations in autobiographical memory or moral ideal self, but we must focus on the identity styles model and motivation of person.

Key words: moral identity, styles of identity, need for cognitive closure, judgment, morality, identity

Possibilities of value-based self-analysis for school improvement: Estonian experience

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Key words: values education, values development, whole-school approach

Short abstract

Centre for Ethics, University of Tartu has developed a model for values-based self-analysis (VBSA) for schools. The VBSA model helps schools to realize the values of their organization and plan action for values-based school improvement. With more than a decade of experience, the VBSA model has been used in 105 Estonian schools for values-based school improvement with promising results on both values-based school culture, curricula and relationships. (Parder & Hirsnik., 2020; Hirsnik & Punnar, 2021; Harro-Loit el al., 2021)

Introduction

Estonian National Curriculum for basic education Core Values include general human values and social values. Moreover, curriculum states Core Competences important for the development and self-actualization of a person in different roles: in the family, at work and in public life; with Value Competence being one of them. Estonian schools have relatively high autonomy for adopting the Curriculum. Schools regardless of their legal status, need to present their own values in their mission statement and outline a plan for values-based education for human flourishing shaped through direct and indirect curricula.

The first "National Values Development Programme" was called to action in 2009 by Centre for Ethics, University of Tartu and Estonian Ministry of Education and Research with the aim of supporting schools in adapting the ideals of the new Curriculum, providing values-based education for all students in Estonia and to help schools bridge the gap between declared and lived values (Sutrop, 2021). Since 2009, Centre for Ethics has run a yearly programme for values-based self-analysis (VBSA) for schools called "Good School as Values-based School" recognition programme. The main aim of the programme is to engage the stakeholders of the school in the process of VBSA, in which stakeholders realize the values in their organization and plan action for values-based school improvement. In the process of VBSA, stakeholders develop a common understanding of how values influence communication, relationships, the learning process, teaching methods, assessment and evaluation, as well as develop their competences for VBSA. (Hirsnik & Punnar, 2021) By now, The Centre has developed the

model for VBSA over a decade (Hirsnik & Punnar, 2021; Harro-Loit el al., 2021), with more than 100 different schools having participated in the process.

Objective

The objective of the presentation will identify the five stages of VBSA and reflect how Estonian schools have implemented this model in connection with the recognition programme "Good School as Values-based School".

Method

Schools where value education has not yet become a part of school culture, need values-based self-analysis for school improvement. (Parder & Hirsnik., 2020; Hirsnik & Punnar, 2021; Harro-Loit el al., 2021) VBSA includes activities aimed directly at the formation of teachers' value competence, as well as the creation of a more general environment that carries certain values and supports reflexion over values. The first step in VBSA is to formulate the desired values and loyalty obligations. The second step is to discuss the values and loyalties to the other stakeholders (i.e. students, staff, parents, community), possible value choices, conflicts and hierarchy of values in school-life and between stakeholders. The third step is agreements about most important values – a time-consuming process in which a dialogue-based communication culture and people's motivation to enter into agreements on values and loyalty obligations are crucial. The fourth step is the monitoring and analysis of the daily practises of the school life. Here, it is necessary to critically ask whether agreed values are reasonable and whether loyalty choices are in some cases more important than values. The fifth step is to respond to changes – i.e. the (re)formulation of values and loyalty commitments that support the current needs of the school in a changed situation. (Harro-Loit el al., 2021)

Conclusion

In the experience for Centre for Ethics "Good School as Values-based School" recognition programme, schools need support in both the process of VBSA and the competences required for VBSA. The five stages of VBSA help schools to identify their strengths and weaknesses for values-based education and school culture and their own resources for whole-school development. (Parder & Hirsnik., 2020; Hirsnik & Punnar, 2021; Harro-Loit el al., 2021)

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