School Manager's Practice of Egoism and Utilitarianism: School and Ministry Procedures as Ethical Norms

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Abstract

This paper traces school manager's practice of egoism and utilitarianism through school and ministry procedures as ethical norms. The educational process has many conditional disciplines which regulate the ordinary learning schedules at schools. In particular, some of these disciplines are issued by the school itself to maintain a healthy and harmonious school life. In this case, regulations are formed by the school management and staff members. On the other hand, there are some disciplines do not relate to the school regulations and decisions. They are regulated by a higher authority i.e., the ministry of education. Ministry decisions are applied to all schools of a certain country or region. Here, the conditional disciplines might have different points of view which could not satisfy the school's normal vision. Both school decisions and ministry decisions sometimes contradict each other. This is because there are no common or mutual solutions to the moral problems concerning the school community. Accordingly, the contradiction between the school and the ministry results is moral problem including the norms of behavior. These norms are directed to comply with specific rules or policies which cannot be followed by the school students because of their social ethics.

Key words: Education; Ethics; Egoism; School uniform; Utilitarianism

1. INTRODUCTION

School life has many situations. These situations are connected with educational process at school. There are different practices exerted within the school. Some of these situations relate to students and their relationships when they want to benefit from each other. This situation depends on the students and their needs to fulfill their desires. The students exchange ideas and information based on the material they learn at school, or they interact with each other to discuss some issues regarding their school. This case refers to students' ability to benefit from each other on the basis of their learning in the whole educational process. Students tend to be expedient to achieve their goals which are set at school where teachers require some tasks to be done by students on the course materials which students study to benefit from the courses to transfer their learning into their real life situations (Abu Jweid, 2021a, p.31). Such situations are positive and enhance the students' ability to use what they learned at school in their real life situations.

I have introduced the students and teachers relationship because they are relevant to the school manger's relationship with both students and teachers. At the school level, the relationship among the students, teachers, and manager is integrated. Without them the educational process will be incomplete. The students and teachers relations differ from the manager relationship with the whole school. Both students and teachers benefit from each other when they interact with other students or teachers. Accordingly, they need other persons to take advantage in order to achieve their interests. On the contrary, the school manager exploits both students and teachers to achieve his/her personal goals (Abu Jweid,

2021b, p.12). In this essay, I will focus on the way in which the school manager exploits both teachers and students. The manager exploitation is his/her practice of egoism and utilitarianism. By practicing utilitarianism, the school manager can achieve his/her interests at the expense of the students' and teachers' priority at the school. Therefore, the school may lose its developing progress as a result of the manager's practice of egoism and utilitarianism. In the sections below, I will introduce egoism and utilitarianism from an ethical point of view. Then, I will support the manager's practice of egoism and utilitarianism with illustrative examples.

By using "conditional disciplines", I mean that there are some rules, regulations, policies, directives, or decisions which are connected to the behavioral norms in the educational process. The ministry disciplines, for example, may contradict with the community's norms (Abu Jweid, 2021c, p.8). Therefore, the ministry regulatory disciplines become controversial because people oppose them. In this regard, the regulatory disciplines become a subject to change or modification to avoid the moral problems coming out of that community's ethical beliefs. The ethical behaviors of a community or society do not agree with the compulsory disciplines issued by the ministry to manage the habitual school life.

Furthermore, I will focus on three norms related rules and regulations issued by the school and ministry of education. First, mixed education is going to be discussed. The second norm is the students uniform. Third, teacher choice will be discussed in relation to compulsory norms from an ethical point of view. The justification of selecting these norms is that they are controversial, and they are always questioned from an ethical point of view. More specifically, these norms do not go along with some conservative communities with religious backgrounds. Therefore, I will focus on these three norms because they are very relevant to conservative societies. In Addition, Jordan will be cited for this essay's examples.

2. EGOISM

The notion of egoism dates back to "ancient history in philosophy, and figures prominently in several of the Platonic dialogues.... it is important to distinguish clearly between the claim that values are by nature subjective and the claim that what makes something valuable" (Gordon 20). Additionally, psychological egoism includes "that people only do, and can only do, what they want is usually called psychological egoism, because it makes egoistic desire the most fundamental psychological explanation (Abu Jweid, 2021d, p.9). That is to say, it says that all human actions must, ultimately, be explained in terms of the desires of the people whose actions they are. If people didn't want to do what they do, they wouldn't do it" (Gordon, p.22). Generally, Egoism has a close relationship with psychology and its demands.

3. UTILITARIANISM

Therefore, pleasure is the main focus of utilitarianism that the main slogan is "what brings pleasure is good, and what causes pain is bad." Thus, utilitarianism is completely individual i.e., it depends many people (Broad, p.102). The greatest happiness principle is another phrase related to utilitarianism. It is also includes "the divorce between a morally virtuous life and a personally happy and fulfilling life, and the emphasis upon deserving to be happy rather than actually being happy, leaves us with a problem about motivation" (Copp, p.175). Another principle of utility is "duty for duty's sake" in which "the principle of utility is the foundation of the present work. . . . By the principle of utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question" (Bentham, p.125). Accordingly, utilitarianism belongs to the individual practices to fulfill the needs of pleasure in life (Abu Jweid, 2021e, p.26). In the following section, I will cite some examples related to both egoism and utilitarianism in the educational process. The main focus will be on the school manager's practices of egoism and utilitarianism to achieve subjective goals.

4. EXAMPLE OF EGOISM

Examples of egoism are various. They cannot be limited to a specific example of egoistic behavior. But I will cite the search for "fame" as an example of egoism practiced by the school manager. The search for fame is a selfish behavior. It indicates the level of self-glorification which enables people to achieve their purposes. The school manager, for example, tries to be famous regardless the school's needs. He/she wants to be famous in order to be promoted or more respected by students' parents and community. In this situation, he/she spends money as an instrument to fulfill his/her goals. Money here is given to students without doing any achievement. Students do not do anything to the school, but the manager gives money to some students to gain their respect in order to be famous for generosity (Abu Jweid, 2021f, p.52). The manager in this situation is the only benefited person in the school, not the students or the teachers. His/her behavior is not justifiable from an ethical point of view; that is he/she spends money for his/her personal interests. This situation could be also evaluated good or bad from the students or teachers points of view. But in terms of ethics, it is considered immoral because it is all pragmatic.

5. EXAMPLE OF UTILITARIANISM

As I have stated earlier in this essay, utilitarianism is all about pleasure as an ultimate principle. In normative ethics, utilitarianism is considered as an action to increase

pleasure or good things and decrease pain or bad things. For example, the school manager asks the ministry to build a sports field for talented students. In this situation, the manager wants his/her school to reach the highest utility standards. However, he/she ignores the rights of other students in doing so. Other handicapped and unprofessional students will not benefit from such sports field (Abu Jweid, 2020a, p.10). Here, utilitarianism is only used by the manager to justify the schools' aspiration to be in good construction standards, while other student groups will be neglected at the expense of students' equality. The pleasure here is not available except for talented students and the others do not gain any pleasurable benefits (Abu Jweid, 2020b, p.7). In this case, utilitarianism could be evaluated as negative because it is too demanding, and it ignores justice from an ethical point of view.

6. EDUCATIONAL ETHICS

In this section, I will present some ideas about educational ethics before discussing the three selected norms. The ethical side is very vital in the educational process especially when it addresses the background of students' morality (Abu Jweid, 2020c: 14). Consequently, the study of educational ethics helps the ministry and school management to issue suitable regulations and rules about the society culture. Therefore, educational ethics is necessary for discussing the students' behavioral norms.

One of the most important factors of educational ethics is the ability to support the ministry or school to provide successful decisions on the controversial issues regarding students' ethics. Here, the problem with the educational order discipline is that it influences the world of decision-making; it needs schools mangers among those who actually make the decisions because "society, parents, colleagues and the public at large, upon whose support the school are bound to rely" (Gardner, p.37). One of the results of being integrated into the morality of philosophical benefits has been the continuous growth of such benefits for the school of most educational policies (Abu Jweid and GhadaSasa, 2020d, p.345). As a result, many educational decision-makers simply develop the skills and concepts to be able to deal with ethical norms of an "analytic kind, and the products of it that they could make sense of did not convince them it was worth their while developing such skills" (Strike x).

Another factor of education ethics is the students' needs. In general, students come from different cultural backgrounds. Accordingly, their needs and desires are different from each other. They need to be equal in the educational process at least (Abu Jweid, 2020e, p.94). Consequently, the ministry may issue some policies that could not be done by students. Students' uniform, for example, does not appeal to certain social groups because it is not ethical in their points of view. The ministry rules, in this case, would be hard to be applied for schools.

Treating the students' needs is very important in this case (Abu Jweid, 2020f, p.208). The ministry's regulations are no longer applicable, and they may cause further controversial reactions especially from the parents who do not agree with them. In such case, the needs are not sufficiently issued by the ministry's educational rights (Halpin, p.92). Moreover, the "border extra-curriculum activities can take other forms, including moving beyond early childhood into other phases of education, such as primary and secondary education" (Dahlberg, p.23).

These are some of the factors relating to the general treatment of ethics in the learning process (Abu Jweid, 2020g, p.103). In the following sections, I will specify the ethical norms to three inter-related problems. They are 1) mixed education, 2) the students' uniform, and 3) the choice of teacher. I choose these problems because they are very critical in the ethical procedures at schools.

7. MIXED EDUCATION

The controversial reactions towards mixed education are relatively common in societies with religious belongings. The Arab countries are a general example of those countries who do not apply mixed education to all schools. The official schools constructed by the government are examples of the society desire to build separate schools for both boys and girls. Jordan is a specific example of mixed education opposition. Although there are few private preliminary mixed schools, the common primary and secondary schools are separated (Abu Jweid and Sasa, p.166). The schools are divided for males and females. The reason behind this divided education is the ethical manners of Jordanian society (Abu Jweid, p.532). Here, I think mixed education will not be successful because it contradicts the ethics of the society.

8. STUDENTS UNIFORM

Students' uniform is a particular issue related the ministry educational rules. The ministry issues a compulsory regulation stipulating the students' unified uniform. This uniform is specified by the ministry and it is applied at schools. Both boys and girls have their specific uniform. However, this uniform might result in opposed reactions by the society from an ethical perspective.

The students' uniform is not favored in some countries. For example, the girls' unified uniform is not allowed in the Jordanian schools, especially in the primary and secondary schools. The kind of girls' uniform is unsuitable for the girls' age in these educational periods. It does not also suit the girls' morality because the vast majority of Jordanian families like to send their girls to schools in the traditional customs of their society. So, I believe that the girls' uniform is controversial in this case and could not be applied. This is because the Jordanian society wants the girls to wear the traditional clothes due to religious ethics.

9. CHOICE OF TEACHER

The teacher choice depends on his/her educational qualification in the first place. Any teacher is assigned to teach the material in which he/she is specialized in. Accordingly, the teacher choice is a school-oriented procedure i.e., the ministry does not interfere in choosing any teacher for a specific material. The school chooses the teacher for course materials. The teacher's responsibility is to teach the material's objective and philosophical meaning according to his/her knowledge and experience. Therefore, the teacher is deliberately chosen to teach his/her specific field. Yet, some school principals respond to some parents' needs to teach their children with another teacher's class.

The ethical problem of teacher choice is emotional. For example, a teacher of science is assigned to teach mathematics by the school principal. The principal does so because the student's parents asked him to make that teacher teach another material because he/she is one of the parents' relatives. Here, the student falls victim of the principal bias in favor of parents' needs. From an ethical point of view, I think this action is not acceptable because students lose the opportunity to learn the material course in an academic and fair way.

10. CONCLUSION

This essay has discussed egoism and utilitarianism practiced by the school manager. Both egoism and utilitarianism are discussed from an ethical point of view. Egoism has been treated in the light of the school manager's search for achieving fame for his personal interests in a selfish way. Utilitarianism, on the other hand, is discussed in terms of the school manager's search for high-standards school construction utility at the expense of maintaining justice and equality among students.

Furthermore, this essay has approached three norms related to the school and ministry regulatory disciplines. The essay's main focus has been on mixed education, students' uniform, and choice of teacher. These norms have been discussed from an ethical point of view. They have been discussed as controversial because they are compulsory by the ministry of education and the school. They are also discussed as important norms because they oppose the ethical and religious backgrounds of conservative countries e.g., Jordan.

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