

Ethics Teaching Techniques for Chiang Mai University Students

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ABSTRACT

This research paper focuses on five objectives of study: to know what techniques of ethics teaching are being used by the instructors, to know what techniques the student union use for organizing activity to develop students' morals, to know the characteristics of courses concerning ethics, to develop model for ethics teaching techniques, and to be able to apply the suitable model techniques for teaching ethics in classroom. The conceptual framework of this study was determined by activity-organizing technique, teaching techniques in the forms of: formal teaching for specific ethics course and informal teaching included in contents of any courses. Participatory and Action Research Approach (PAR) was employed for this study. The data were collected by the following tools: Brainstorming: debate, opinion survey; In-depth interview; and Questionnaires of 1,139, surveying the opinions of administrators, lecturers, students and officers at Chiang Mai University during the first semester of 2003.

The results of the study indicate that teaching ethics are included in classroom and activities the most. In addition, there is no specific form of inclusion in the content, depending on how the teacher can evaluate when students are ready by appropriate observation. Therefore, the teachers can teach ethics at any time and on any occasion. Forty-four point eight percent of teaching techniques use case study, 44.8 percent telling tale and raising news issues from newspaper and TV, 26.9 percent are lecturing by guest speakers and 19.2 percent are analyzing the real situation. Most respondents included ethics issues in classroom teaching. With respect to teaching style, 63.1 percent taught ethics informally. 47.8 percent suggested that ethics class should not be required for all major, 25.3 percent was evaluated at the end of semester and 70.1 percent were lectured participation activity techniques by union.

The suggestions to university's administrators and faculty level: CMU's administrators should set up policy of informal ethics teaching techniques by inclusion in any subjects and activities. Finally, The ethics workbook teaching techniques should be able to apply the suitable model techniques for teaching in classroom at Chiang Mai University.

Key words: Ethics, Ethics Teaching Techniques

INTRODUCTION

CMU's Corporate Mission: To be a premier university seeking excellence in the advancement and dissemination of knowledge to meet the challenges our nation faces in a globalizing world. In line with the Corporate Mission, the first of CMU's objective is: To provide access to an international standard of multidisciplinary education. Absolutely, CMU must develop roadmap to accomplish that mission. In CMU's case, the mission was achieve student value. The importance of student value are knowledge and moral development.

Santa Clara University's Journal (1998 as cited in Clair, 1987) was published the paper debated the question with "Can ethics be taught" because in that year, the editorial of the Wall Street, Journal announced that ethics courses are useless because ethics can't be taught. Although few people would turn to the Wall Street Journal as a learned expert on the teaching of ethics, the issue raised by the news paper is a serious one: Can ethics be taught? Because the issue is an old one. Almost 2500 years age, the philosopher Socrates debated the question with his fellow Athenians. Socrates' position was clear: Ethics consists of knowing what we ought to do, and such knowledge can be taught. And almosr psychologists today (Kohlberg as cited in Clair, 1987; Kitchener. 1986 and others) would agree with Socrates. This paper refer to look at the hard evidence psychologists have amassed, the answer is yes. If we read the Wall Street Journal, we wouldn't have thought so.

Kohlberg found that a person's ability to deal with ethical issues can develop in later life and whether education can affect that development. He found that a person's ability to deal with moral issues is not formed all at once. Just as there are stages of growth in physical development, the ability to think morally also develops in stages. The earliest level of moral development is that of the child which he called the preconventional level. The person at the preconventional level defines right and wrong in terms of what authority figures say is right or wrong or in terms of what results in rewards and punishments. Any parent can verify this. Ask the four or five year old why stealing is wrong, and chances are that they'll respond: "Because daddy or mommy says it's wrong" or "Because you get spanked if you steal." Some people stay at this level all of their lives, continuing to define right and wrong in terms of what authorities say or in terms of reaping rewards or avoiding unpleasant consequences. The second level of moral development is the level most adolescents reach. He called this the conventional level. The adolescent at the conventional level has internalized the norms of those groups among whom he or she lives. For the adolescent, right and wrong are based on group loyalties: loyalties to one's family, loyalties to one's friends, or loyalty to one's nation. If you ask adolescents at this level why something is wrong or why it is right, they will tend to answer in terms of what their families have taught them, what their friends think, or what Americans believe. Many people remain at this level, continuing to define right and wrong in terms of what society believes or what laws require. But if a person continues to develop morally, he or she will reach what Kohlberg labeled the postconventional level. The person at the postconventional level stops defining right and wrong in terms of group loyalties or norms. Instead, the adult at this level develops moral principles that define right and wrong from a universal point of view. The moral principles of the postconventional person are principles that would appeal to any reasonable person because they take everyone's interest into account. If you ask a person at the postconventional level why something is right or wrong, he or she will appeal to what promotes or doesn't promote the universal ideals of justice or human rights or human welfare. (Clayton, 2000; Hayes, 1983; Robert, 2000;

Kohlberg, 2001; ethics Action Workbook, 2001; Yvonne, 2005; Wong, 2005)

Many factors can stimulate a person's growth through the three levels of moral development. One of the most crucial factors, he found, is education. He discovered that when his subjects took courses in ethics and these courses challenged them to look at issues from a universal point of view, they tended to move upward through the levels.

Churchward (1992 as cited in Haverford College, 2005) was applied Kohlberg's model for discipline schools. He explains that students function at different levels of discipline and states that schools should not expect all students to be disciplined the same. He believes that rates of progression through the stages of Kohlberg's model differ from student to student, but that the progression from stage to stage is the same regardless of sex, race, or culture. His main concern is that in a society that expects math, reading, and other subject's programs to be different for each student or each grade level, the discipline programs are the same at each level. He has developed a discipline program based on Kohlberg's ideas which takes into account the moral development of each student. He, like Kohlberg, believed students followed a progression of stages on the road to self-discipline, and each student progressed through those stages at his or her own personal rate. He encourages teachers to work through the stages; not skip from stage to stage. He encourages teachers to talk to the student to see what is troubling him or her: "Whatever the cause, it is worth taking the time to talk with the student and see what's going on". He further encourages teachers to help students through the stages and most importantly, don't give up!

Woolfolk (1993 as cited in Robert, 2000; Haverford College, 2005) is encouraged to examine the links offered at Examples of Kohlberg's each stage. These links contain concrete examples of each of applications of these types of reasoning in the classroom. Consider the following moral dilemma: Mr. Heinz's wife is dying. There is one drug that will save her life but it is very expensive. The druggist will not lower the price so that Mr. Heinz can buy it to save his wife's life. What should he do? More importantly, why? He found that At level one (Preconventional), a person's answer to the Heinz dilemma might be, "it is wrong to steal the drug to save your wife because you might get caught". This reasoning is based on the consequences of his actions. This person's primary concern is avoiding punishment. On the reverse side, the reasoning for stealing the drug would be to avoid punishment by your wife and the law, assuming an investigation came after the wife's death. The inquiry may blame the man for not coming up with a way to get the money to save his wife's life. At level two (Conventional), one takes into account society's norms and laws, saying, "It's wrong for Mr. Heinz to steal because it's against the law. Mr. Heinz wants society to approve of his actions, so he doesn't steal the drug". On the flip side, the subject may believe: "it's right to steal because Mr. Heinz means well by trying to help his dying wife. He'll pay the druggist the money when he is able, or accept the consequences for stealing the drug". In this case, the subject still respects the law, but places an even higher value on loyalty to his loved ones. This shows a desire to be a good person but still conform to the law. At level three (Postconventional), a person's response might be, "It's not wrong for Mr. Heinz to steal because human life must be preserved and life is worth more than personal property." Note that the thinking here is more abstract than the previous levels. Laws to a person at this level can be considered somewhat arbitrary, depending on the situation. This person realizes that laws are important to keep society running relatively smoothly, but also knows that they can be too rigid to apply in some cases. This person justifies that saving a life is more important than an abstract symbol of power: money.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research paper focuses on surveying the opinions of administrators, lecturers, students and officers at Chiang Mai University in regard to techniques of teaching ethics to Chiang Mai University's students. The objectives of the study are:

1. To know what techniques of ethics teaching being use by the lecturers in different fields.
2. To know what techniques the student union use for organizing activity to develop student' s morals.
3. To know the characteristics of courses concerning ethics.
4. To develop model for ethics teaching techniques at Chiang Mai University.
5. To be able to apply the suitable model techniques for teaching ethics in classroom at Chiang Mai University.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The conceptual framework of this study was determined by three independent variables, namely:

1. Activity-organizing techniques.
2. Teaching techniques, in the forms of: formal teaching for specific ethics course, informal teaching included in contents of any courses, and training in ethics by instructors.
3. Policy of university's administrators at university and faculty level.

Course contents and ethical activity arrangements covered in this research were categorized in two themes:

1. Ten rules of moral for a good man which are discipline, responsibility, honesty, social skill, creativity, self-confidence, knowledge acquisition, diligence, economization, and avoiding addicted substance(drug use).
2. Teaching content and ethical activities in order to cultivate specific moral consciousness in terms of observing, rules and regulations of school, faculty or community, dressing properly, having discipline in class, having discipline on road, having democratic life style, being moral. and following their religion's teaching, maintaining Thai culture, having social skills, respecting queuing, being economical, conserving environment, no drug involvement and cheating in test.

Participatory and Action Research Approach (PAR) was employed for this study. The data were collected by the following tools:

1. Brainstorming: debate, opinion survey
2. In-depth interview
3. Questionnaires
4. Specific questionnaire interview of 1,139, surveying the opinions of administrators, lecturers, students and officers at Chiang Mai University during the first semester of 2003.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that teaching ethics are included in classroom and activities the most. In addition, there is no specific form of inclusion in the content, depending on how the teacher can evaluate when students are ready by appropriate observation. Therefore,

the teachers can teach ethics at any time and on any occasion. Forty-four point eight percent of teaching techniques use case study, 44.8 percent telling tale and raising news issues from newspaper and TV, 26.9 percent are lecturing by guest speakers and 19.2 percent are analyzing the real situation. Most respondents included ethics issues in classroom teaching. With respect to teaching style, 63.1 percent taught ethics informally. 47.8 percent suggested that ethics class should not be required for all major, 25.3 percent was evaluated at the end of semester and 70.1 percent were lectured participation activity techniques by union. Moreover, the study found that training students to have discipline during tests by following rules and regulation could solve problem remarkably.

Ethics problem-solving are suggested as follow. Most respondents included ethics issues in classroom teaching. With respect to teaching style, 63.1 percent taught ethics informally (means that it is up to each individual teacher), whereas 33.8 percent taught ethic formally (means that ethics class is a required course).Thirty-one point two percent of respondents suggested ethics as a required course while 17.2 percent of respondents suggested ethics as a selective course. Forty-seven point eight percent of respondents suggested that ethics class should not be required for all majors, but should be taught additionally in all classes. With respect to the number of ethics teaching hour per semester, 19.8 percent suggested 1-3 hours. Thirteen point four percent of respondents suggested 2 issues of ethics should be put in the teaching plan. With respect to the teaching content, 73.1 percent suggested discipline content, 79.1 percent suggested responsibility content, 67.2 percent suggested economic content, 61.2 percent suggested knowledge-acquisition content, and 58.2 percent suggested social skill content. Furthermore, 55.2, 53.7, 50.7 and 31.3 percent suggested the contents of diligence, self-confidence, creativity and avoiding addicted substance (drug use), respectively. For the method of evaluating success of teaching ethics, class attendance (23.9 percent), homework assignments (13.4 percent), and separation from course content (12 percent) find was suggested.

In terms of activity techniques to develop students' moral organized by student union, there were opinions that:

(1) The University lecturers should participate in students activity (70.1 percent), and they should be a role model.

(2) At the department level, budget should be provided for moral activities, ethics issues to be included into classes each semester should be spelled out clearly with follow-up or evaluation activities.

(3) At the faculty level, place and budget should be provided for ethical activity, with rescheduling or revision of curriculum to give more time for students to participate in ethics activities.

(4) The suggestions to university's administrators and faculty level: CMU's administrators should set up policy of informal ethics teaching techniques by inclusion in any subject and activities. The results of this study reflected the opinions and ideas of university staff who are involved in teaching and organizing activity for students at Chiang Mai University. It can be beneficial to the university to choose the suitable techniques for teaching ethics, in order to attain CMU's mission was achieve student value. The importance of student value are knowledge and moral development in terms of producing graduates who are eager to acquire knowledge to be a pundit and know how to think, act, take care of themselves and others and work with good moral and social awareness, in the future.

Finally, the ethics workbook teaching techniques should be able to apply the suitable model techniques for teaching in classroom and activities at Chiang Mai University.

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