CHAPTER III

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3.1. The Significance of the Study

Nowadays the moral development of children and young people has always been a matter of great concern to the educators of the world. At the present time, the subject moral education is becoming increasingly prominent in the forum of educational discussion at all levels. A study of the documents of the Government of India related to pre-independence period and post-independence period reveal the demand of the educators on the inclusion of moral education and its values in our educational system. As early as 1815 Lord Mora (1920) had significantly observed;

The humble but valuable class of village school masters claims the first place in this discussion. These men teach the first rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic for a trifling stipend which is within the reach of any man’s means and the instruction which they are capable of imparting suffices for the village shop-keeper. The general, the sad effect of this education is that the inculcation of moral principles forms no part of it. The remedy for this is to furnish the village school masters with little manuals of religious sentiments and ethic maxims conveyed in such a shape as may be attractive to the scholars, taking care that while awe and adoration of the Supreme Being are earnestly instilled, no jealously be excited by pointing out any particular creed. (Quoted in National Archives of India, 1920, pp.22-23)

The present society faces a lot of crisis in the field of social and moral values of life. In past, India had a rich and glorious tradition. In this connection Chilana (1987) states:

In view of our glorious tradition of piety, tolerance, universal brotherhood and peaceful co-existence as
contrasted, with the present day phenomenon of hypocrisy, corruption, dishonesty and inhuman attitude, we are undoubtedly convinced that we face today the worst moral crisis. Mad race for a higher standard of living had led to the worst degeneration in the moral and social values like honesty. Loyalty, courtesy and respect for elders, murders, dacoities, thefts and rapes have become common crimegraph. There is frightful suffering because of adulteration in food materials and life saving drugs. (p.8)

Very often the educationists have examined the curriculum of India. They are unanimous about the defects in the existing curriculum and suggest the incorporation of the moral education in the curriculum. The Education Commission (1964-66) of Government of India (1971) observes the defects in school curriculum as under:

A serious defect in the school curriculum is the absence of provision for education in social, moral and spiritual values. In the life of the majority of Indians, religion is a great motivating force and is intimately bound up with the formation of character and the inculcation of ethical values. A national system of education that is related to the life, needs and aspirations of the people cannot afford to ignore this purposeful force. We recommend, therefore, that conscious and organized attempts be made for imparting education in social, moral and spiritual values with the help, wherever possible, of the ethical teachings of great religions. (p.358)

India is a country having people of different caste, creed and faith. The pages of history from ancient time till now show that the people of India have maintained their unity inspite of diversity. In maintaining their unity, the essence of culture and religion played a vast role. But gradually, it was observed that the thought process of some people went away from the true essence of culture and religion for which many types of disturbances raised their heads. In order to form right type of moral attitude in the
minds of the people a great need of moral education since the childhood of our school children is felt essential. The Committee on Religious and Moral Instruction (1959) of Government of India has rightly stated:

Many ills that our world of education and our society as a whole is suffering today, resulting in widespread disturbance and dislocation of life are mainly due to the gradual disappearance of the hold of the basic principles of religion on the hearts of the people. The old bonds that kept man together are fast loosening, and the various new ideologies that are coming to us, and which we are outwardly accepting without inwardly digesting their meanings, are increasingly worsening the situation. The only cure, it seems to us, is in the deliberate inculcation of moral and spiritual values from the earliest years of our lives. (Quoted in Documents on Social, Moral and Spiritual Values in Education, 1979, p. 23)

The foregoing discussion clearly reveals the need and importance of moral education. But for the pupils of our schools, moral education must be taught to educate our children. In this connection Philip (1971) is justified when he says:

Our children and young people must be taught both to understand and how to apply moral concepts and to see the significance of behaving or not behaving in a consistent way that recognises the needs and interests of others. (p.30)

But it is difficult to outline the framework of moral education for its better implication in the schools. But a clear framework is needed in the interest of our school education. In the words of Philip (1971):

A clear framework of rules is essential to their moral growth although enforced learning of and obedience to such a code is not the end of moral education. Children should be helped to develop through the various stages and in fact to take each step forward themselves, if they are to achieve autonomous morality, when they act responsibly, consciously, rationally on their own moral principles. (p.30)
It is a matter of great concern to organise the curriculum on moral education in the interest of clarity and precision. It is evident that moral education is termed differently by different people, even by different committees and commissions. The National Policy on Education, 1986, has considered the case of moral education under the term value education and consider all education as value education. In this regard NPE-1986, NCERT (1985) put forth its observations as under:

All education is in a sense, value education. Education being a goal-directed activity, it just cannot be a value-neutral process. The point of mentioning value education is to emphasise that the educational enterprise has not been adequate for the affective dimensions of the human personality the moral and aesthetic. Further, it is felt that what has been characterized as "crisis of values" demands more explicit and deliberate educational effort towards value development. The growing concern over the erosion of values and increasing cynicism in society, particularly among the younger generation, has brought to focus the need for readjustments in the curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for cultivation of social, ethical and moral values. (p.5)

As such the investigator feels the significance of moral education in the curriculum of the school. He also humbly feels that his study on moral education would help the teachers and others connected in the implementation of moral education in the schools of his own country. Therefore he has ventured to take up the present study. He also humbly feels that his study would shed new light in the area of moral education.

3.2 Objectives of the study

The present study is primarily intended to provide a clear understanding about the implication of moral education at the primary school stage. Besides, it was felt essential
to study moral education with special reference to growth and development, bases such as philosophical, psychological and sociological, present extent of utilization of moral education in primary schools of Orissa, childrens' interest in moral education and evaluation criteria of moral education. Hence the broader objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To trace the growth and development of moral education in the international, national and state perspectives.

2. To know the bases of moral education such as philosophical, psychological and sociological.

3. To clarify the meaning and concepts of moral education.

4. To ascertain the extent of utilization of moral education in relation to plans, programmes and activities in primary schools.

5. To find out the interest of children in relation to different aspects and activities of moral education.

6. To suggest measures for better utilization of moral education.

7. To evolve the evaluation criteria on moral education.
3.3 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The researcher was conscious of the scope and the delimitation of the study. It may be mentioned as follows;

1. Moral education in its broadest sense is very comprehensive. Hence the present study was restricted only to the growth and development, bases, extent of utilization at primary school level, children's interest in moral education and evaluation criteria of moral education intended to be used by headteachers/teachers. The various other aspects of moral education, such as content, methodology, training of teachers, researches have not been brought under the purview of the study. These omissions however, do not imply inappropriateness of their implication in building a sound edifice of moral education at primary school level.

2. The study of extent of utilization of moral education was confined to the rural and urban, tribal and non-tribal areas of all the 13 districts of Orissa.

3. The study of children's interest in respect of moral education was confined to the children coming under age group of 8 to 11.

The researcher has deliberately delimited the scope of the study of children's interest in moral education within
the age group of 8 to 11. In this connection Kulashrestha (1968) has rightly observed that;

Children by the time they enter the age group 8 – 11 have already acquired reading ability and mastered the elementary mechanism of reading. They are now sensitive to an appreciative of things. Other than their basic physical needs.(p.15)

Therefore, the children coming under the age group 8-11 were taken to be the right subjects to respond to a questionnaire. They were also able to meet the query of the researcher at the time of interview.

To ascertain the extent of utilization of moral education the questionnaire sought to collect data from the primary schools situated both in rural and urban, tribal and non-tribal areas of Orissa.

In absence of a suitable moral education interest questionnaire, the researcher, had to develop a questionnaire as objectively and scientifically as possible.

In the absence of suitable and commonly acceptable criteria of moral education the same had to be developed by the author through appropriate procedure discussed under chapter 7.3.