

The Effect of “Living Values: An Educational Program” on Behaviors and Attitudes of Elementary Students in a Private School in Lebanon

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The study examines the effect of the “Living Values Educational Program” (LVEP) on certain behaviors and attitudes related to personal intelligences (Intrapersonal & Interpersonal) in elementary school students in a private school in Lebanon. A sample of 76 second and third grade students was randomly selected. A pre-post experimental control group design was used. Students in the treatment group followed lessons from three of the program’s value units, namely: Peace, Respect and Love, in addition to the regular school curriculum for a whole school year, while the control group continued with the school’s regular curriculum. Both groups were pre tested prior to the implementation of the program and then post tested using the following instruments: Harter’s Perceived Competence Scales, Teachers’ Rating Scale, and the BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i:YV (S)). Data was analyzed using *t*-tests and qualitative teacher parent interviews. Significant treatment effects were found on students’ self-perceptions in the Scholastic, Cognitive and Social domains of the Harter Scale, as compared to the control group. Also, significant differences in the Teachers Rating Scale posttest measures, in favor of the treatment group were also found, but not on the EQ-i:YV (S) subscales and total EQ post test mean scores. Results were discussed and explanations were provided with recommendations for future research.

KEY WORDS: values education; self-perceptions; emotional intelligence.

INTRODUCTION

Children around the world are being affected by violence, growing social problems and lack of respect for each other and the world around them. As the level of conflict is increasing, many educators and parents believe that the solution is through the implementation of programs that enhance the awareness of universal moral values in the educational system.

This need for values education in schools was expressed in Thomas Lickona’s book *Education for*

Character. Among the reasons he gave for this need is the increased violence in schools and the need to make a connection between the growth of a society and the support of full human development (Lickona, 1992). He also highlighted the fact that values are always present and in play within the school’s context. “Everything a school does teach values—including the way teachers and other adults treat students, the way principals treat teachers, the way the school treats parents...” (Lickona, 1992, p. 21). In the same book, Lickona stresses teaching universal moral values. He defines universal values as “objectively worthwhile, universally agreed-upon values that schools can and should teach in a pluralistic society” (Lickona, 1992, p. 38). According to him universal moral values are the ones that carry an obligation to what we ought to do through treating

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all people everywhere justly, respecting their lives and worth as human beings. Lickona also brings the attention to the importance of deliberate teaching of values to help raise the awareness to the importance of moral behaviors.

The need for values in education was expressed, as well, in the UNESCO's 1996 Delors report, "Learning: The Treasure Within." The report mentions, "In confronting the many challenges that the future holds in store, human kind sees in education an indispensable asset in its attempt to attain the ideals of peace, freedom and social justice" (Delors report, as cited in Tillman & Colomina, 2000, p. 181).

Reports from schools incorporating values teaching showed that teaching universal values promotes excellence, global understanding and service. This results in the growth of the whole child. The City Montessori Private School (CMS) in Lucknow, India, has been recognized for its academic excellence. The school's "achievements are linked directly to its emphasis on values that include excellence as a life-long attitude. Classroom experiences center on learning universal values such as kindness, honesty, cooperation, and responsibility.... For students, aiming for their best is not an external push, but an internal desire ..." (Cotton, 1996, p. 2).

Similarly, the West Kidlington Primary School in Oxfordshire has been working with values since 1995 and recently won recognition for its outstanding work in the areas of moral, social, cultural education, and the development of the whole child. The school's perspective is described as "the place of values is to develop the whole person, both the rational aspects and the inner self" (Farrer, 2000, p. 5).

"Living Values: An Educational Program" (LVEP) is an answer to the call for values and in this sense can be considered as a case study of values education. It is based on the belief in the whole child and provides guiding principles and tools for the child's development. "The child is recognized as an individual, a whole person who functions as a complete being with other beings" (Tillman & Colomina, 2000, p. 31). With the various activities and educator's training opportunities provided by LVEP, it provides values-based education and curriculum.

The aims of LVEP are to: (a) help individuals think about and reflect on different values and the practical implications of expressing them; (b) to deepen understanding, motivation, and responsibility with regard to making positive personal and social choices; (c) to inspire individuals to choose their own personal, social, moral, and spiritual values; and (d)

to encourage educators and caregivers to look at education as providing students with a philosophy of living (Tillman, 2000). The program's twelve key universal values are: Cooperation, Freedom, Happiness, Honesty, Humility, Love, Peace, Respect, Responsibility, Simplicity, Tolerance, and Unity.

LVEP provides for the younger students, ages three to seven, varieties of age appropriate activities to explore values: "learning new concepts, sharing and thinking, creating, and teaching social skills are combined with playing, art, singing, movement and imagining" (Tillman & Hsu, 2000, p. 11). As for the upper elementary students, ages eight to ten, the values activities in LVEP "are designed to motivate students and to involve them in thinking about themselves, others and the world. Students are asked to reflect, imagine dialogue, communicate, create, write about, artistically express, and play with values. In the process, personal, social and emotional skills develop, as well as peaceful and cooperative social skills" (Tillman, 2000, p. 13).

Lickona emphasizes the importance of having educators go through the process of choosing their own list of values that they want to teach as it brings together the students, parents, administrators and school staff. Consequently, the school will get its own special stamp (Lickona, 1992). LVEP authors also advise educators to choose and agree upon what is appropriate for their school's culture and needs.

Through the variety of skills, activities, and opportunities LVEP provides teachers and students with a framework and guiding principles for the development of the whole person. LVEP principles stress providing teachers with adequate training and with rich opportunities for implementation, assure the commitment of teachers to the implementation of the program, reinforcement of students' positive behaviors, and strengthening the connections established between home and school.

LVEP has been internationally and locally used and many of the international reports have pointed to the efficiency of LVEP in changing students' interpersonal and intrapersonal behaviors and attitudes (Drake, 2002). LVEP's pilot results in June 1998 indicated increased motivation in students through more cooperative and respectful behavior in both peers and teachers, and more ability to focus on school tasks (LVEP, 2002, Pilot Results). LVEP is currently being evaluated by New Castle University, Australia, where extensive research has been conducted on curriculum intervention in the areas of morals and values (Lovat, Schofield, Morrison, &

Neil, 2000). In Lebanon too, since the implementation of LVEP in some schools 2 years ago, elementary teachers reported its positive impact on students' attitudes and behaviors.

The Lebanese culture reinforces values within the family and society's framework. Although many schools foster the understanding of values within their teaching and every day practice, there isn't yet a comprehensive curriculum that provides hands on activities and the integration of values within the curriculum. Values and personality development are mentioned in the new Lebanese curriculum, yet the emphasis on implementation is not clear. Therefore, there is a need for the integration of values education in the Lebanese schools. It can be done through providing students with developmentally appropriate hands on activities and opportunities, taking into consideration the students' age appropriate morals and values.

Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to determine the impact of LVEP on the behaviors and attitudes that relate to intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences of elementary students in a private school in Lebanon. Three of the program's values were chosen; peace, respect and love. This choice was based on the fact that most of the skills needed for the interpersonal and intrapersonal growth are incorporated within their lessons, such as, active listening, conflict resolution and focusing and moral reflection exercises. Through implementing these LVEP values in the elementary classroom and integrating them within the curriculum, the study will investigate their impact on increasing and developing students' self-esteem, conflict resolution skills, peer mediation abilities, and empathy.

Although LVEP is internationally and locally well received and positively reported, and there is a need in the Lebanese schools for training teachers in values education and for the adoption of LVEP, yet there is not a controlled research evaluation of it. Therefore, it is important to provide an empirical base to the LVEP program by evaluating its efficacy in affecting students' behavior through a controlled research. In researching the impact of LVEP on the Lebanese students' behaviors and attitudes we are providing the Lebanese elementary schools with a comprehensive program that will help in the development of the whole child (social, emotional and academic). Moreover, conducting the study in Lebanon and adopting principles similar to those followed in other international

research, will expand and add to LVEP's international validity.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample of the study consisted of 75 students, 31 girls and 44 boys enrolled in a private school in Lebanon, the American Community School at Beirut (ACS). Two sections out of six from grades two and three were randomly selected at the beginning of the school year, and at each grade level one section was randomly chosen as the experimental group and the other as the control. The students' ages ranged between 7 and 9 years old. Teachers in the four sections have similar educational background and comparable training in teaching.

Instruments

In order to assess the effect of LVEP on students' attitudes and behaviors, data were gathered using (a) Harter's Self-Perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985) and the Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for Young Children, (Harter & Pike, 1983) (b) The BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory, short version (EQ-i:YV (S) (BarOn & Parker, 2000), and (c) Teacher's Rating Scale.

Harter's Self-Perception Profile for Children and the *Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for Young Children*. The scales were developed to assess elementary students' self-concept and esteem. They are used in this study to assess the impact of LVEP on children's self esteem and in particular, cognitive, social and athletic perceptions. Both scales have adequate reliability and validity data and have been validated in the Lebanese context (El Hassan, 1999).

The BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory. In assessing the impact of the LVEP on emotional intelligence, the BarOn short version (EQ-i:YV (S)) was used. The inventory has been extensively researched and is used with students aged 7–8 years (Baron & Parker, 2000). It is a self-report measure consisting of 5 subscales assessing individual's interpersonal and intrapersonal abilities, stress management, adaptability, and general mood. The test has shown acceptable reliability and validity as the scales reliably measure the constructs they were developed to measure and they identify core features of

emotional intelligence in children and adolescents (Baron & Parker, 2000).

The Teachers' Rating Scale. This scale is similar to and modified from the students' questionnaire that was developed by the Australian research team who studied the effect of LVEP on students' attitudes and behaviors in 2001. Content validity is based on specific objectives in the LVEP. The scale targets skills students are expected to develop after the implementation of LVEP in schools such as, dealing with others, finding alternatives to behaviors, social skills, appreciating oneself and others, resolving conflicts, and ability to understand one's emotions and behaviors.

Teachers' and parents' reports. Teachers and parents provided informal reports based on observable changes in the students' behaviors and attitudes in classroom, playground and at home.

Procedure

The researcher went through five days of international training called "Train the Trainer" which certified her to train others in LVEP. Teachers in the experimental group went through training in LVEP at school, as part of the three days professional development conducted at the beginning of the school year. The researcher used the basic training components suggested in the LVEP Trainers' Manual. Teachers were trained in skills incorporated in the value units used in the study such as: active listening, imaging and focusing exercises, mind mapping and ways to reinforce students' self esteem and values. Multiple and Emotional intelligence theories and their implications for education were presented in order to help teachers realize the impact of emotions on children's behaviors and attitudes. Skills that provide values-based atmosphere were presented such as conflict mediation, positive reinforcement, and discipline.

Prior to the implementation of LVEP, the BarOn and Harter's scales were administered as pre-tests by the homeroom teachers and their assistants using the specific administrative procedures provided in the manuals. In addition, teachers filled out the Teachers Rating scale. The pre-tests were administered in the presence of the researcher during regular homeroom time. Teachers and the assistants tried to reduce the anxiety of the students and to motivate them. Students were asked to choose the answer that best describes them and they were allowed to ask questions when they couldn't understand an item.

After the pre-testing, implementation of LVEP started. There are 25 lessons in the Peace unit and 21 lessons in the Respect unit. The Love unit develops skills from the Peace and Respect units that reinforce self-esteem, interpersonal and intrapersonal awareness. For example, the Respect and Love units include "Quietly Being" exercises, which reinforce intrapersonal awareness through enjoying quietness and being with the self, consequently understanding peace. In the Respect unit, children get the chance to look at their own as well as others' positive qualities. This helps in reinforcing their intrapersonal intelligence, consequently understanding respect towards self and others. The Peace unit has several lessons on conflict resolution and active listening, which continue in the Respect and Love units. Through these lessons, children get to learn to express their feelings out loud and learn to be assertive; consequently reinforcing their self esteem and understanding the importance of self value and respect.

A schedule was prepared whereby teachers were to teach at least three lessons every week integrated within their existing curriculum. Books from the school's library that reinforced the values taught were to be read by the teachers within the language arts periods and songs that related to the values taught were taught to students. LVEP was integrated within the social studies units and/or any other subject that provided opportunity for integration, especially the ones that emphasize community, families and living in harmony. Vocabulary that reinforced values was encouraged both in the classroom and in the playground. Teachers in the experimental groups, also, sent activities and suggestions provided in the Living Values Parent's guide to parents to follow up the values taught at home.

The three value units were taught during the three semesters that constituted the academic school year. The Peace unit was taught in the first semester, the Respect unit in the second, and the Love unit in the third. The researcher held regular meetings with the teachers every other week to evaluate and touch base upon the work done in the classroom, and to assist and answer teachers' questions or concerns that related to the implementation of LVEP. Throughout the school academic year teachers in both groups were interviewed by the researcher to report any observed changes in students' attitudes and behaviors both in the playground and in the classroom. Parents of both groups discussed changes they observed in children during the LVEP parental seminars that were conducted by teachers three times during the academic year.

As for the control group, they continued with the regular school curriculum without using the LVEP lessons. However, topics that related to respect, tolerance, peace, and love were discussed in areas emphasized in the regular curriculum. These topics were also discussed during the elementary school assemblies, poetry and multicultural weeks, and through public speakers who visited the school and addressed students with social and moral issues. Moreover, the control group's parents were part of the parental seminars.

At the end of the year, post tests on Harter's scales, the BarOn EQ-i:YV (S), and the Teacher Rating Scale were completed for all four sections.

Data Analysis

The mean scores for each group on the different assessment tools were calculated. Pretests scores of both the experimental and the control groups were compared, using *t*-tests to ensure that there was no significant difference between the groups, prior to the implementation of the study. Then another series of *t*-tests were conducted to see if there were significant differences between the experimental and control groups' performances on Harter's scales, the BarOn EQ-i:YV(S), and the Teacher's Rating Scale posttests. Moreover, teachers' and parents' informal reports were gathered and summarized. Main findings were reported.

RESULTS

Harter's Results

The *t*-test results, comparing experimental and control groups' pretest mean scores showed initial significant difference in the Scholastic and Athletic subscales, in favor of the control group. The post *t*-test results of both groups showed significant differences in all subscales in favor of the experimental group. Table I presents results.

BarOn Results

t-Tests comparing experimental and control groups' pretest mean scores did not show initial significant differences on all subscales and total EQ scale. Another series of *t*-tests comparing experimental and control groups' post test mean scores showed no significant difference in all subscales and total EQ scale. Table II reports the results.

Table I. Means, Standard Deviations & *t*-Values of Harter's Scale for Pre- and Post-test Scores for Control and Experimental Groups

Scale	Pre-test ^a			Post-test ^b		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>
<i>Scholastic</i>						
Experimental	2.900	.581	2.29*	3.265	.651	3.26*
Control	3.229	.646		2.766	.665	
<i>Social</i>						
Experimental	2.722	.646	.76	3.29	.458	4.70*
Control	2.838	.644		2.749	.527	
<i>Athletic</i>						
Experimental	2.939	.607	2.79*	3.44	.430	2.96*
Control	3.333	.598		3.046	.675	

^aNumber of students in experimental group was 38 & in control group was 35.

^bNumber of students in experimental group was 37 & in control group was 35.

**p* < .05.

Table II. Means, Standard Deviations & *t*-Values of the BarOn EQ Inventory for Pre- and Post-test Scores for Control and Experimental Groups

Scale	Pre-test ^a			Post-test ^b		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>
<i>A</i>						
Experimental	15.73	2.87	-1.96	15.35	3.02	-1.04
Control	15.59	3.39		14.57	3.35	
<i>B</i>						
Experimental	18.97	3.50	.930	19.18	4.08	-1.02
Control	19.67	3.00		18.31	3.01	
<i>C</i>						
Experimental	15.28	9.91	-1.163	13.68	3.83	.721
Control	13.24	4.06		14.37	4.19	
<i>D</i>						
Experimental	16.94	3.98	1.48	16.89	4.12	.851
Control	18.27	3.73		17.68	3.77	
<i>E</i>						
Experimental	65.50	6.65	.706	64.85	12.94	.078
Control	66.78	6.97		65.05	8.80	
<i>F</i>						
Experimental	17.63	3.05	.644	15.92	3.17	1.85
Control	18.78	10.59		17.14	2.30	

Note. A = Intrapersonal; B = Interpersonal; C = Adaptability; D = Stress Management; E = Total EQ; F = Positive Impression.

^aNumber of students in experimental group was 38 & in control group was 37.

^bNumber of students in experimental group was 37 & in control group was 35.

Table III. Means, Standard Deviations & *t*-Values of the Teacher's Rating Scale for Pre- and Post-test Scores for Control and Experimental Groups

Group	Pre-test ^a			Post-test ^b		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>
Experimental	2.484	.453	1.451	3.125	.423	-5.867*
Control	2.632	.430		2.519	.425	

^aNumber of students in experimental group was 38 & in control group was 37.

^bNumber of students in experimental group was 36 & in control group was 36.

**p* < .05.

Teacher's Rating Scale Results

The *t*-test results comparing experimental and control groups' pretests mean scores did not show an initial significant difference between both groups. The post *t*-test results of both groups did show a significant difference. Table III reports the results.

Teachers and Parents Qualitative Data

The results of interviews conducted with teachers and parents during the implementation of the program can be categorized under the following headings:

Second grade teachers. A second grade homeroom teacher reported, "After the implementation of LVEP and throughout the school year, my students became aware of what is right or wrong. They were very honest in their attitudes and were always telling the truth even if they did something wrong. My students' social behavior and their interaction with each other improved tremendously after the implementation of the program." Noting the increase in students' self-image and respect towards themselves, she said "I could detect the amount of respect that they developed towards themselves through the mirror's activity in the Respect unit. You can't imagine the positive responses that they wrote when I asked them to describe the person that they saw in the mirror." Teachers also confirmed that the program had a noticeable effect on one of the students whose attitude changed a lot. "He used to be arrogant and to fight with the kids. This child's attitude changed and he now plays cooperatively with other kids in the classroom." The same homeroom teacher used soft music in her class to calm down the students and to provide a positive atmosphere. She reported, "My students calm down immediately when they hear the music and they started asking for it every day."

In contrast to the teacher in the experimental group, the homeroom second grade control group's teacher mentioned that "kids do not know the difference between right and wrong, and they are dishonest in their attitudes and responses." He mentioned that on several occasions "I have to spend most of my time stopping them from fighting with each other." He did mention, though, that there was some improvement in their behavior towards the end of the year after he followed with them very strict discipline strategies.

Third grade teachers. The experimental group's homeroom teacher mentioned that after the implementation of the program, the students started to play with the other students they didn't use to play with before "because they learned from LVEP that each one is unique." The same teacher reported that the students were treating each other and the other teachers in a very respectful way. She also mentioned "my students started acting as conflict mediators in the playground and tried to resolve the conflicts that occurred among their peers." In the classroom, teachers noted that their students were quieter and seemed calmer and were surer of their own capabilities, which resulted in improved academic performance. There was an increase in students' on task behavior and values vocabulary. Teachers noted that "every time some thing happens students remind each other of the importance of respect and staying peaceful. The word unique became very popular and they were able to understand that each one is special in his/her way."

Teachers on recess duty. Teachers who took recess duties reported that the experimental group LVEP classes increased their ability to follow instructions and to show cooperative attitude on the playground. "They line up quickly when it's time to go back to class and they follow instructions." The same teachers on recess duty frequently complained about the control group's inability to follow instructions quickly and to play peacefully.

Control group homeroom teachers. These teachers reported a slight improvement in the students' on task behaviors and cooperative learning in the classroom throughout the school year; however, they kept finding difficulties with some of the students' behavior. The students were not able to acquire skills like conflict resolution skills and active listening. This deficiency made them unable to solve the problems that arose with their peers, which resulted in conflicts most of the time. Second grade teacher reported, "The amount of arguments among students in the

classroom is very tiring. You have to force them to follow instructions and listen to other people's perspective."

Parents and principal of the school. Parents and administrators reported the positive increase they observed in the children's behaviors and attitudes. Parents started hearing words at home that reflect the values that students were learning. One of the second grade parents reported that his child was teaching his brothers at home steps to solve problems. Another second grade parent reported that her child constantly reminded the family that "hands are for hugging and not for hitting." The school principal reported hearing several students using the words respect and love at different occasions and when the students were asked where they learned them, they said "From the LVEP lessons."

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of the Living Values Program on elementary students' attitudes and behaviors following a pre-post group design. Instruments used to test the hypotheses of the study were; The Self-Perception Profile for Children and the Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for young Children, The BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory and Teachers' Rating Scale.

The results of the hypotheses testing indicated that there was a significant difference in the experimental group's self-esteem perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes after the implementation of the Living Values Educational Program. The results also indicated no significant difference in the experimental students' interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences and total EQ after the implementation of LVEP.

Impact of LVEP on Students' Self-Esteem

The significant difference in self perception in all subscales; Scholastic Competence (self perception of academic competence and performance at grade level), Social Acceptance (belonging to a group and having friends), and Athletic Competence (sports activities at grade level) in favor of the experimental group can be attributed to certain factors that prevailed during the implementation of the LVEP Program.

Opportunities provided within the school's context. Throughout the implementation of LVEP, students got many opportunities to practice and

translate social skills they learned in the classroom in different contexts, either in the playground or at home. According to Lickona, even if students know what they should do and feel they should do it, they might fail to translate this knowledge to action if they are not provided with opportunities to practice and rehearse them. Students need lots of opportunities to develop the social skills that are appropriate in different contexts (Lickona, 1992).

Some of the skills that were practiced through the Living Values lessons were active listening, conflict resolution, finding alternatives to situations and self-expression. Classroom opportunities for self-expression helped students understand and listen to each other's perspectives, increase problem solving abilities and increase their empathy level. Many studies support the importance of implementing character education and social training programs in raising students' self-esteem and worth as lessons in such programs enhance students' self understanding, empathy towards others, conflict mediation skills, listening skills, respect for others and pro-social skills (Battersby, 1996; Leming, 1997).

Teacher's commitment and impact. Teachers in the experimental group were very committed to the implementation of the program and willing to integrate the values taught in other subject areas. They communicated the skills taught to other teachers and to parents. This communication created and reinforced skills and values implementation in other contexts, at home and in other classes. Consequently, experimental students' self-confidence and ability to express their thoughts and social skills increased. This important role of teachers was highlighted in De Roche and William's book *Educating Hearts and Minds*. They mentioned that teachers' commitment to any character education program is one of the most important factors that contribute to the development, productivity and continuity of the program (De Roche & William, 1998).

Moreover, teachers who implemented LVEP in their classrooms were trained prior to the implementation of the program, which reinforced their knowledge of the importance of, values in education, reinforcing positive behaviors, importance of discipline and role modeling. During the implementation of Living Values lessons, the teachers continuously reinforced students' positive behaviors and attitudes. Teacher's focusing on students' strengths and positives rather than weaknesses provided a positive atmosphere hence increasing academic performance and confidence.

Research supports this important role of teachers. Likona (1992) emphasizes the power of the teachers in affecting the values and character of the young. Teachers can play the role of the mentor through providing moral instruction, encouragement and opportunities for discussion, they can serve as caregivers by respecting and loving their students, and they can serve as models by demonstrating high levels of respect and responsibility (Likona, 1992). Gage and Berliner (1991) also emphasize the role of student reinforcement. If reinforcement is consistent, immediate, realistic, and continuous, it results in increased academic performances, self-confidence in students, and more positive behavior.

The connection between school and home. LVEP lessons provided and reinforced sharing ideas, projects, and news with parents in order to strengthen the connection between home and school. Those ideas were provided either by the teachers implementing the program or through the LVEP Parents' book. Teachers sent home projects, news, and ideas and consequently raised civic and moral awareness. Moreover, LVEP provided guidelines for parents' workshops, which were conducted at school and increased this connection. De Roche and Williams (1998) states that character and values education programs that raise students' self-esteem support the efforts of parents and guardians in child rearing and values formation. This happens through building strong long-lasting relationships between home, school, and community and building the intellectual, moral and civics awareness of the students.

The simplicity of Harter's scales. Harter's self profile and pictorial scales are developed to help students assess their competencies in a simple way. The pictorial scale used for the 2nd graders was easy and comprehensive through the pictures that were provided. Questions were straightforward and students didn't express any problem in understanding them. Moreover, and although the third grade students' self perceived profile is longer, students didn't seem to have any difficulties in answering, as the structure of the questions is easy. This factor helped students give precise answers to each item and helped give a clear picture of the way they perceived their competencies.

To recap, the main factors that helped contribute to the significant differences in Harter's subscales after the implementation of the program can be summarized in terms of opportunities for implementation provided by teachers, commitment of the teachers in implementing the program and reinforcing

students' positive behaviors, training obtained by teachers' in the program, the connections established between home and school, and finally the simplicity of the instrument.

Impact of LVEP on Students' Emotional Intelligence

The BarOn results showed no significant difference after the implementation of the program in all subscales; Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Adaptability, Stress Management, and Total EQ. These results can be attributed to the following:

Duration of the implementation of the program. The lack of significant changes in the experimental students' EQ is inconsistent with findings of researchers that recommend the use of different social training programs to improve such scores. Researchers have recommended the Self Science Curriculum, the PATHS Curriculum and the Child Development Project to increase EQ scores (as cited in Jawad, 2001). Similarly, Goleman (1995) reports that emotional literacy can be enhanced through social skills training programs similar to the ones mentioned above. However, Goleman continues that emotional literacy courses "do not change one overnight, but as children advance through the curriculum from grade to grade, there are discernible improvements in the tone of the school and the outlook and the level of emotional competencies of the girls and boys who take these courses" (Goleman, 1995, p. 326). Although the LVEP was implemented for six months, it was not implemented over a prolonged period and this was the first time that students were exposed to it in their curriculum.

Moreover, continuity in any social and emotional literacy program is important for the development of emotional intelligence. According to Goleman, students at the Nova School start their emotional literacy lessons at lower elementary and continue with the same courses through out their school life. He states, "The most effective emotional classes must be pegged to the development of the child, and repeated at different ages in ways that fit a child's changing understanding and challenges" (Goleman, 1995, p. 314). Therefore and although changes in the experimental group's attitudes and behaviors were noticed by their teachers, continuity throughout the years and at different stages of development is very important for affecting performance on the BarOn.

Research on the duration of values programs. Research done on values teaching and character

education takes years of implementation and follow up. The Child Development project done in California had the most extensive evaluation of any values education program done so far. After 5 years of setting, the design results were collected and positive changes were noted (Lickona, 1992). The longer the implementation of values programs, the better and clearer the results would be. In this study, and although teachers observed changes in students' behavior, such changes did not translate to higher performance on the BarOn due to short duration of program.

The difficulty level of the BarOn. The difficulty level of the BarOn instrument might be another factor for the non-significant results. Students tested were young with an age range of 7–8 years. Teachers and assistant teachers reported that students found difficulty in answering some of items as they found them conceptually difficult to understand. Moreover they were very confused with the scale format (4-point Likert-scale) and kept, throughout the test, asking about what each number meant.

A research done by El-Sadr in 2003 on the validation of the BarOn in Lebanon also revealed that the instrument was difficult for the younger students, ages 7–9. It was hard for them to understand the meaning of some of the items even after translating them to their native language (Arabic). In a personal comment, El-Sadr noted that the test took a longer time to administer with this age group, and the administrator had to stop at different times to explain some items, and at the end dropped the 7–9 age group from the normative sample (El-Sadr, 2003). The instrument's difficulty might have led to the non significant findings in this study.

As a conclusion, the factors that could have affected the BarOn insignificant findings are: the duration of the LVEP's implementation period wasn't long enough to fully impact the development of emotional intelligence in students, the lack of continuity of LVEP's implementation throughout several school years, and the possible difficulty level of the BarOn inventory for the age group of students in this study, 7–8 years old.

Teachers' Ratings of Students' Attitudes and Behaviors

Items in the Teachers' Rating Scale were based on the objectives taught to the experimental group in the three LVEP units. The significant changes in experimental group's scores can be explained by the fact that teachers in this group followed, reinforced

and observed the targeted objectives in the classroom and the playground. Those objectives measured students' conflict mediation skills, active listening, respecting, liking and finding positive qualities in oneself and others, taking other perspectives into consideration, enjoying quiet time by oneself and taking responsibility for one's actions. Through the teachers' attempt to integrate LVEP objectives in different subject areas and transferring the learning into different contexts; art class, playground, music class, and home, the objectives became increasingly reinforced, contrary to the control group. This resulted in students' internalization and expression of such attitudes and behaviors and subsequently in the significant differences in the posttest results.

Qualitative Results of the Teachers' and Parents' Comments

Teachers' feedback was significant because it highlighted certain aspects in the research that were not directly addressed by any of the instruments. Teachers' interest and increased awareness of the importance of values programs in the educational system and its' impact on students is especially significant since according to Lickona, teachers can enable students to experience morality by treating them in a moral way, they can model moral reasoning to their students, and they can act as mentors when they provide corrective feedback to students (as cited in Jawad, 2001). Moreover, teachers' comments revealed their awareness and realization of the impact of such programs on students' behaviors outside the classroom's context i.e. playground and home.

Parents' and school principal's feedback were also very significant. Parents' feedback highlighted aspects that were not clear in the instruments used. Some of those aspects related to students' ability to communicate with their parents and siblings at home, increased parental awareness of the importance of the emotional needs of their children, and parental attitude towards school and teachers. The school principal's feedback highlighted her realization of the need of the school for values programs and confirmed the students' changes that were realized in the significant results obtained.

As a conclusion, it seems crucial for schools to implement values and social skills programs in order to enhance students' social, emotional and intellectual development. Although the results in this study were significant in showing changes in students' self esteem and attitudes as measured by Harter's scale and

Teachers' Behavioral Rating Scale and not in emotional intelligence as measured by the BarOn inventory, results in other studies are promising. Many studies on different social skills programs implemented for longer periods of time have shown significant changes in students' attitudes, in particular, and the school's climate in general.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Research on values and emotional literacy programs shows the impact of such programs on students' attitudes and behaviors toward self and others. As students' emotional intelligence increases as a result of a long and consistent training in such programs (Goleman, 1995), continued research in this area appears to be crucial for validating the importance of values and social skills training in enhancing and reinforcing students' emotional, social and intellectual awareness. Accordingly, it is recommended that: (a) further research should aim at implementing and integrating the LVEP within all areas of the curriculum, for a longer period of time and for the whole school; (b) more teachers' training in the LVEP be conducted to help better acquire and internalize the skills that are to be taught to students; (c) further follow up and monitoring of values programs' implementation in schools is needed to directly report and detect desirable changes; and (d) further research should be directed towards developing a more direct measure of the objectives and social skills targeted by the Living Values Program.

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