

Story Telling – Not A New In, But A U-Turn

Dr. Mamta Arora

HOD, Deptt of Education

Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya

Hardwar

Richa Chandel

Research Scholar

Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya

Hardwar

Email : richachandel15@hotmail.com

Abstract

It is the power to think, understand and express that keeps us ahead of all the creatures that exist. Any information that we come across, makes us think. The impact varies, depending upon the source of information and the frequency of exposure to the same. Every information, in some or the other way is a story. Some real, some fake, some glorified and some garnished. As an adult, we all know, how positivity and negativity of our thoughts change the direction of life, and when it comes to childhood and adolescence it's very important to receive a way towards rightful thinking pattern. At the tender phase of childhood and transitional phase of adolescence, the destructions in personality of an individual remain irreparable if once tattered. Stories had not only been the biggest and favourite source of entertainment for the readers and listeners, at any phase of life but also an effective way of developing virtues like honesty, respect, obedience, love towards nature and its protection along with the management of its resources. It is found that listening to stories also develop the power to create and comprehend. The soft bedtime stories from our elders add so much to us. Present paper states, the role of moral based stories, in bringing about changes in thinking process of children and adolescents, hence making them a better individual, with rich moral values, better approach towards the day to day challenges, better at academic performances and with least behavioural problems in school, home and in peer group. Exposure to moral values through stories of different genre, e.g. Bal Nirman Ki Kahaniyaan, Panchtantra, Aesops Fables, Fairy Tales, etc, bring about observational changes while some can be measured and proved statistically. And with this let's not forget that this method of informal learning has always existed in our society, in the form of stories told by our elders as a our day to day life at every level and for every child; not only in our schools but in our homes too along with every organisation that is dealing childhood and adolescence. With this study the researcher wants to establish the fact that story telling is not 'a new in' but rather a 'u turn' and can play a pivotal role in bringing about awareness towards the environment in the upcoming generation and will make them learn how to manage the resources without hampering them.

Keywords – *Dimensions of Personality, Juvenile Delinquents, adolescents, storytelling, awareness towards environment, responsible citizens.*

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Received: 30.08.2019

Approved: 15.09.2019

Dr. Mamta Arora

Richa Chandel

*Story Telling – Not A
New In, But A U-Turn
RJPSS 2019, Vol. XLIV,
No. 2, pp. 254-265*

Article No. 32

Online available at:

[http://
rjpss.anubooks.com/](http://rjpss.anubooks.com/)

Introduction

Mounting unsteadiness among the upcoming generation is a challenging situation faced by teachers in the classroom, especially amongst the primary classes, where catching the attention is in itself a creative task. Being a teacher to primary classes the researcher has been noticing that where on one hand the coming generation is high at intellect, there on the other hand arrogance and hyperactivity in children has also increased manifold.

In recent days it's being noticed that people are taking 'story – telling' as a profession and are gaining popularity as well as appreciation due to its effectiveness in terms of the impact, it leaves over the beneficiaries. Education seems to be incomplete if it only is providing a diet to brain and not to heart.

The personality of an individual is influenced by various aspects of the environment to which he belongs. Especially at adolescence, the transition period of an individual, the environment plays a vital role in shaping the child's personality.

Our childhood experiences have a direct impact on how we approach adolescence, which in turn affects how we approach adulthood. Our attitudes, feelings and values are largely shaped by our experiences during our early years. Each period of life has its own challenges as we continue to develop and change in the direction of becoming independent.

At the tender and transitional phase of adolescence, it is very important for children to get right guidance and a righteous way of thinking. During these years, words usually fall on children's deaf ears. They are reluctant towards advices and guidance given directly.

Having her roots connected to Shantikunj Haridwar, researcher strongly believes and witnesses the ideology of the movement, which lays emphasis on refinement of thoughts. It says 'we become, what we think' and so it is very important to give a creative and constructive direction to thoughts. The movement, commonly known as 'Vichar Kranti Abhiyan', is a unique movement for refinement of people's thinking and positive orientation of mass psychology.

The unique experiment of "Vichar Kranti" - gradual refinement of thoughts, righteous transformation of attitude and sublime transmutation of human psychology up to the divine realms of spirituality is the foundation of this mission. The founder of the mission, 'Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya', wrote about 3000 enlightening books on wide ranging topics.

This enriching literature includes story books for children, titled as "Bal Nirman ki Kahaniyaan'. Not only these but other collection of stories based on moral

values had been a big source of inculcating moral values amongst the children. Many researches suggest that through stories children not only connect to the characters of the stories but also develop a sense of correlation of the situations of stories to their real life. Stories also help them socialize.

Researches tell that moral based stories give direction to the ambiguous or distracted thinking of children in a very effective manner, as listening or reading a story, teaches them in the way that nothing else can. Organised thinking helps in building the character of an individual based on ethical and moral values, hence, emerging as a better human and contributing to the building of better society and nation, at large.

Compassion, empathy, sympathy, etc are very commonly used terms. But, do we really work in direction of developing these virtues in our children or are we using these terms just to throw an impression over a crowd about our understanding of these soft skills, without which we cannot think of a human society with humanitarian approach.

While looking for what works the best in developing virtues related to humanity, the researcher came across the role of storytelling in developing moral values amongst children.

As the researches witness that story telling has been a time tested method of bringing up an emotionally healthy society, we cannot forget the stories narrated by our grandparents during our bed time. This elegant process not only kept the two generations emotionally close but also filled the younger ones with the values which complete us as a human.

With the passage of time, as the trend of joint families is almost vanishing, we realize the drawbacks of this trend of nuclear families, which is not only disturbing the social health of families but also spoiling the personalities of children.

When we talk about juvenile crime we find that crime is not bound to any particular society or caste or background. Rather they come from all sort of backgrounds due to different known or unknown reasons. Deviation of personality of a child, if identified at an early stage, can be treated very well.

Keeping all this in mind an intervention based on story telling was designed which aims at studying the impact of story narration over different aspects of personalities of adolescents.

Review of Literature

Disorders of Childhood and Adolescence

Over the years, discontent with the classification system for childhood

behaviour problems has led to considerable rethinking, discussion, and empirical investigation of the issues related to diagnosis. According to the DSM – IV classification system of childhood and adolescent disorders, major disorders enumerated are- ADHD, Conduct Disorders, Delinquent Behaviour, Anxiety Disorder, Childhood Depression, Autism. There are a wide range of causes leading to these disorders. (Marie Gervais)

Role of Education in Human Life

Education plays a vital role in shaping the thoughts of a human and leading him to a life that is much exposed to the world that is developing in a rapid pace. Education not only makes us intellectually strong but also helps us become a better being as a human and a better component of nature. (Dr. Ajay Bharadwaj)

But it is also true that education, if is confined to only bookish knowledge, leads to an imbalanced growth of an individual. And if it aims at developing only technical skills, will only produce nature made robots with no wisdom and rationale of where and how to use the knowledge so as to serve humanity and nurture the gifts of nature.

Value based education is a tool which not only provides us a profession which we can pursue but also a purpose in life. The purpose of our life is undoubtedly to know oneself and be ourselves. We cannot do it unless we learn to identify ourselves with all that lives. It is very aptly said that: ‘Know thyself’ was written over the portals of the antique world.’(Dr Ajay Bharadwaj)

Moral Education and Morality

Morality and education are intimately associated. Education in its broad sense penetrates all aspects of our socio-communal life. Thus education of morality is a very basic duty of the community on the one hand and family in particular as both these are informal agencies of education. Education is the principle vehicle for the training of moral values in the individual. It has been a traditional phenomenon that the parents and elders in the community manifest a moral responsibility to see that the young in the community grow up in the moral and righteous way.(Joseph C. Mukalel)

Moral values control the entire spectrum social life of the individual. Social life governed by social attitudes control interpersonal relations and dealings between individuals in a community. (Joseph C. Mukalel)

Morality is the belief that some behaviour is right and acceptable and that other behaviour is wrong. (Fazilah Idris^aZaharah Hassan^aAzizah Ya’acob^aSaran Kaur Gill^bNoor Aziah Mohd Awal)

Marriam Webster tells, 'It is a doctrine or system of moral conduct.'

Story Telling – A Tool for Developing Moral Values

Research and theory support the use of children's literature to prepare children for social interaction. Piaget's theories of child development support the use of children's literature with very young children. From age 4 to 7, children learn to understand different perspectives from their own because they change from being self-centered to other-centered. During this time, children not only understand fantasy stories but also more realistic stories to develop their relationship with others and to satisfy their curiosity about people and the world (Russell, 1994).

Meaningful story books for children can present experiences that have a connection to their lives. So, literature can help children learn about the real world in a pleasurable and fascinating way, perceive their surroundings, and understand relationships with others (Yoo, 1997). In other words, children's literature provides children with fundamental answers about who they are, how they should live in their world, and how they should live with each other. According to Weaver (cited in Brynildssen, 2002: P. 33-34). "*Literary characters have almost the same potential for influencing the reader as the real people with whom a reader might share a reading experience*". (Dr. Mona Mohammad Farid)

The connection between drama and moral education in young adolescence has not been widely researched. This study examines the role of process drama. In this study process drama is defined as educational drama for awareness and conflict resolution through the creation of a dramatic collective exploring the moral values of junior high school age students. Students examined their values through themes of family, friendship, and other issues of personal importance. When dramatic cognitive dissonance was followed by group discussion and reflection, students' awareness of their values articulation processes was heightened and their interpersonal problem solving skills improved. The ensuing group ethos that developed was characterized by caring, respect, and mutual commitment. This study suggests that dramatic engagement focusing on personal story can be a significant moral education tool for junior high students. (Marie Gervais)

There are a number of ways that one might morally educate a child. One can demonstrate various virtues and encourage the child to copy his or her own behaviour. One can issue a series of imperatives and punish if failure to abide by them. Moreover, one might tell the child stories with moral lessons in order to elicit favourable behaviour and to discourage unfavourable behaviour. In this research, we study how kindergarten teachers can better serve more appropriate aims of moral education by using stories.

The main findings of this study are as follows: first, moral education is considered complementary material in kindergarten in Indonesia. There are few teachers who use stories as moral education in kindergarten. Second, teachers play an important role in helping children understand the story and capture the message of the story. Teachers are therefore challenged to explore the content of stories and help children connect the story with their daily lives. Third, the ways in which teachers see morality affects the way they convey moral values in a story. (Husni Rahim and Maila Dinia Husni Rahiem).

Value needs to be inculcating since young age to form a human personality which rooted in moral and ethics. Teachers have to deal with a variety of teaching methods and pedagogy that emphasizes the concept of 'student-edutainment' in the process of teaching and learning. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the use of storytelling and story reading to inculcate moral values and ethics among preschool children. Data collected qualitatively using focus group interviews, observations, document analysis (children's creative painting) and video recording. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis using *NVivo software version 10.0*. The result shows, storytelling and story reading methods capable of fostering moral values such as helping, loving and well behaved. In addition, aspects such as regulation of the code of ethics, social ethics, human relations, well-mannered and courteous are the practice of pre-school children. The results of this study can build a reference database for the kindergarten teachers, Development Research Centre of the National Child (CDRC), parents and the community.

Methodology

Research Design-Within group pre- post research design was be used for the study.

Sampling-Accidental Sampling

Sample size- 20 (Male- Sampreksha Grih – Balak, Moradabad-10- 14 yrs)

Tools

Sanjay Vohra. - Multi Dimensional Assessment of Personality Series

(MDAPS–V) Form C (English) has 100 items which measures 20 dimensions covering adaptability, achievement, motivation, boldness, competition, enthusiasm, general ability, guilt proneness, imagination, innovation, leadership, maturity, mental health, morality, self control, sensitivity, shrewdness, suspiciousness, social warmth and tension of adolescents (age 10 – 14 years).

Variables

Independent Variable-

An Educational Intervention given for 40 days. Following schedule will be followed on the weekly basis.

- 1) A Prayer — 5min
- 2) Pranakarshan Pranayam – 5 min
- 3) Story Telling (Bal Nirman ki Kahaniyan) – 20 min
- 4) Good Thought (Repetition and discussion of one same thought whole week) – 4 min
- 5) Om Chanting – 1 min

Total Duration 35mins

Dependent Variable-

20 Dimensions of Personality

Adaptability, Academic Performance, Boldness, Competition, Creativity, Curiosity, Enthusiasm, Excitability, General Ability, Guilt Proneness, Individualism, Independence, Leadership, Maturity, Mental Health, Morality, Self Control, Sensitivity, Social Warmth and Tension .

Statistical Method - Correlated t-test.

Hypothesis – Null Hypothesis

Results

DF= 20-1=19

Result Table

Dimensions of Personality	Value of Correlated t-test (Absolute value)	(Critical value) .05 level of significance	Null Hypothesis
Adaptability	2.139233	2.093	Rejected
Academic Performance	0.812728	2.093	Accepted
Boldness	0.640723	2.093	Accepted
Competition	1.482352	2.093	Accepted
Creativity	1.399248	2.093	Accepted
Curiosity	1.394538	2.093	Accepted
Enthusiasm	0.858395	2.093	Accepted
Excitability	0.786398	2.093	Accepted
General Ability	1.503505	2.093	Accepted
Guilt Proneness	2.183069	2.093	Rejected
Individualism	0.732695	2.093	Accepted
Independence	0.887041	2.093	Accepted
Leadership	0.887041	2.093	Accepted
Maturity	2.142306	2.093	Rejected
Mental Health	0.825578	2.093	Accepted
Morality	0.67082	2.093	Accepted
Self Control	2.202869	2.093	Rejected
Sensitivity	0.410391	2.093	Accepted
Social Warmth	0.764121	2.093	Accepted
Tension	1.03999	2.093	Accepted

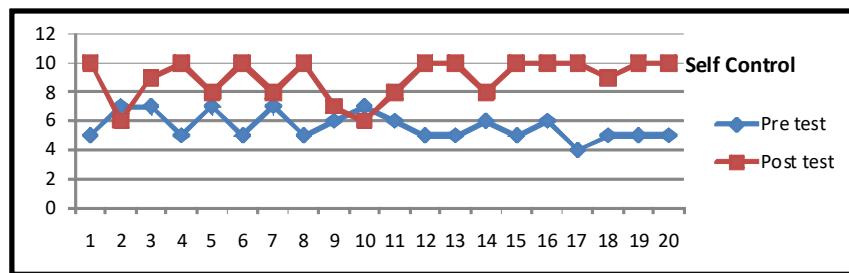
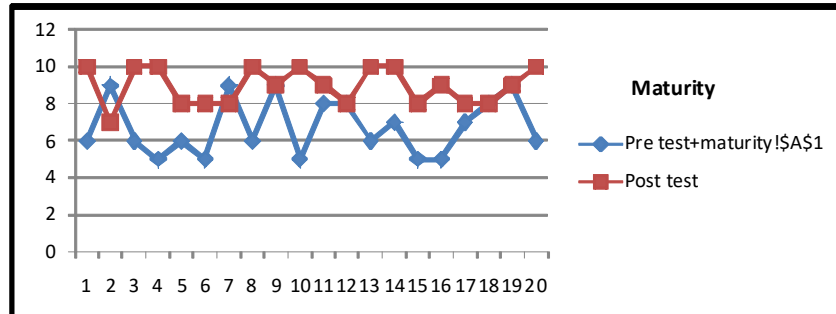
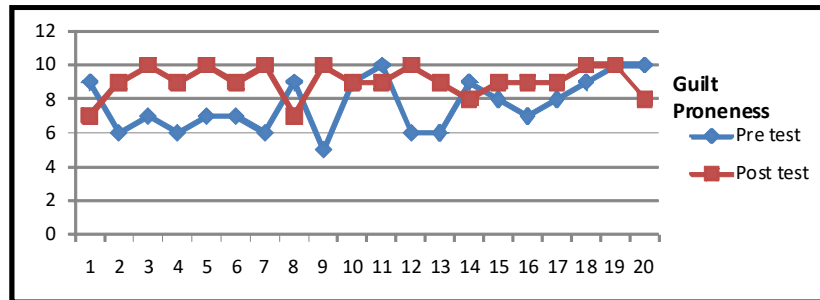
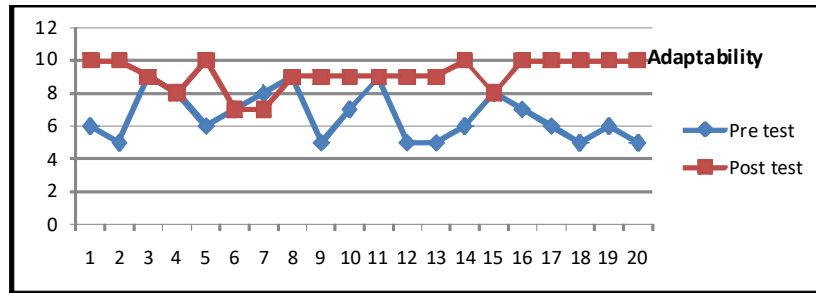
Out of 20 null hypothesis four hypothesis were rejected, hence telling that there is a positive impact of the intervention over following dimensions of personality-

- **Adaptability**
- **Guilt Proneness**
- **Maturity**
- **Self Control**

And results show that there is no significant impact of the intervention over the following dimensions of the personality.

Graphs

Here are the graphs displaying the changes in the 20 dimensions of personality of the children living in Bal Samprekshan Grih that took place when given the exposure to the intervention for 40 days.



Discussion

As shown in the result table, four dimensions of the personality of the children, are found to be significant at .05 level of significance with 19 as degree of freedom,

hence rejecting the null hypothesis, while the remaining 16 dimensions were not found to be significant at .05 level of significance, hence accepting the null hypothesis. However the graphical representation of data shows that there are changes in the readings of almost all the dimensions of personality of the children being exposed to the intervention for the duration of 40 days. Its significant here to mention that visible changes in the behaviour of most of the children were noticed, as mentioned by the warden of the juvenile home and by the peer group, yet statistics is all that matters in the end to prove the work scientifically authentic.

Researcher would also like to mention here that, if the intervention is made a mandatory part of the daily routine of the juvenile homes, it would definitely contribute in giving a better direction to the thinking process of children, who by fate reach a juvenile home.

The duration which such children spend in Samprekshan grih, should get a glimpse of how important it is to think right and how to train one's mind to be committed towards positive thinking.

Such a package of practices, focused on training the thought process of children, would help them become better individuals and would lead to reduction of recidivism.

Elders, who are blessed with a responsibility of bringing up an individual from a child to an adult, should understand their role as a parent, warden, teacher, etc. Its not only in the juvenile homes that we need such a package of practices but everywhere and all the time, we should be committed to make a better society with healthy thinking process.

Children don't learn from what they hear, rather they learn from what they see.

In support of this quote, I would say that its not what we say would matter for our upcoming generation but it's what we follow and do would matter at large to bring up a better generation.

Character building and personality development is a constant process, which continues for the life time, but by neglecting the adolescence of a child, we do injustice towards his future.

With this study I aim at coming up with the suggest that there should be an inbuilt system that should work for bringing about changes in thinking process of children not just in juvenile home but also at different NGOs dealing the young minds and schools and colleges.

Such an exposure if can bring about significant changes in four dimensions of personality of children, I strongly believe that if the intervention is given for a longer period, it would bring about significant changes in other dimensions of personality too.

Hence this would help in developing a love towards nature and its resources.

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