

RESEARCH

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VALUE OR VIRTUE IN EDUCATION ¹

El valor o la virtud en la educación

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a study of two similar concepts and, at the same time, with different nuances: virtue and value. It is a reality that both concepts have been studied throughout the history of education and, in a more precise way, since the 21st century. Both terms are worked descriptively to conclude that the goal of education is to seek excellence and this could be achieved through the acquisition of virtues since the person is constantly changing, seeking perfection that implies growing in virtue and gives happiness that is the end of education.

KEY WORDS: moral development; social integration; interpersonal relationships; emotional development and improvement.

RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta un estudio de dos conceptos semejantes y a la vez con matices diferentes: la virtud y el valor. Es una realidad que ambos conceptos han sido estudiados a lo largo de la historia de la educación y desde una forma más precisa desde el siglo XXI. Se trabajan ambos términos de forma descriptiva para concluir que el objetivo de la educación es buscar la excelencia y esta se podría conseguir mediante la adquisición de virtudes ya que la persona está en continuo cambio, busca el perfeccionamiento que implica crecer en virtudes y que otorga la felicidad que es el fin de la educación.

PALABRAS CLAVE: desarrollo moral; integración social; relaciones interpersonales; desarrollo afectivo y perfeccionamiento.

¹ This article is based on a reflection made by the author on two essential concepts in education: virtue and value. The experience of the author giving tutoring lessons with adolescents for 16 years has allowed her to make this reflection (Carried out from February 2010 to December 2016). Area of psychology and education in general.

O VALOR OU A VIRTUDE NA EDUCAÇÃO

RESUME

O valor ou a virtude na educação. Este artigo apresenta um estudo de dois conceitos semelhantes e ao mesmo tempo com matizes diferentes: a virtude e o valor. É uma realidade que ambos conceitos foram estudados ao longo da história da educação e desde uma forma mais precisa desde o século XXI. Trabalha-se ambos términos de forma descritiva para concluir que o objetivo da educação é buscar a excelência e se conseguiria mediante a aquisição de virtudes já que a pessoa está em continua mudança, busca o aperfeiçoamento que implica crescer em virtudes e que outorga a felicidade que é o fim da educação.

PALAVRAS CHAVE: desenvolvimento moral; integração social; relações interpessoais; desenvolvimento afetivo e aperfeiçoamento.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This article begins by clarifying the etymology of two very frequent concepts in education: virtue and value (Camps, V., 2008).

The etymology of the word virtue comes from Latin, *virtus* means power or potentiality and is related to *vis*, which is force or energy; but it can also be related to *vir*, which is translated as “male”, in its reference to the masculine adjective indicating completeness and integrity. In Greek terminology, virtue was *arete*. A concept used since the most remote times in the history of Greek education. It is used by the oldest testimony of the Greek aristocratic culture (Homer, *The Iliad* and the *Odyssey*).

Making a brief tour of the word virtue, we can see how Socrates already uses it, but it is Plato who speaks of three types of virtues in the person: prudence, strength and temperance for the good functioning of man and the polis.

It is Aristotle to whom the concept of virtue is due as “an activity of the soul that belongs to the way of being, of behaving well or badly with respect to passions” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, p. 165). The above statement assumes that there is something innate in the person, there is a beginning of virtue and human behavior can be good or bad according to the passions. Aristotle distinguished the intellectual habits of those who are not and affirmed that virtues are acquired through the will.

Habit and virtue can be considered “an increase in the order of capacity” (Polo, A., 2006) and, this way, the growth of personal freedom is reinforced. It should be clarified that the significant difference between virtue and habit is temporality; although they refer to the same reality, when speaking of “habit”, the genesis and the

qualification of the power -passed and present - are mentioned, while the term "virtue" refers to its potentiality, to the increased operability vis-à-vis the future. This refers to its historical and linguistic origin.

"Virtue" connotes an ethical content rather than habit. The difference between habit and virtue is not of contrast, but of complementation as will be explained later.

Nowadays, the terms "habit" and "virtue" usually provoke two referents as disparate as deviating from the straight sense that had been given to both concepts:

1. Virtue as a typification or moral standard ideally beautiful, but unaffordable in practice. It must be forgotten because of its sublimity and its heteronomy that frustrate personal dynamism.
2. Habits, as repressions of creative action, such as fancies, routines or simple customs. The reduction of habits to customs is patent in modernity. One could say that the origin of this interpretation is found in empiricism. Locke (1632-1704) defines habit as "that power or ability of man to do anything when it has been acquired through the frequent execution of the same thing" (Polo, L., 2006, 98). To the empiricists, there is a clear identification of habit with custom. It is true that, by accustoming, reflexes are obtained but not habits. This requires awareness of the action and integration in individual behavior.

With the habit you can work more and better because the power has grown perfectly, according to the nature of personal growth; and this means that the power has more and better operational capacity; or in other words, that the subject of the power owns it. It is what could be called the perfective possession of the human being, in which its growth lies. Possession is an essential dimension of the human being, and in its highest degree, it is realized in the habits. You can have material things or objects; the human being uses them for his benefit, modifies them and uses them or discards them according to his benefit; he owns them, but he can lose them easily and against his desire.

In Aristotle, the meaning of virtue as habit is already configured. He established for the first time the distinction between dianoetic habits -which refer to science, art, prudence, wisdom, understanding and right reason-; and ethical habits, which refer to courage, liberality, magnificence, magnanimity, ambition, meekness, kindness, sincerity, sharpness, modesty, shame and justice. Through these habits, the person possesses his powers; without them, they remain indeterminate and the person is not the owner of his actions because his actions are not consolidated.

You could say that virtue is a habit, a quality, which depends on the will but not exclusively. It would correspond to the ability that facilitates to work the good that is characteristic of intelligence.

In the human person, the will -not weakened- follows the intellect, and the habit requires two successive movements: the consideration of good in acting (the intellectual act) and the voluntariness of the exercise (the volitional act). Virtue is constituted by the reiteration of the mental act that speeds up the faculty to discern and apprehend judgments about where and how to do good, as well as the diligence

of the exercise of the will over the performance of positive acts (Marina, J. A., and Pellicer, C., 2015).

Virtues are acquired with great effort and are rooted in the personality after years of learning and exercise. If you want ethical behavior in society, it is necessary to develop virtues since the first years, where the personality is forged and, this way, it opens up to an operative disposition of virtue.

“Virtue is the *result* of a reiterated practice and, once achieved, it helps its own growth” (Naval, C. and Herrero, M., 2006) that is to say that the repetition given to virtue facilitates the person's growth and development. As Aristotle said “by getting used to despising the dangers and resisting them we become brave, and once we are, we will be more able to face dangers” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*). This way, virtues strengthen the personality and achieve the freedom of individuals in a real plane.

Virtue requires a constant repetition of a good act and seeks something good as an end. Therefore, intelligence has that faculty of going to the truth and understanding good; the will will facilitate the execution of good. Habit is acquired by the repetition of acts that results in ease and permanence with respect to truth and good.

A virtuous person is a person who seeks good and acts with freedom. This is a radical dimension of the person and is seen as a substantial unit, there is only the reference to their acts as the only way of their improvement. These acts, in turn, can only be understood from the human operational powers, which are growing. The fact that the person is considered a unit will help to integrate virtue into the way of being.

We currently tend to interpret that the habits of thinking are acquired by repetition of acts. We must bear in mind that American pragmatism also conceives the reduction of habit to custom. It is good to clarify this perception by retaking the Aristotelian definition of virtue as “good operational habit”: “habit” is the permanent attitude; “Operative” means that they are acts that begin and end; “Good” is that by its intention and its purpose it seeks good in itself. This way, habits cannot be perceived as mere routine and sporadic customs, since the habit requires an effort that is not always given in the customs.

Lately, there is little talk of virtues, and yet more emphasis is given to the term value. The term “value” is perhaps one of the ethical references of this postmodern era that has achieved more significance in a short time. In ethics, the content of value is built on the estimable quality of the material good transferred on the effect of spreading the moral good. Something has value if the subject is exteriorized as good: it is a value that communicates good. This approach has important implications for education.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives to be highlighted in this article of reflection are two:

1. Demonstrate the content, at a pedagogical level, of the concept of “value” as well as the term “virtue”.

2. Determine the repercussions and similarities that exist between value and virtue.
3. Carrying out personalized education seeks the improvement of the person that is acquired with the virtues and values.

3. CONCEPT OF VALUE

The educational emergency and the need to influence values are studied (Rovira, J. M^a, 2007). However, it is said that values wear out, or rather, that value can lose its effectiveness because children do not learn from their parents, teachers or media to value them; and a value that is not valued has no meaning or use. This way, it is being interpreted as something that is outdated and corresponds to a specific moment, so it will not have enough force to affect the whole person, in his pentacity (Salas, B. and Serrano, I., 1998).

However, Scheller², a philosopher who studied this field and who put this term into effect, says that "values do not exist, they are worth, they are characteristics that things and people have or possess" (Scheller, M., 2000, p. 98). There is, first of all, a close relationship between value and being: value depends on being. The "being", or more exactly "what is", is that one collides with, that which forces one to consider it to be something that is there and which one has to take into account. Value is "a characteristic that that being has or can have and that gives him certain significance" (Guardini, R., 1999, p. 21). There are no new values or old values, rather there are values that were not previously known and now they are learned to see; or perhaps there are values that have always been observed and that are no longer fashionable or are not perceived in young people latently.

In the pedagogical field, it is important to delve into the characteristics of "value":

a) The objectivity of value.

It is fundamental to start from the basis that values are not anyone's inventions. Value remains even when it is not discovered. Therefore, an educator must be himself, a bearer of that value, or at least he should make an effort to live the value he must convey. This way, the student can see the incarnation of the value that he is expected to assume and live (Revista Educere, 2013).

b) The effect it produces on the subject (the human person).

When we talk about value, we refer to importance in itself and to estimation, but esteem is not a characteristic of things but rather what arises from the contact of the thing with a subject. Esteem does not occur in things, but in people. Courage "moves us and engenders admiration in us. This joy arises from our relationship with an object that has an intrinsic importance" (Guardini, R., 1999, p. 23).

In the education of values, this point is as vital as the former. It entails developing active sensitivity to the good, the beautiful, the noble, the heroic. It is not so much content but rather ability to admire. Believe that what is admired is possible and make that goal a reason for life that allows improvement.

c) Need for an adequate response.

² Max Scheller addressed different themes in his works. Its transcendence has resulted from his reflection on values ("axiology"), the intentionality of emotions and their intentional objects (values).

“Any good that has a value imposes on us, so to speak, the obligation to give an adequate response. We understand that it has not been left to our arbitrary decision or our occasional mood to respond or not and how to respond” (Von Hidelbrand, D., 1997, p. 46). That is, the values correctly captured and placed on an orderly scale somehow facilitate the meaning of life. Human existence should be characterized by taking positions in front of values.

“From the subjective point of view (values) are indicators of human behavior; ways of said behavior for ordering itself well and making sense” (Guardini, R., p. 23). The position taken in life springs from perceptions about values. For this reason, value is directed in part to the integrity of the human person and takes an important place in the moral life of man, but not in an absolute and full way, because it is at the swing of the moment in which man lives.

4. DIFFERENCE OF VALUES WITH RESPECT TO VIRTUE

Values are objective contents that have a specific impact on people. However, to the extent that values do not become motivations for concrete and real actions, they are rendered ineffective because they are not the guide of everyday action. There must be the process of moving from value to personal reality. This step is what is called virtue and, for this reason, one could say that virtues reflect values, that virtues become life through the existence of each human being.

As already mentioned, a virtue is a “good operating habit” and, as any habit, it arises from the repetition of equal good acts. Learning produces and reinforces (with repetition) a predisposition of the person towards certain behaviors. This predisposition or habit affects the person entirely.

Value guides each good action in particular, but it is necessary that this value generates positive dispositions in people, but it remains in a pure theoretical discourse. Value is motivation. If the person adds the effort to act well, he will be virtuous.

Acquiring a habit is an effort and, once achieved, the act or acts proper to that habit are facilitated, although this does not mean that you should repeat acts like an automaton but with freedom, with conscience and wanting those acts, valuing each time plus the good of each act.

Experience shows that the beginning of each “new” good act usually costs, but the conscious effort to perform these good acts generates virtue and makes them, little by little, simpler. At the beginning, it is necessary to make an effort to perform such acts. However, when they are repeated, you get the habit or you are on the right path to get it. Each good act represents a greater integration of the person and this results in greater ease in carrying them out. This way, the true discourse of values needs to be complemented with that of virtue so that it does not remain in a content-empty scheme.

Finally, we mention in this section the relation of integration and virtue that are like two parallel aspects: while integration is the effort to which one tends in the daily action to achieve more human acts; virtue is the result of that process, where

the person is reinforced in his search for good. In fact, it can be said that both integration and virtue are possible if values are put into practice.

The harmony of the achieved parts is produced thanks to a good action or according to the values that make it possible in the future that good actions of that kind be easier to perform. Therefore, the only way to become good is to start by doing good acts. "To acquire a habit, it is necessary to repeat an act many times" (Isaacs, D., 2000, p. 38).

An attempt has been made to reflect the close relationship that exists in these three terms; virtue, habit and value since they have aspects that are common but can be nuanced to achieve a better study of each term.

So as to understand why it is necessary to develop virtue in education, you can think about what is missing. Many times you have the experience that you react badly without thinking or without wanting to. It also happens that it is good to perform a certain action but it is not done out of laziness, that is, a balance between reason and feeling that is what moves the action is not always experienced. The latter is the non-integration that could be considered to be a certain break in the action levels of the person, it is the dissonance of those inner levels. With non-integration, confusion is perceived in our interior and decision making is weakened. From integration, attitudes and decisions are stronger and safer because they lead to the true order of one's nature.

If there is dynamism out of place and balance and integration are not taken into account, the person manifests behaviors and relationships that are consistent only with material aspects (consumerism) and with social features (antisocial behaviors). If the situation becomes permanent, there is a vicious behavior that consists in lack of habit for positive acts.

In this situation, intelligence and the will cease to be consistent because their evaluation does not start from the truth and good, the person coming to consider goals and actions that may threaten their stability. You can thus become an inconsistent person who does not meet the goals you set, who does not know what you want. Intelligence has little space to find the truth, the will to find good and, ultimately, to guide the whole man to the happiness that is virtue.

Each time the person does something good, the parts adjust a little better. Going build the person better means to increase virtue, is what is called integration: this is achieved through correct action or, specifying more, achieving a good intentionality of both sides: intelligence and will.

Intelligence is "the personal ability to adapt to new situations by appropriately using the resources of thought. The mission of intelligence (in contrast to memory) is to meet the new demands that life poses by realizing it in such a way that an adequate use of available means of thought is made" (Stern, W., 1957).

As for the will, it seeks to achieve its purpose through action. It consists in the fact that the conscious self takes a position with respect to impulses and behavior, expresses conformity or rejection, puts the veto or assumes a decision and takes care that the proposed purpose considered as a guideline of any behavior is achieved, that is to say, that it transports from the mere possibility to the fact and faces everything

that opposes its realization. The will is, then, a struggle against resistance, a position of the self in front of them to overcome them.

“Education is the acquired and stable ability and aptitude to order, freely and correctly, the fallible dynamism of the interiority of man and his behavior towards the individual and common goods that perfect their nature” (Ruiz, E., 1976). According to this definition, education tends to the fullness of man and is a means or instrument for man to live well, which requires him to act well in relation to his end. Acting well does not arise from theoretical knowledge but requires a good disposition about the ends: the logical process of intelligence is not enough, but a will inclined to good that is carried out by the virtues is needed.

Education points to intelligence, which must guide both the person and the will, so that it does not resist the direction of reason. Both specific powers of man must be perfected: intelligence should be channeled by prudence so that it is usually inclined to true judgment. The will must be perfected by three of the four fundamental virtues: justice, strength and temperance.

The will, through justice, seeks its own good not only individually but according to the good of society, so that man can habitually renounce his own interests on behalf of the common good. The will, thanks to the strength, is strengthened and usually tries, with constancy and without decay, to find honest good. Temperance gets the will regulate the sensitive appetite and dominate concupiscence.

Practically, in the teaching field, one tries to favor the fact that the student finds by himself reasons of weight to act always according to the true freedom, according to what is really beneficial to him according to his nature of person, and to the others as they are fellow men.

On countless occasions, the student must make decisions that supposed to leave, to some extent, the dictation of their emotions. This internal struggle -the axis of the integration process- is intense, and it is necessary to provide elements so that, in decision-making, it becomes more and more firm.

Students need to live in an environment that reflects values and with people who live with coherence. Progressively, they must discover these values, in the sense of recognizing that they exist objectively in their environment and in themselves. This way, they get to know them, to understand their interest, to be attracted to them and thus facilitate the use of the will in living the values (Rovira, J. M^a., 2007).

The problem appears when values are put at the service of personal opinions. “Moral relativism has replaced the truth with personal opinion, it has erased from the map that which is indisputable until it is proven otherwise and has caused the state of collective oversight in which we now find ourselves” (Esteban, F., 2007).

5. EDUCATION IN VIRTUES

If man develops the virtues, reason will perceive the true good of man; the will and the sensitive appetite will follow the reason to pursue its perfection as such since intelligence and the will, human faculties that man has to achieve his happiness, are directed to the truth, to the universal good and must be directed to concrete acts of kindness through habits. The development of virtues re-feeds understanding and the

will through three main attitudes: firmness, promptness, and a certain liking (Isaacs, D., 2000):

1. Firmness means that virtue reaffirms the person in what he is doing. The person is surer of himself by having the confidence that, in his normal life, he is causing an improvement and also in the lives of others. Consequently, the person has stability zones where he can act without hesitation.
2. Promptness means that virtue creates a capacity to act well more easily because the isolated acts have been incorporated into the same person, into their way of thinking and acting. The person decides, reacts and acts positively, without much effort.
3. Virtue allows the person to know, in part, happiness; It allows the person to act with satisfaction when choosing good.

A virtuous person is a good person. From the educational point of view, it allows a direct action by the educators who guide students in different ways in order to develop virtues in their lives.

“Education is the intentional perfection of the person, the effort to reduce the distance between what a person really is and what they realize they should be” (García-Morato, J., 2002, p. 38). Therefore, it is important to know the intentions, the means and the idea of the person that one has and to whom one tends. Each individual is immersed in an endless process of self-education, which is the result of multiple and varied interactions. Education is, therefore, a relationship between people of whom one intentionally influences another and helps him acquire the qualities necessary to achieve his end.

“Excellence should be considered to be not an evaluation of results but a personal quality in which all the dispositions of each individual man reach the highest subjectively possible perfection”, (García, V., 1993, p. 301). Excellence leads to happiness, which in turn is a state of full joy of the conscience that totally and stably satisfies all the desires and potentialities of man.

Now, happiness is not a good that can be possessed immediately, nor is it a good given to man from the beginning of life, but, according to Aristotle, “it is something that is produced”; it is an activity that consists in living and acting. Life consists in these two faculties: feeling and thinking, and “faculty refers to the corresponding activity, and the activity is the main thing”. When man is aware that he is feeling or thinking, he “perceives” his own existence.

The definitions of happiness that have been given are varied. Happiness has a double aspect: objective and subjective. The latter implies joy and satisfaction; and objectively, happiness demands something about what it is about and about what that joy develops. There is a great diversity of conceptions of happiness, although, at the time of judging, they are different interpretations (Naval, C. and Herrero, M., 2006): sometimes, happiness is considered to be what, materially, one possesses. To some, happiness is in pleasure. To others, it is in the exercise of power. Many people believe that happiness is good acting. To others, happiness requires the effort to achieve virtue.

This last point coincides with the statements of the Ethics of Aristotle, which considers that the concept of *eudaimonia* (happiness) cannot be based either on taste

or honor or wealth because it is too animal or superficial or instrumental or static but that it consists in the active life of the spirit in the exercise of freedom. Nor is it a mere habit but an act according to wisdom, that is why love for wisdom ensures the supreme happiness that consists in contemplation beyond material conditioning.

Aristotle relates virtue to habit. To this philosopher, virtue is “good operational habit located between two vicious extremes” which expresses that the habits derived from virtue are necessarily good, actions taken by man and oriented to good. Virtue ensures the good use the will makes of habit. Therefore, any virtue implies voluntariness, rationality and freedom of the subject that owns it.

The habit is obtained little by little, repeating acts, it can also be lost if left inactive for a long time. And this habit is called to grow in turn, with praxis. Education has a lot to do with the formation of habits. Once consolidated, habits are constituted as “second natures” that, by the same, predispose to continue in that line.

In short, everyone wants to be happy. Happiness will consist in knowing and loving what is good, and this is achieved through a correct union of sensitive and intellectual knowledge integrated in the love that is realized through the acquisition of virtues.

6. COMPREHENSIVE AND PERSONALIZED EDUCATION SEEKS TO IMPROVE THE PERSON

Comprehensive and personalized education is that education able to unite all the possible aspects of the life of man. Parents understand, know and love each of their children, they have the best position to decide when to give different information according to the physical and individual growth of each child. In short, the person is unique and unrepeatable because he is the result of personal history or biography.

This feature of comprehensive education “own identity” coincides with that of “singularity” (García, V., 1970, p. 22) which is the property by virtue of which each person is different from the others. In this sense, education must ensure that each person realizes their potential according to their characteristics: capacities, needs, interests, etc. Comprehensive education implies personalized education.

Family relationships represent, better than any other type of relationship, freedom of acceptance and then freedom of choice. There is another type of social relationships that respond totally to the spontaneity of man. In them, the human being remains free in a constant way. They are those relations of friendship the purpose of which is entertainment and the spontaneous flow of human life in company.

Any human relationship is communication that requires expressive and understanding capacity on the part of the communicator, from which it is inferred that personalized education responds to the person but leads to the development of communicative capacity. Many obstacles disappear only by the mere fact of communication.

This relational aspect of the person entails a series of connotations: solidarity, openhandedness, sensitivity and responsibility (Salas, B., and Serrano, I., 1998).

a) Solidarity multiplies the capacity to understand and tolerate knowing how to accept different cultural, religious, political, ethnic, etc. manifestations.

b) Openhandedness is necessary to give to others. The more exchanges you have with others, the richer the communication and the more it requires that openhandedness of time and availability.

c) Sensitivity is a quality that is perceived in the good relationship with others. It is achieved by respecting one's self, other people, cultures, ethnic groups, etc. Reaching this sensitivity requires a balance and personal harmony, since first the person must achieve to be comfortable with himself in order to be comfortable with the environment.

d) Responsibility is one of the qualities necessary to develop people who relate to others and commit themselves with themselves and with the social group with whom they live. It implies sincerity and honesty between what one thinks and what one does.

This point of communication can be synthesized with one of the characteristics of personalized education: "openness" (García, V., 1987). The person by nature is open to all the surrounding reality but can only be fully deployed through his communication with others. In order to live, since birth man, needs the intervention of other people and their relationship with them. For this reason, the person must cultivate virtues and acquire them by dealing with others.

Man is a person insofar as he has the capacity and freedom to understand, decide and guide the actions of his life. Personalized education helps to consider the own personal project looking for the improvement that is achieved by the acquisition of virtues. As indicated by José Antonio Marina (2012): "Education, then, in its deepest sense of expanding the powers of intelligence and the ability to create the human being, is always an acquisition of appropriate habits".

7. CONCLUSIONS

Regarding the objectives determined at the beginning of this article, it can be stated that:

1. Values are of great importance in education, although they do not affect the whole person, since value has a subjective and changeable element depending on the environment in which it is carried out. "Values are not invented or minted, they are simply discovered, they gradually appear with the progress of culture" (Max Scheler). There are no new values or old values. Rather there are values that we did not know before and now we have learned to see them. Or, sadly, there are values that have always been observed and that are no longer fashionable.

Values are objective contents that have a specific impact on people. However, this discourse can be sterile or theoretical insofar as these values do not become motivations for concrete and real actions. A value is "without effect" if it does not become the guide of daily action.

This way, there is a process of passing from the value to the personal reality of each one. This process is what is called virtue. A value is an internal perfection;

however, virtues are values that gradually become life through the existence of each human being (Llargo, A., 2013).

2. However, virtue to being is a “good operating habit”, as any habit, it arises from the repetition of equal good actions. Learning produces and reinforces (with repetition) a predisposition of the person towards certain behaviors. This predisposition or habit affects the whole person.

The value guides each good action in particular, but it is necessary that this value generates positive dispositions in people; otherwise, it remains in a pure theoretical discourse.

The value is the motivation, if we add the effort to act effectively to it, we will reach virtue.

Acquiring a habit is undoubtedly an effort. Once the action or actions of that habit are achieved, they are greatly facilitated.

But it is not to repeat actions like an automaton, but with freedom: with conscience and wanting those actions, valuing more and more the good of each action. Experience shows that, at the beginning, each “new” good action usually costs a little more. But precisely the conscious effort to perform these good actions generates virtue and makes them simpler little by little.

Repetition many times can be boring but it is necessary to learn. It allows us to resist the obstacles and to focus our attention when faced with a distraction. It is convenient for adults to progressively increase the difficulty of an activity to develop resilience. At other times, adults should guide and share tasks with children.

But to acquire a habit is not just to repeat. It is also to advance, to go beyond. Habits are a mechanism of intelligence to expand its efficiency. As affirmed by the French philosopher Ricoeur (1986) “Habits are a potential that serves reflection as a point of support and the will for a new leap”.

A habit is a three-step loop: signal, routine and reward. Signal is the trigger that activates automatism, routine is what we do (physical, mental or emotional) and reward is what we earn, and this is also what makes our brain value whether it is worth remembering the loop or not .

Charles Duhigg, in his book “The Force of Habit” deals with “The Golden Rule to Change Habits”. This is based on the fact that, in order to change a certain habit, if the same signal is used and the same reward is provided, most of the time the routine and therefore the habit can be changed. Thus, it is key to know the signal that activates us and the reward we receive.

In turn, in creating a new habit, the conviction that one must be convinced that change is possible influences.

Another essential point is the “Positive Domino Effect”, that is, if we change a habit to improve something, it drags other habits also towards improvement.

“At the beginning, it is necessary to make an effort to perform the action. When this effort is not necessary and the action is easily repeated, we have achieved the habit or we are on the right track to achieve it” (Isaacs, D., 1987, p. 47).

In the model of the pyramid, each good action represents greater integration of the person and this results in more ease to carry out those good actions.

This way, the true discourse of values needs to be complemented with that of virtue so that it does not remain in a content-empty scheme. As you can see, virtue is what solidifies the person and constantly seeks that perfection by acquiring that good repetitive habit to reach happiness.

As a summary of this second conclusion, it could be affirmed that human virtues complement the attention to the values, since they focus the attention of the people in the way towards good. A virtuous person is a good person. And, from the educational point of view, it allows a direct action on the part of the educators, demanding the learners in different ways in order to develop virtues in their lives.

3. Carrying out personalized and comprehensive education is achieved through the acquisition of virtues.

It is possible that we want to reinforce the development of virtues especially in regard to the gradual process of interiorization of the values they reflect. And, in addition, in spite of trying to increase the intentionality of the professors with respect to the development of the human virtues of students, it is possible that this congruent action will not be achieved.

In these situations, it may be considered appropriate to think about specific contents of a specific subject or introduce special topics within certain subjects in order to promote the process and all this is achieved through personalized and comprehensive education.

The main function of this type of activity is to help the student to discover a series of values, so that he / she can appreciate them and, therefore, have an interest in starting to live them or live them in the future. Therefore, it is not about talking about activities that help the student to *clarify* values. In fact, the "*values clarification*" movement is not so much about values as about needs. Sometimes needs and values coincide, but not always.

In this case, it is about taking advantage of the habitual performance of the teacher in the classroom, through the activities that he organizes with the students and through the contents of his subject, so as to stimulate the development of some virtues. You can also take advantage of other situations at school - breaks, complementary activities, the mess hall, school transport - to stimulate this attention. In these moments, it is not about the creation of any specific activity to attend the virtues. It is, rather, a matter of taking advantage of the usual life of work and coexistence.

In order to take advantage of these situations, it is advisable that teachers, through personalized and comprehensive education, have some reference as to which virtues can be considered a priority in each age group, or which aspects of which virtues should be given special attention.

Do not forget what has been previously mentioned regarding the concept of personalized and comprehensive education with respect to the personalization criterion. However, a generic plan of priorities can be drawn up that then serves the majority of students.

For example, up to seven years, it would be reasonable to insist on the virtues of order and obedience and aspects of sincerity, respect and sociability. From eight to twelve years, taking into account that students now have more use of their will and

that they begin to go through difficult moments of a psychic-physical type, it might be advisable to focus on strength, hard work, perseverance, responsibility or virtues that involve attention to others, such as generosity, companionship or even social responsibility. From thirteen to fifteen years (before for girls), it may be time to insist on virtues that have to do with intimacy: modesty, friendship, or aspects of sobriety. And from sixteen to eighteen, with intelligence being more developed, it would be advisable to insist on virtues that require greater intellectual capacity such as prudence, understanding, loyalty, or flexibility.

Professor Iratxe Suberviola-Oreja of the University of La Rioja, in her article "Emotional competence and academic performance in university students" (2011, 14) tells us that: "It should be kept in mind that classrooms are a context of varied and continuous interpersonal relations and, that these social relations are mediated by effective emotional competences". They develop better when there is an acquisition of habits in students that have thus generated virtues.

It is also possible to translate some necessary behaviors into objectives for a period of time. Sometimes they are called *slogans*. It is important that they refer to aspects of observable behavior and that they do not cover all the virtue (in order not to insist excessively on virtue in the case of some students who do not need it).

Experience shows that any kind of priority requires time and perseverance on the part of teachers and is only achieved when a kind of personalized education that seeks the integral formation of the person is carried out. As professors Max Römer-Piereti and Celia Camilli-Trujillo point out in their article "The journalistic commentary. A theoretical and didactic view from university education" (2011, 733): "The teacher will give his student eyes to see that his text will allow his reader to follow his breathing, an ethical environment that marks his professional and personal life, the choice of the words that will be his and, very importantly, achieve empathy with his reader, the one who makes the voice of the writer his own".

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