A study of Ethics in Persian Books of Elementary School
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Abstract

Purpose: Human ethics and behavior are so important that God has sent many prophets to human beings for ethics and religious education.

Methodology: Ethical education of students is one of the main goals of education system; therefore, efforts are made to incorporate ethical themes and teachings in the students' lessons, especially in elementary school; because the elementary period is the period of children's upbringing. This research has been done using descriptive-analytical method, based on library studies and with the aim of examining ethics and ethical teachings in Persian reading books of the first to sixth grade of elementary school. Teaching ethical concepts to elementary students should be considered to have constructive effects while, avoid harmful consequences.

Findings: The results showed that in the Persian books of the elementary school, many ethical topics had been considered and these teachings were among the ethical goals that had been approved by the Higher Education Council. Due to the greater impact of poetry, anecdotes and stories on the child's mind, most of these ethical teachings were presented to the student in the form of poems and stories.

Conclusion: Studies conducted in the Persian reading book of the six grades of elementary school showed that elementary school students were full of excitement, emotion and feeling that the correct guidance of this passion and emotion could be fruitful in the direction of ethical teaching.

Keywords: Ethics, ethical teachings, student, elementary course, Farsi reading.

1. Introduction

It should be said that ethics and religion have played an essential role in guiding human beings and controlling their behaviors from the very beginning of life; thus, religious ethics is an ethical tendency that is related to human attributes and behaviors according to religious views. In this type of religious teachings and propositions, the most important and main reference is the principles and laws of ethicality and behavior that define human perfection and worldly and otherworldly happiness as the most desirable; That is, the ultimate perfection of man is to reach nearness to God, which is possible only through the cultivation of the spiritual and ethical dimension. According to these explanations, ethic is essential for human being, and men, women, children, and adults should adhere to morality in order to reach perfection. This is especially important among children, especially elementary school students, which is the most important course of study in education systems; because the child’s personality and all-round development are further shaped in this period, and today’s children are the future makers of a society. Ethical education of students is necessary in three ways: It causes mental relaxation, social relations improvement and excel in society; The continuation of these moral virtues leads to the attainment of God’s pleasure and perfection, which is the ultimate goal of human creation. According to Spinoza, the salvation and happiness of human beings is God’s love for human beings, which leads to peace of mind and pleasure (Spinoza, 2015).

This caused this research to be dedicated to the study of ethics and ethical teachings in elementary Persian lessons. Ethic means nature, temperament and the like, which is used to mean the inner, esoteric and invisible form of man and can be understood with insight (Al-Zabidi, 2005). From the perspective of thinkers, it is those physical traits of man that cause the emergence of good and bad deeds; whether it is stable or unstable, whether issued out of thought or reflection, or without thought and contemplation; Hence, the term ethics is defined by Islamic thinkers as follows: "Strong and stable physical traits that cause actions appropriate to those traits be issued easily and without the need for reflection" (Moskviyyah, 2004); Therefore, ethical education is essential. Ethical education seeks a spiritual understanding of life and a moral sense in life to help man in the troubles of life. In fact, education, and especially ethical education, is valuable because the person who possesses those virtues is considered perfect and happy. Ignoring the religious dimension of ethicality, ethical virtues are a vital necessity of a prosperous and virtuous society (Arsan Kilani, 2016).

"Cultivation of ethical values" (Jafar Gholian, 2013) is one of the important goals of children’s literature. Also, the ethical goals of primary education by the Higher Education Council, which is in charge of drafting the laws of education in Iran, are as follows: Primary school students, after completing this course, should have the following ethical characteristics: Honest and trustworthy, polite and kind, faithful to the covenant, modest and chaste, respectful of elders and obedient to parents, brave and patient, clean and pure, persevering, observant of Islamic dress and veiled, hopeful and cheerful, resistant to difficulties, adorned, lovingly, helping classmates and peers with learning tasks, apologizing, and correcting inappropriate, disciplined behaviors at home, school, and in the community (Higher Education Council Resolutions, 2017).

In this part of the research, these ethical components are examined in the Persian books of the elementary school: One of the most important and fundamental moral themes is knowing and praising God. God-seeking and the desire to worship are in the institution of children and adolescents. Man is naturally very inclined to God in this period. "In this period, man becomes very interested in the issue of creation and God and religious issues; because, he instinctively feels that his only excuse is God and only by appealing to God can he find a meaning for his existence" (Ebrahimi, 2002). An important part of the Persian book of the elementary school tries to introduce God to the child; so that, he draws a picture of him to give an idea from God to the child based on it. Lessons of "Kind God" and "Kinder than mother" in the first grade, "Praise", "Most kind" and "Praying" in the second grade, "God of the rainbow", "Painter of the world", "Hope", "Green Moment of Pray" and "Quail and Farmer" in the third grade, "God", "Grace of God",...
"Migration of Swallows", "Creator of Beauty", "In Search", "Hope" and "Praying", in the fourth grade, "O all of you have been found", "God's grace" and "Theater" in the fifth grade, "In the name of the one who taught the soul to think", "Knowledge of the Creator", "Windows of knowledge", "Rain" and "Praying" in the sixth grade, is dedicated to this topic, in which themes such as knowing God, thanksgiving, appreciation and gratitude for God's blessings, starting work in the name of God, God's power, trusting in God and having hope and acquainted with his creations have been referred. Expressing God's blessings and counting God's creations is a way to know him; because the concept of God should be taught to the child in a simple way, not by reasoning and rational methods. Many blessings have usually been mentioned in elementary school Persian textbooks. For example, in the poem "Green Moment of Prayer", in the third grade of elementary school, all the elements of nature are praying and worshiping.

The divine prophets tried to make human beings know God and to understand this connection of human beings with God and to make it known to others. Awareness of this ethical theme has led some of the elementary school lessons to be devoted to the issue of worship and communication with God. Topics such as prayer, call to prayer, reciting the Qur'an and praying are acts of worship that are included in Persian books. The lessons of "Quran", "In the neighborhood mosque" and "Reza" in the first grade, "Our neighborhood mosque" and "Pilgrimage" in the second grade have dealt with these issues. Prayers, supplications, and man's relationship with God, which are performed in the form of pray, Qur'an, and supplications, are widely reflected in elementary Persian lessons. Praying that cause inner purity, purity of heart, God satisfaction and closeness to Him. Due to his pure nature, the child wants purity and is far from the worries and conflicts of the adult's world. Lessons such as "Praise", "Kind God" and "Reza" in the first grade, "Green moment of prayer", "Painter of the world", "Turquoise pool," Scent of daffodils" in the third grade, "The day when it rains" in the fifth grade, "Rain," in the sixth grade, are devoted to the subject of prayer.

In this course, students learn to pray for friends, healing of the patients, parents and others in the community, and to ask God for happiness and healing for them. Also, ask God to hasten the advent of the Imam of the Age. Another ethical issue for students is to get acquainted with the Prophet (PBUH), the Imams and the Infallibles (AS). Students in the lessons of "Kind Prophet", "Our Prophet" in the first grade, "Pilgrimage" in the second grade, "Paradise shirt" and "Scent of Narcissus" in the third grade, "Homay Rahmat" in the fourth grade, "The day when it rains" in the fifth grade, "Rain", "God's Lion" and "Bright Star" in the sixth grade get acquainted with the Holy Prophet (PBUH), Hazrat Fatima (AS), Imam Ali (AS), Imam Reza (AS) and Imam Zaman (AS) and their moral characteristics. Sustainability is another ethical component that the student should be familiar with. Giving importance and value to sustainability and resistance is one of the valuable and important duties of any nation and ethnic group, and one of the best and most fundamental ways to understand this is to include the contents of sustainability literature in students' textbooks. For this reason, textbook planners have tried to include various themes and components of sustainability in these textbooks. Items such as: self-sacrifice and martyrdom, resistance and perseverance against oppression, respect for martyrs, freedom and liberty, love for the homeland and …. What can be seen in these subjects in elementary Persian lessons are:

Honoring the martyrs in the courses "Smell of Apple and Jasmine " in the second grade, "Hero of yesterday, today, tomorrow" in the fifth grade, "Martyrs are the sun" and "Martyr TondgoYan" in the sixth grade. Inducing a sense of patriotism and preserving patriotic values in the courses of "Iran", "Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, Iran" and "Our homeland", in the first grade, "Beautiful Iran", "Our house" and "Flag", in second grade, "Flourishing Iran", "Dear Iran" and "Homeland" in the third grade, the story of "Patriotism", "House of Hope", "National Anthem", " A song for the homeland " and "Defense of the Homeland" in the fifth grade, "O Homeland", "Daryaghi" and "We are all from the clean soil of Iran" in the sixth grade. Resistance in the lessons of "Soldier" in the first grade, "Arash Kamangir", "Waiting",
"Simple coincidence" and "Commander of Hearts" in the fourth grade and "Fountain and Stone" in the fifth grade.

The Islamic Revolution of Iran is one of the manifestations of resistance and sustainability. This revolution took place with the decline of the star of the oppressive government. On February 13, 1979, with the revival of Islamic values, another birth took place in the culture of literature and spiritual life of our country. This event is one of the great events in the history of Iran that awareness and understanding it is essential for students. The student gets acquainted with the Islamic Revolution and its achievements in the lessons of "Bahman Celebration" and "Memories of the Revolution" in the first grade and "Guest of our city" in the fourth grade.

Respect for elders, especially parents, is a valuable ethical teaching. In several verses, God has emphasized the need to preserve the dignity of parents and to refrain from any insult and harassment of them, and has considered any disrespect to parents and failure to respect their rights as a sin and in need of repentance. Such as verses 23 and 24 of Surah Isra, verses 17 and 18 of Surah Al-Ahqaf, verse 36 of Surah An-Nisa', verse 8 of Surah Ankabut and verse 151 of Surah An'am. The lessons of "grandfather" in the third grade, "angel of a child" in the fourth grade and "O dear mother" in the sixth grade have been related to respect to the elders, especially mentioning the mother's efforts for the child and appreciating her. Also, in the lesson of "Kind God" in the first grade, the importance of praying for parents is emphasized.

Greeting and visiting are the ethical qualities of Muslims. The necessity of doing this action has been mentioned in the lessons of "Reza" in the first grade and "Greeting" in the second grade, an ethical and good behavior with the people.

Satisfaction is one of the ethical teachings which in the word mean satisfaction, contenting oneself with a small amount of means and facilities of life according to the necessity (Ragheb Esfahani, 2001) and satisfaction with a small gift (Ibn al-Manzur, 1988).

This ethical teaching is mentioned in the story of Ants and Solomon in the Persian textbook of fifth grade with the title of "in work and effort" and the lesson of "precious life" in the sixth grade. In these lessons, the student realizes that persuasion is an expression of faith and the most important fruit of it is comfort and satisfaction. Imam Ali (AS) has said: "Comfort and peace is the result of satisfaction" (Motazli, 1984). Self-esteem and its correction are also other consequences of this ethical desirable attribute; because "the most important factor in helping to improve one's self is satisfaction" (Tamimi Amedy, 2015).

Attention to thinking and reasoning is one of the central teachings of Islam, which has been considered both in the Qur'an and in the hadiths of the Prophet and the narrations of the Imams. The existence of combinations such as "men of mind", "I know you are thinking", "I know you are wise" and "I think you are wise" shows the importance of this ethical doctrine in the divine word. Also in religious teachings, divine teachings are always expressed with reason and proof; therefore, religion is not in conflict with thinking and reasoning, which means seeking knowledge (Ghazali, 1992). The Prophet (pbuh) commanded Muslims to acquire knowledge from everywhere, even from China, which at that time was a non-Muslim country. "Seek knowledge in China, if you seek knowledge, it is obligatory on all Muslims" (Koleini, 1984). The lessons "Like the Sun" in the first grade, "The Dream of the Caliph" in the third grade, "Windows of Cognition" in the sixth grade deal with the issue of thinking and reasoning in God's creations, and the lessons "Kosha and Nosha" in the second grade, "The value of knowledge", "Wisdom and Knowledge "and" Questioning " in the fourth grade," Guidance wisdom and discouraging wisdom "," The role of the wise "," When Bu'ali was a child "," Everyone knows everything ", in the fifth grade," Science and practice "," Tree of knowledge" "Fruit of Art" and "Voice of Sparrows" in the sixth grade emphasize the acquisition of science and knowledge and recount its desired results. Also, one of the ways to gain knowledge is reading a book and studying that the lessons of "reading" in the first grade, "kind friend" and "our class library" in second grade, "kind friend" in the third grade, "heros of yesterday, today, tomorrow" in the fifth grade,
"Attar and Jalaluddin Muhammad" and the "etiquette of reading", in the sixth grade promote the culture of reading and the way of studying.

From the Islamic point of view, forgiveness is used as one of the therapies methods to improve people's behavior with each other (Naraqi, 2018). This ethical virtue has many individual and social effects, the most important of which are increasing faith and forgiveness of sins, self-purification, prevention of abnormality, dignity, intimacy and pride, and finally the peace of the individual, family and society; therefore, it is necessary for the child to become acquainted with this ethical component and make it the queen of his mind. The theme of the prose story "The Lion and the Mouse" in the Persian book of first grade, and the poetic story of "The Lion and the Mouse" and the poem "Homay Rahmat" in the fourth grade are forgiving the mistakes of others. The story of "The Lion and the Mouse" has many ethical messages, such as not fighting; to be honest, not to be despised.

Another ethical virtue that the student should know is the importance of honesty and integrity. The word "sincerity" from "truth" basically means that the word or news that is given is in accordance with the outside, and the person whose news is in accordance with the fact and outside is called "honest" and "truthful" (Tabatabaei, 1995). Honesty and truthfulness is one of the greatest ethical virtues and one of the good deeds that has a special place in religious teachings and has been recommended in the Qur'an and many narrations, including verse 119 of Surah Tawbah. Al-Ghazali believes that "when a servant speaks the truth, his heart stands to be enlightened" (Majlesi, 2016).

Elementary school student when reading the stories of "The Honest Shepherd", "Who Was Who Was" in the second grade, "Young and the Bandit", "Empty Vase" in the fifth grade and the poems "To the Universe, truth is better of everything " and "Bright Star" in the sixth grade learns that if he is not truthful and honest, he will lose both the trust and support of others and his human dignity will be degraded.

The Quran and the hadiths of the great men of religion are the oldest source of Muslims in which love is discussed. Love plays an important role in social relations and human communications. In a society where the social relations of its individuals are based on love and charity, the self-esteem of the people is high. The student is introduced to this ethical teaching in the lessons of "I am an artist" in the second grade, "Our neighborhood" and "Playmate" and "Like rain" in the third grade, "Friendship" and the story of "love" and the story of "empathetic friends" in the sixth grade. He learns to love others and to avoid resentment and enmity. This encourages him to connect with and work with others. They learn this effective connection in "Blessed Beet" and "Cooperation" in the second grade and "Kajestan" in the fifth grade.

The need to consult is not hidden from anyone. In Islamic teachings, the issue of "consultation" is very important as there is a surah in the Holy Quran called "Shura" and also God commands his prophet in verse 159 of Surah Al-Imran "and consult them in the matter". Lessons of "our class library" in the second grade, "friendship" and "consult" in the sixth grade of elementary school has pointed out the importance of consultation.

Pride, wonder and arrogance are traits of ethical vice that have always been condemned between people. According to ethical scholars, wonder means that man should consider his deed as great and abundant, and because of that, he should be happy and be kind to his God until he sees himself beyond the bounds of guilt (Ragheb Esfahani, 2001). While reading the "Secret of the Rose" lesson in the fifth grade, the student realizes that arrogance is bad. The arrogant man becomes useless, lonely and helpless from the blessing of the friend. Also, human beings are superior to others due to their knowledge and science, technology and art.

One of the most important issues that have been widely discussed in the verses of the Holy Quran and the narrations of the Imams is the issue of patience. According to Ragheb Esfahani, patience is for a person to restrain in straits and to be in control, to restrain means to maintain himself (Ghazali, 2018). This word is used a lot in the Qur'an: verse 10 of Surah Muzmal, verse 11 of Surah Hood, verse 35 of Surah Al-Ahqaf. Al-Ghazali in Alchemy of Happiness introduces patience as one of the saviors of religion (Makarem Shirazi,
Students are introduced to the concept of patience and its positive consequences in the lessons "Turtles and Ducks" in the first grade and "fountain and Stone" in the fifth grade.

In the discussion of ethics, the issue of effort has been emphasized. In the Qur’an, God has made man dependent on his efforts and activities and his benefit from life to the extent of effort (Mazaheri, 2012). Elementary school student in "Good Work" courses, in the third grade, "Seven Red Pearls", in the fourth grade, "Work and effort", "Merchant and boys", "When Bu’ali was a child", "Fountain and stone", fifth grade, and "Expensive life" in the Sixth grade learns that he should work hard to achieve his goals.

One of the ethical teachings in Islam is that the believer should be clever and vigilant so as not to be deceived. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said in this regard: "The believer is clever, understanding and avoids mistakes" (Majlesi, 2016). Student in the courses "Clever Child", "Fox and Rooster" in the second grade, "Iranian Rooster" and "Fox and Crow" in the third grade, "Secret of Signs" and "Release from the cage" in the fourth grade, "Razi and building a hospital", "Cleverness" in the fifth grade, "consciousness" and "Bu’ali and Bahnmiar" in the sixth grade learns that with cleverness can manage and control his or her emotions and feelings and do not suffer from wrong feelings and consequently regret.

Good morals are ethical virtues that students should be aware of and adorned with; because the holy religion of Islam always calls for gentleness in dealing with others and prevents harshness. The Prophet (pbuh) has said about this moral virtue that "Good morals and kindness perpetuate friendship" (Suwaiti, 2008). The student in the lesson of "good morals" in the second grade learns that good behavior with others increases his respect while increases the number of friends and makes being in the school environment sweet and simple for him or her.

One of the most important ethical points in maintaining health is hygiene. In the Qur’an, in verse 222 of Surah Al-Baqarah and verse 108 of Surah At-Tawbah, God emphasizes the observance of cleanliness and purity. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) considered cleanliness to be the common duty of human beings and said, "Keep clean and tidy with whatever means you can;" because the foundation of Islam is based on cleanliness and paradise for the clean person (Majlesi, 2016). Elementary students learn how to maintain good health and strive for it by taking the lessons "Little Bear", "The Way to Health" and "Be Clean, Be Dear" in the second grade, "Blue Sky, Clean Nature", and "Sparrow Song" in the third grade. One of the ways to maintain health and well-being is to exercise. Primary school children learn in the first grade "sports" lessons, the third grade "exercise bell" while exercise has an effective role in health and vitality.

Privacy is a prominent moral characteristic of the perfect man; because Islam emphasizes privacy and secrecy. Imam Ali (AS) says: "The good of this world and the hereafter lies in hiding the secret" (Sadr Haj Seyed Javadi, 2002). The "box secret" in the third grade teaches the student the subject of privacy. Of course, it is necessary to make it clear to the student that not every secret is worth wearing and hiding.

According to philosophers and sages, courage is one of the four attributes of ethics (Ibn al-Manzur, 1988) and means having a strong heart in times of difficulty (Naraqi, 2018). The word courage is not mentioned in the Qur’an, but the content of some verses, such as verse 57 of Surah Anbiya, clearly indicates this feature. Courage in personal life and social relationships increases a person’s decision-making power. The elementary school student in the course of "Courage" and "Empty Vase" of the fifth grade and "Haft Khan" of the sixth grade gets acquainted with this ethical teaching and learns that the brave man accepts criticism without fear and decides. He stands up for his beliefs, enters the field of truth, fights against enemies and does not submit to humiliation.

Sacrifice is among the topics considered in ethics, and "that is forgiveness, in spite of one's need and necessity", the lowest degree of which is financial sacrifice and the highest degree of which is the sacrifice of life. The elementary student in the lessons of "Devoted persons" in the third grade, "Arash Kamangir" and "Homay Rahmat" in the fourth grade learns to give alms to the poor and needy and to sacrifice his life in the way of religion and defending the borders of the country.
Table 1. Ethical themes of Persian books in the elementary school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Ethical teaching</th>
<th>Row</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15/5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Knowing God and mentioning Him</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Familiarity with the Prophet, Imams and Infallibles</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Respect to the parents</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Greetings and visits</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Thinking and acquiring knowledge</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Honesty and integrity</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Love, friendship and cooperation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Consult</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0/6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pride and arrogance</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>patience</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Effort</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cleverness and vigilance</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Health and wellness</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>1/7</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

2. Discussion

Studies conducted in the Persian reading book of the six grades of elementary school showed that elementary school students were full of excitement, emotion and feeling that the correct guidance of this passion and emotion could be fruitful in the direction of ethical teaching. They also used the story, anecdote, and poetry to direct students' childish emotions toward the deepest ethical teachings; because guiding, educating and strengthening the student's thinking by reading, listening or telling different stories gave a more desirable result. In these books, the ethical issues approved by the Higher Education Council had been considered. In some cases, students were even introduced to several ethical topics in one lesson. Under the influence of these teachings, students made ethical virtues the queen of their minds, avoid vices, and thus, cultivate the soul and self-improvement. In addition to these cases, the criticism that could be leveled at the Persian books of the early period from an ethical point of view was that ethical teachings were not purposeful in terms of frequency. For example, patriotism is used in the Persian book of the first, second, third, fifth and sixth grades. Even in the fifth grade, this ethical theme was repeated many times; however, in the Persian book of the fourth grade, this theme was not mentioned; Therefore, it was suggested to reconsider the ethical content of elementary school Persian books. In this research, the sources used are introduced and thus the ethical principle of scientific fiduciary and the intellectual right of the authors of the works has been observed.
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