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**A critical review of Kant thoughts on ethical education:
a reflection on current era**

**Una revisión crítica del pensamiento kantiano sobre la educación ética:
una reflexión sobre la época actual**

**Uma revisão crítica do pensamento de Kant sobre a educação ética:
uma reflexão sobre a era atual**

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Abstract: Education has many aspects to be experienced that need to be learned by students, where the most important and philosophically considered necessary is ethical experiences. In the current era ethical education is considered significant for students to teach them positivity and to reduce ethical crises from their life. In this study Kant thoughts on ethics and education were discussed in order to explore its importance. In which the imperative role of Kant thoughts was debated for the current education. His thoughts have had great influence on western philosophy and earned the chief position for ethics till date. According to Kant the central part of education is ethical and its main ambition is formatting one's inner discipline. Also, he said that it has a strong relation between ethics and education. Hence, Kant's thoughts are appreciated in this era therefore ethics is suitable to implement in the education system to acquire better results.

Keywords: Ethics. Education. Kant thoughts.

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Resumen: La educación tiene muchos aspectos por experimentar que necesitan ser aprendidos por los estudiantes, donde lo más importante y filosóficamente considerado necesario son las experiencias éticas. En la era actual, la educación ética se considera importante para que los estudiantes les enseñen positividad y reduzcan las crisis éticas de su vida. En este estudio se discutieron los pensamientos de Kant sobre la ética y la educación con el fin de explorar su importancia. En el que se debatió el papel imperativo del pensamiento kantiano para la educación actual. Sus pensamientos tienen una gran influencia en la filosofía occidental y se han ganado el puesto principal de ética hasta la fecha. Según Kant, la parte central de la educación es ética y su principal ambición es formatear la propia disciplina interna. Asimismo, dijo que tiene una fuerte relación entre la ética y la educación. Por lo tanto, los pensamientos de Kant son apreciados en esta era, por lo que la ética es adecuada para implementar en el sistema educativo para obtener mejores resultados.

Palabras clave: Ética. Educación. Pensamiento kantiano.

Resumo: Há muitos aspectos da educação a serem vivenciados que necessitam ser aprendidos pelos alunos, e o mais importante e filosoficamente considerado necessário são as experiências éticas. Na era atual, a educação ética é considerada significativa para os alunos, ensinando-lhes positividade e reduzindo as crises de valores em suas vidas. Neste estudo, as ideias de Kant sobre ética e educação foram discutidas a fim de explorar sua importância, procurando debater o papel imprescindível que elas podem ter para a educação atual. O pensamento kantiano tem grande influência na filosofia ocidental, conquistando uma posição fundamental no campo da ética até hoje. Segundo Kant, a parte central da educação é ética e sua principal finalidade é formatar, no indivíduo, a própria disciplina interior. Além disso, haveria uma forte relação entre ética e educação. Portanto, retomar a ética a partir de Kant pode ainda ser o mais adequado para se implementar no sistema educacional um projeto de formação de valores para se obter melhores resultados.

Palavras-chave: Ética. Educação. Pensamento kantiano.

Introduction

In today's state of affairs ethics is the most central and effective branch of philosophy. It is also known as moral philosophy. The word ethics is derived from the Greek term Ethos which means custom and character. That is related to individual virtues and morals therefore our activities and experiences in daily life are the focuses of ethics. Everyone has the strength to think about good and bad thus all are responsible for their own acts and decisions. Ethics is actually the study to teach an individual what is wrong and what is right for you. Consequently, right and wrong, good and bad, virtue and vice, justice and injustice, evil and goodness are ethical concepts. Ethics in a simple way 'is about what we ought to do'. Therefore, it requires a decision to be made about a given problem or situation. It states to differentiate between good and bad things such as to avoid misbehavior, dishonesty, swindle and all illegal acts, on the other hand it allows one to be truthful, honest, respect individual values and rules of life etc. Ethics seems to be about association with people, animals, and the world environment (Freakley & Burgh, 2000). It shows the way of doing right and wrong to survive peacefully in the world. It is considered mostly to be inherited from religious philosophy and few moral philosophy (Ehrich, 2000; Preston & Samford, 2002).

In the current era ethics is a fundamental subject to be taught in the education system. Ethics is observed as a choice of selection to make decisions about something or situation. In this regard students are facing different situations. They need to make a decision which enables them to lead an ethical life. Ethics education guides individuals what decision is needed in a specific situation that can occur in harmony. In the technological century everyone can easily reach information with the help of technology that also discloses ethical problems like plagiarism etc. Therefore, in every field of life ethics should be placed as a course in order to educate everyone properly about the right rules and values. Ethics plays a great role in the education system in the teaching and learning system at school (Gülcan, 2015). Ethical values are the basis for moral education in school it isn't only the foundation for education but also encourages teachers towards

better decisions (Fullan, 2007). It must be promoted in school administration to improve leadership and decision making to encounter ethical dilemmas (Cranston *et al.*, 2003; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021).

Educational leaders may suffer in various ways of decision making if they ignore ethical principles that will ultimately affect the educational system (Furman, 2003). Therefore, educational leaders must have a set of ethical responsibilities in relationships with teachers and students and to be aware about interests and rights of students, teachers, parents, and the school community (Cranston *et al.*, 2003). According to Begley and Stefkovich (2007) educational leaders considered ethics as a tool to support their practical actions and encourage certain organizational or social activities. Through which they act to protect students' rights and provide them opportunities of learning at school. Similarly, students' reactions to different ethical problems are molded by school leaders' values and ethical tendencies decisions (Begley, 2006). These problems are naturally categorized as adoptions among closely challenging goods or the pitting of values in a given situation.

In the study of Menezes (2023) it is highlighted very clearly that our society where we live has much involvement in the Internet and digital technologies. Therefore, digital technology is necessary in the field of education for better learning and improvement. Also, it is important to follow the privacy of different technology applications by using it in the educational system. The idea emerged from this article that highlighted the importance of learning articles (LA) that are used for data collection by digital means and everyone has to follow their code of conducts. In this sense the researcher developed an idea to analyze the ethical role and importance in the current era among the students who are using digital applications for learning.

In the field of education, the production of knowledge is very important and for that the researcher approached historical and conceptual issues related to ontology and epistemology in the view of Marxist contribution. The possibility for the process of knowledge production is highlighted that established reflections on the importance of research in the field of Education, that evidence the onto-epistemological foundations used by researchers. The work has been done on theoretical aspects with the main aim to contribute to the discussion on the production of knowledge especially for onto-epistemological and its ethical implications (Manson, 2022). In this view the researcher thought about philosophers for ethical education and Kant ethical thoughts and beliefs were discussed in the light of the current era. Manson (2022) worked on knowledge production keeping the contribution of Marxist for research work and I worked on ethical education in the view of Kant and discussion were made keeping in sight the current time.

In modern times Kantian ethics is always considered in the most influential moral theory. By reviewing work of different philosophers' researcher found Kant theory more relevant and interesting for this work. Kant clearly identified the realities of moral values, principles and defended them by providing a philosophical thought of our core moral convictions and constructing a moral theory. In the modern time in all fields ethics has an important place to be adopted for peaceful life and quality relationships and similarly, education is a fundamental process for every individual. Therefore, education and ethics are interconnected to each other and had a great role in one's development and progress. To produce harmony and good human ethics should be placed as a course in an educational system. The current education system is based on technology and it is a technological era and every student is very far from the physical classroom. In this regard it is noted that a lot of students are far away from ethical education so it is the most important subject to be implemented in this era. In the review of ethical education many issues were found in the society that people are facing by people due to lack of ethical education. In this study researchers have discussed Kant ethical philosophy and educational philosophy in order to explain its importance in the current situation. Further it is exploring the major role of ethics for

students. Where the major objective of the study is to analyze the importance of ethical education on the students in the current era. Further the study is to review ethical consideration in the light of Kant thoughts on ethics. The main purpose is to highlight and suggest the importance of ethics in the digital era for the education system. The current review was based on available online literature, documents and articles from the past till date. The selected articles and books for this review were published by scholars and also the Kant book was mainly emphasized. Further selected biographic data were followed by few steps such as exploring relevant theme and statements with a specific focus on ethical education that addressing the need for current education situation, after that researcher critically evaluate the major aspects from Kant book and relevant articles in which researcher discussed some major areas such as ethical education, its need and importance for current era, Kant thoughts on ethical education.

Methodology

In the digital era and distance from physical education ethics are lacking behind in many aspects of life. Therefore, our research posed the following research questions: what is the importance of ethical education on the students in the current era? What are the philosophical assumptions of ethical consideration in the light of Kant thoughts?. The current review was based on available online literature, articles, related reports and reviews. The relevant material was collected from books, essays and bibliographic reviews in order to discuss ethical importance in the education system in the light of Kant philosophy. Further selected data were followed by a few steps, such as exploring relevant documents and statements with a specific focus on a structure that addresses the value of ethics; after that researcher critically observed the opportunities and challenges faced by teachers and learners during these days. The results and discussions were presented on the basis of bibliographic review.

Analysis and discussion of relevant literature

Kant philosophical thoughts on education

The well-known philosopher of the 18th century Immanuel Kant had a great contribution in education. He said that humanity in the world is only possible with the acquisition of education and the best part of education to be acquired for oneself is the completion of ethics. According to Munzel (2012), Kant's changed his concept of education for freedom to understanding and to focus on philosophy in which he considered it necessary and the need of the modern time. Education is important for vocation and one's destination to get a better position in life. Kantian education concerns the fate of humanity, morality and civilization. Therefore, in the current era education of humanity and civilization is lacking that we need to fulfill by opting ethical courses. Through which new generations can learn effectively how to survive in society what are their rights to live and act. Also, Kantian human nature is about freedom in a sense everyone should have knowledge and awareness about their freedom to education and live a healthy life in the world. Kant's account of education as the cultivation of the critical distance to engage in honest self-examination illuminates the underlying metaphysical principles of education. Everyone needs to improve in their life to examine themselves in a better way.

Kant's basic concept of education for humans is the nature of every individual that must be according to their nature and concepts. The self-conception of the human being is the influential source of the fulfillment of the potential of human nature. As he reported and argued with the current education the human being does not fully reach the purpose of their existence. His main

purpose was that everyone needs to explore the aim of their reality. At this point it might be acceptable that every individual needs to identify their skills, aim and purpose of life then they can survive effectively. By the way people live differently and uniformity is possible among them, if they follow the same principles and these principles should become their second nature for living. It is possible to plan an education system that is most suitable to the nature of each human being and everyone needs to be educated according to their nature and needs. As it is observed that the plant only accepts flowers of one and the same color when cultivated from a root. On the other hand, if it is grown from a seed one gets flowers of totally different and most varied colors. Thus, nature has after all placed the germs in these plants, and it is merely a matter of proper sowing and planting that these germs develop into the plants. The same holds true with human beings (Kant, 2007). Therefore, it may be right to say that how you train an individual he will act the same.

Kant philosophy on ethics

Kant's ethical theories are well known and the most difficult to understand (Kant, 1788; 1988; 1991). Kantian ethics has determination of complete universal moral law and realization of an ideal society with respect and harmony. Most scholars consider it as a duty of ethics frequently entitled as deontological ethics. Kant's ethics are indirectly linked to consequentialism and utilitarianism. Also, some accepted that he might have been a utilitarian which expresses his identity today (Hare, 1997). His philosophy was quite clear about each principle such as a principle of moral rightness that is considered central to his deontological ethics. It is used to differentiate diversities in students ethically and intellectually. Occasionally, it is expressed like "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time that it should become a universal law" (Kant, 1988). Kant said that immorality involves a destruction of the categorical imperative and is thereby illogical.

"He has expressed some steps of the categorical imperative to summarize a certain procedure for moral reasoning; therefore, in the first step he expresses individual thoughts that protect your reason for acting as you propose. Secondly reorganize that maxim as a universal law of nature leading all coherent agents and act as you yourself propose to act in these circumstances. Third, contemplate whether your maxim is even believable in a world governed by this law of nature". (Johnson, 2014).

Kant's (1788) major contribution in ethics was his persistence that individual acts hold ethical prosperity when someone did his duty for themselves and others. First of all, he presented the idea that something is accepted by the moral perception of a human and then it is considered an important part of rational ethics. That definitely shows there is an ethical value for every action done by an individual for a desirable reason. Further it clarifies that every act of an individual is based on his own desires or hypothetical imperative. Just like if you are honest so people will think good of you, that is an imperative which happens only if someone wants to be thought well. Shaftesbury's ethics suggest that you help those who are suffering and if you understand their pain. Kant said that morality must be categorical imperatives and must apply to all rational beings unrelatedly their wants and feelings. Therefore, the best principle of Kant's ethics is to act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time win that it should become a universal law.

"He faced two major issues, one he explained how individuals can be moved by a reason alone to act in accordance with this supreme moral law and second, he had to show that this principle is able to provide practical guidance in one's choices". (Kant's, 1788).

There are different theories which are based on moral rights; one is presented by Nozick (1974), who took his ideas from Locke and Kant (Scanlon, 1976). Particularly Kant's principle that an individual should not only earn but always as an end itself for it (Exdell, 1977; Nozick, 1974). That principle is further explored by Nozick that basic rights such as the right to individual own

life and self can be derived. These rights show a way that you can act morally good and bad for your and others' rights since it isn't acceptable to harm others' rights. By discussing these points of moral rights, he notices positivity (right to take) and negativity (right to not harm) in moral rights (Nozick, 1974; Kamm, 1986). But he didn't accept the existence of positive moral rights; meanwhile these rights would disrupt negative moral rights. One negative right is the right of one's self known as self-ownership which means one can do what he wants with oneself but has no right to harm any other (Tännsjö, 2011).

Kant's concept of duty is considered a leading concept to the principle of ethical knowledge and the moral law. His great thoughts are mentioned in virtue of his possession in the area of ethics that one can find in all ways with perfect ease and decide what is good and what bad, what conforms to duty and what is opposed to it. It's all about individual common sense and it is clear that there is no need of science and philosophy for a man to know what he must do to be honest and good, or even wise and virtuous. Further it can be thought of to them in their desires and feelings because man feels in himself a force in opposition to all the commands of duty. For your own desire you can't opt a wrong way to get your wants.

Lack of ethical education in the current era

In pandemic social distancing measures have been established on a mandatory basis to meet the urgent health demand for the protection of the lives of populations (Brooks *et al.*, 2020). In this context, education had its scenario of activities for the first time converted to digital technologies. Digital education refers to electronic and technological devices, such as computer, Internet, smartphone, tablet, television, newspaper, etc. Therefore, students are far away from the physical classroom and face to face interaction during this time ethical education is most neglected. Students in the current era are facing a lot of moral issues, certain problems and choices of today's life that are already noticed and still additional ones reasonably to emerge within the near future (Johnson, 2009). Majority of issues are associated with technology and technological issues and problems such as ethical aspects of using computers and information technology by unethical methods (Bynum, 2011; Stovall, 2011). As it is known that now everyone is familiar with technology due to covid and technological era. So there are a wide range of technological problems faced by students (Frey & Wellman, 2003).

The quick and sudden change in the ethical landscape of technology is reflected in the fact that fields of applied ethics such as nano ethics and cyber ethics (Johnson, 2009; Fuchs, Bichler & Raffl, 2009) have only recently been identified and named. There are many ways we hold ethics to be of great importance to education in general but also in relation to technology education in particular. Because in this century technological ethics are also considered the most important part in the education system. Such as computers and the Internet are of great value for many of us in our private lives and for educational needs but they have a great implication on education (Smedts, 2008). As it is mentioned that computers and the internet have a main role in changing our lifestyles and relations with the world. That also demanded transformed strategies for education in this era. Among these implications for education are those for the ethical aspects of education as pointed out by Smedts (2008), He said that educational experts must generate space for the ethicalities within relationships such as ethical questions on how the ICT we once managed has come to manage us conceptually, institutionally and in our relationships. On the other hand the most important subject to be dealt with in school in relation to technology education is the ethical aspects of risk and risk management (Papastephanou, 2006; Gardelli *et al.*, 2014). specifically in relation to technology and technological advancements (Ferretti, 2010). Hence, ethics is of importance in

education in relation to technology and in general. However, ethics could be dealt with in many different ways in school.

Conclusion

In this article we analyzed and discussed the role of ethics in education for the current era with the harmony of Kant's thoughts of education and ethics. Also, in general and in relation to technology in particular and scrutinize some arguments for why ethics should have the one before the others of these possible roles. Therefore, the importance of ethics for the technological era was discussed in order to highlight its importance for students in their academics and personal life to obtain education in distance in a better way. The importance for ethical education in this century was discussed and to be considered important for peaceful life and fruitful learning. Subsequently, some arguments for why there should be ethics in education are presented and discussed. Kant believes that principles of ethics should be absolute as he proved in his work that its feeling deals with innate and intrinsic affair rather than experimental. In this regard Kant ethical philosophy addresses the task and necessity that are essential elements for humans to be adopted. Therefore, students are responsible to obey this principle of necessity and task of freedom and human's authority that make them responsible for self-construction and self-actualization. Kant strongly believes that ethical education is the first step in educating children, so they learn and think about everything in a positive way. As a result, children are able to think about their bad behavior and don't repeat something without understanding.

These ideas which have been discussed in the context of moral education and philosophy of education for the current education system in the view of Kant. Therefore, it was examined and evaluated in relation to the technological era where there is a lack of ethical education. Respectively it is a way to understand and scrutinize these issues as well importantly, it is a way to better understand and evaluate the different issues to ethics in education. If ethics are notably strong for students, then it must be implemented as a course and if the arguments turn out weak then the courses might not be implementable. Hence here the thoughts of Kant's are appreciable that education must be according to the nature of the individual. Also, his ethical morals are important to be implemented so one can decide which action is necessary for time to be proposed.

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