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Social Responsibility of Educators

Bouguila Sihem

Supervisor of FIBA department

Girls Academy, College of Business Administration

Jazan University, KSA.

ABSTRACT

We are interested in examining the social responsibility of education through an explorative study on a sample of teachers and students. Teachers should promote some values that conduct the behavior of students. Our ambition is to introduce the idea that the "citizenship" could be an explanatory framework of successful learning. Two arguments can justify our idea. First, the social orientation is yet established through our religions and reinforced by our parents. Culture and others some endogenous factors may encourage this social trend. Second, the citizenship is in its self the output of learning strategies. This indicates that active learning is inherent to social responsibility of active citizens teachers and thereby citizens students. So is important to reveal this problematic in order to stimulate our teachers together with students to pursue a social responsibility in their behaviors to get not only an actual citizen generation but also to ensure getting a future citizen generation. Through this study we hope influencing people, (teachers and students in particular) to act and be stimulated toward correct and responsible behavior.

Key words: social responsibility, teaching, learning, citizens, teachers, students, education, values

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INTRODUCTION

The first guru of the child is the mother, the second guru is the father, and the third guru is the teacher at school. These gurus open the eye of the - mind of the student to the vast world of knowledge, with its two integral dimensions of the secular and the religious. ***"Human existence depends upon compassion and curiosity leading to knowledge, but curiosity and knowledge without compassion is inhuman and compassion without curiosity and knowledge is ineffectual."*** --Victor Weisskopf, nuclear physicist (Shapiro, 2011).

But still teaching is one of the most important, and one of the hardest, jobs in the world.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Student interactions can be assessed by observing learners' personal development and well being; learners' moral, social, and cultural development; learners' adoption of healthy lifestyles; learners' contribution to the university community and the greater community. So how do we prepare students to be good future engaged citizens?

OBJECTIVES

In order to response this question we aim through this paper, first to show how we can promote a social responsibility culture through education and how we can prepare good citizens among students and thereby the community in whole. Second we examine through an explorative study the degree of social orientation of both our faculty members and students and we suggest some recommendations according to our finding. Third we determine some obstacles of promoting and implementing the social responsibility in education. In the final section we conclude and propose how we can establish a really social responsibility of education

Definition of education

Plato: The purpose of education is to cultivate the intellect, pursued for its own sake, in order to uncover the universal themes and natural laws that the prepared mind can discern beneath the surface confusion of life (Berman, 1990).

Socrates: The purpose of an education is to prepare citizens to participate in public affairs(Berman, 1990).

Definition of social responsibility

"Social responsibility is a personal investment in the well-being of others and of the planet (Berman, 1990).

Social responsibility of education is a process whereby the whole community transmits to the next generation appropriate values, traditions, skills and cultural norms. Service learning promotes good deeds and academic success.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As shown by Kathryn Wentzel in her article "Social Competence at School: Relation Between Social Responsibility and Academic Achievement" that Both theoretical and empirical work suggest that student social responsibility is not only a valued outcome in and of itself but that it can be instrumental in the acquisition of knowledge and the development of cognitive abilities. This review describes research on the value of social responsibility for parents and teachers and on how it is promoted within the classroom. It is proposed that social responsibility can facilitate learning and performance outcomes by promoting positive interactions with teachers and peers and, from a motivational perspective, by providing students with additional incentives to achieve.

Lexi Sorenson show in his workpaper: "Responsibility of Teachers" that Not all students learn the same way or at the same rate, but they all deserve the same chances to learn and succeed. A student with a learning disability may require extra attention than a student without a disability. It may require extra steps for a gay, or transgendered student to feel safe, included and supported. Equity does not mean that all students are treated the same; equity means that all students are treated fairly, inclusively, and respectfully. The teacher should provide equitable opportunities for all students to develop their individual abilities, regardless of culture, socio-economic class, ethnicity, or faith.

And for an Unbiased Teaching a teacher's personal opinions must be kept out of the classroom. Politics and religion can be discussed in general terms, but the teacher should never skew lessons to promote her own beliefs. Students must be presented with objective information so that they can amass the tools and knowledge to form their own decisions and think independently. A teacher sees first-hand how economic situations can affect a student's well-being and performance. A student from a low-income family may be less likely to participate in extracurricular activities, and may have poorer grades than a fellow student from a higher-income family. As an advocate of student success, it is a teacher's responsibility to do what he can to improve conditions, whether by raising concerns to the principal, speaking to parents, coordinating school programs, or participating in social activism in his community.

TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITY

It is a teacher's responsibility to provide a nurturing and welcoming learning environment for all students, and to take seriously the position of influence that she is in. A teacher can influence what her students talk about, how they think and what they become. Social responsibility demands that a teacher not only cares about actual students; but also must understand and prepare them and show them how fit into future community.

So to prepare students to be good citizens by providing them ways to help the institution itself be a good citizen while learning to be good citizens themselves;

To foster and renew bonds of trust in the community; i.e., "social capital" and to use the neutrality of the campus to provide a common ground where differences of opinion and advocacy for particular points of view can be addressed in an open and constructive ways and where people with similar goals can come together and create ways to work together

Therefore the social responsibility of teachers' emphasis on how:

1. To create leadership development opportunities for students and to foster a commitment to social and civic responsibility;
2. To enhance the employability of graduates by providing opportunities to build a strong resume and to explore career goals;
3. To promote learning both for students and for community members;
4. To play a role in creating capacity in the community to work on complex societal problems.

5. To design a more effective way for the campus to contribute to economic and community development;
6. To build support for public investment in higher education, both to provide access and opportunity for students of all backgrounds to pursue an education and to generate knowledge that will address critical societal needs;
7. Scholarship of Discovery: contributes to the human stock of knowledge and to the intellectual climate of a college or university.
8. Scholarship of Integration: makes connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context—often educating non specialists.
9. “a philosophy of education that empowers individuals, liberates the mind and cultivates social responsibility.”
10. Challenging encounters with important issues
11. More a way of learning than specific content
12. Prepares students to be intentional learners who can adapt to new environments, integrate knowledge from different sources and continue to learn throughout their lives
13. Prepares graduates who will be intentional, empowered, informed and responsible.
14. Open up boundaries and stimulate the exchange of ideas using some of the strategies of learning organizations:
15. Celebrate the diversity of the school community. Recognize all of the intellectual levels of the students and allow them to participate in the community.
16. Use the school woodshop classes to build furniture for homeless shelters. Involve the art classes in designing the furniture or decorating it. The concept of learning to use tools and equipment is maintained and the end result is fewer little projects and one larger project that helps the community and builds a sense of classroom community.
17. Incorporate environmental literacy into all of the content areas. Teach students about the interdependence of life forms; that materials flow through our ecosystems; that we are consumers of resources; that humans have an effect on environmental systems. Read about environmentalists, visit local rivers and streams to observe ecosystems. Learning through hands-on discovery is a sensory activity that has a greater impact than learning through reading inside a classroom or watching a video screen.
18. Create school democracies that have real power. Allow student governments to make recommendations to parents and school leadership groups. Assist students in learning the process of decision making; if it is always done behind closed doors they will never know what questions to ask so they can learn to govern themselves. Just as we teach “think alouds” in reading, we should teach “think alouds” in decision making.
19. Encourage students to make small changes through group action.

EMPIRICAL STUDY

In order to detect the degree of social responsibility among our staff and our students, we have proposed to do an explorative study (Sandhya, 2004) which consisting in asking 100 teachers and 100 students some questions as described under.

We conduct our questionnaire by asking questions reflecting social actions as explained below in tables

Questionnaire about the social responsibility of education

Students' questions

1. Did you listen your teacher talking about social responsibility like environmental issues, ecological issues, and social association? (Awareness of this concept)
2. Did your teacher inspire you to behave correctly? inspiration
3. Is your teacher while explaining courses, very strict or lenient and is he willing to repeat his explanation
4. Did you feel that your teacher is your friend?
5. Are you willing to have friend who is from different religious, race, material level...
6. Did you feel that your teacher or an administrative agent practice discrimination in your classroom
7. Did you prefer a teacher allowing you cheating?

8. Did you participate in local party or in decorating your university?

Teacher's questions:

1. Did you know what social responsibility of education is?()
2. Are you willing to teach ecological, social, environmental issues through your materials? ()
3. Have you participated in social association? ()
4. Are you lenient or severe person at classroom? ()
5. Are you lenient or strict person in invigilation duty ()
6. Are you concerned by what students are thinking about you ()
7. Are you a constant reader of books?()
8. Have you participated in social debate? ()

RESULTS

Tab.1: descriptive statistics of proxies' variables of social responsibility as approximated by students

		Percentage%
Educator' responsibility as seen by students	Aware of this concept	70
	inspiring	55
	Lenient	70
	freindly	45
	discriminators	90
	Serious	55
Social actions done by students	Green actions	15

Comments

As shown by this table that almost

70% of students don't know what social responsibility is, and be aware of the importance of ecological and environmental issues

Only 55% of students declare that they have inspired values from their teachers

70% of students consider that teachers are lenient and he is willing to help them

45% of students feel that their teacher are considered as their friends

90% of students feel that they are discriminated by both administrative agent and by their teachers

55% of them seem to be serious

Only 15 % of students have done green actions

Recommendations

It's clear from our finding that we have to learn them more and more about:

-what is to be a good citizens, responsible, sincere and serious person

-Why it is necessary to be conscientious and aware of the importance of citizenship and responsibility

- How to involve, stimulate and inspire them to practice and do what they have learn about social responsibility and citizenship

We should establish the equity, principal vector of social responsibility, and avoid any action that leads to discrimination between them

Encourage students to participate in green actions and became familiarized with this type of social initiatives as participate in social group, (decorating, cleaning the university...)

Table 2: descriptive statistics of proxies' variables of social responsibility as approximated by teachers

Educator' responsibility	Percentage
Familiarity	80
stimulation	80
Green actions	55
freindly	60
Seriousity	100
notoriety	70
Knowledge capacity	60

Comments

From these statistics we can note that almost

80% of teachers know what social responsibility of education is
80% of teachers are convinced to convey these social issues through their materials and thereby can involve their students to be good citizens
Only 55% of teachers have done green actions as participating in social association and debates
60% of teachers behave friendly with their students
All of them are agree to be serious and strict in their duty in order to inspire student to be disciplined sincere and
70% are interested by their notoriety among their students
60% of teachers are constant reader and update their knowledge

Recommendations

Teachers should be engaged more and more in doing green actions as to be a member in social association, participation in training courses in this field, debates, conferences...
Teachers should be more engaged to learn their students what is to be good citizens inspiring them how to practice the correct values, and if they prepare them correctly they prepare, in fact the future generation and the community in whole
Strong learning of citizenship (responsibility, seriousness, honesty, consciousness, good capacity of knowledge..) leads certainly to strong community

OBSTACLES TO CITIZENSHIP AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- curricula that provide neither guidance on how to promote socially responsible citizenship nor the time necessary for it
- administrators who may be more concerned with orderly classrooms than with the substance of the teaching and learning that takes place in them
- teachers whose view of citizenship and social responsibility is confined to flag pledges, voting, philanthropy, completing assignments and obedience
- teachers who are fearful about promoting active citizenship (sometimes with good reason)
- parents and community members who think a school's primary function is to get students to memorize facts and score well on tests so they can get into college
- parents and community members who may protest student involvement in controversial public issues

CONCLUSIONS

A teacher has not only to instruct but also to inspire the students; he or she has to influence the life and character of his or her students, and equip them with ideas and values which will fit them to enter the stream of national life as worthy citizens. You have to do all these during the years they are under your influence in the school.

The role of a teacher is to shape the minds of the younger generation. That shaping will be on positive lines; development of a scientific and humanistic attitude and temper, self-discipline, concern for other people, an ecological awareness. Teachers must instil into the students ancient cultural spirit of tolerance of different opinions and viewpoints, and acquaint them with the modern wisdom expressed in the dictum of the famous French thinker, Voltaire: 'I do not accept what you say; but I will defend with my life your right to say so (Swami Ranganathananda, 2009).

A teacher who does not love knowledge cannot inspire love of knowledge in children. The teacher must keep one's mind fresh by study of new books; he or she must constantly renew one's stock of knowledge.

It is not enough for a teacher to be aware of social justice issues; she also should discuss these issues with her students. Timely domestic and international topics --- including the inequitable distribution of wealth and power, marginalized populations, gender and social inequality, the environment, and social services --- should be talked about in a safe, open-minded environment. These discussions will promote tolerance and unbiased thinking in students

A teacher reads new books, acquires new dimensions of knowledge, and becomes enriched with new stock of ideas. That is the way to keep the mind fresh and creative. And this knowledge capacity must be combined with the capacity to communicate knowledge to others. By his or her knowledge, a teacher can only instruct; but communication of inspiration comes only from his or her personality.

Schools were originally intended to provide students with an environment that stimulated the ideals of character, not solely as a place that promoted academic success. Recently schools have cut back on developing citizenship skills because of accountability that relies on academic test scores.

"Students can and should be given opportunities to take part in the significant events in their world. As teachers, we can create very powerful opportunities for our students, both in the classroom and extending into the larger world....We can help them understand processes of group decision making and the political process. And, we can structure ways for them to participate in the empowering experience of acting to make a real difference in the world." --ESR's *Making History* (Sheldon Berman, 1990).

LIMITS OF RESEARCH

- Our sample of study was very limited
- The assessment of social responsibility is subjective
- This study may stimulate a future direction to be investigated deeply in this field testing the relationship between social responsibilities and learning achievement

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