



MORAL INTELLIGENCE FOR MORE DIVERSE AND DEMOCRATIC WORLDⁱ

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Abstract:

One of the most important tasks facing individuals in 21st century is not just to bring various intelligences (MI) together and use them properly, but figure out how intelligence and morality can work together to create a world in which people can live peacefully in a diverse democratic society. Although some courses under different names have been included in both teacher education programs and in general, education curriculum, they all failed to prepare both teachers and citizens believing in diverse democratic ideals. This paper advocates that instead of placing courses under various names (democracy and human rights, civic rights, social justice and democracy, etc.) into curricula, integrating and practicing moral intelligence activities into each and every lesson of any subject matter would serve better to prepare both more democratic citizens and more skilled and committed teachers in social justice and for a better and more democratic future.

Keywords: Multiple intelligences, Moral Intelligence, social justice, democracy

1. Introduction

One of the most important tasks facing individuals in 21st century is not just to bring various intelligences (MI) together and use them properly, but figure out how intelligence and morality can work together to create a world in which people can live peacefully in a diverse democratic society (Gardner, 1999).

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Although some courses under different names have been included in both teacher education programs and in general, education curriculum, they all failed to prepare both teachers and citizens believing in diverse democratic ideals.

Education systems managed to produce a lot of smart people (leaders, politicians, army commanders, businessmen, academicians, scientists, etc.) with high levels of verbal and mathematical intelligences, i.e. IQ who lacked moral values and as a result they caused and continue causing other people suffer all over the world. These people had all the intelligences in their profiles especially; the ones highly regarded in present education systems and mainstream cultures around the world, Verbal/Linguistic and Logical/Mathematical. What was lacking was the moral intelligence (Altan, 2010).

It is not possible to raise individuals with high level of virtues, respectful to basic human rights, freedom of speech, choice and belief systems, law of order and democracy by just nurturing their Linguistic and Mathematical intelligences.

Therefore, moral intelligence, as in the case of other intelligences, should be activated and taught with very well planned activities so that individuals can become more aware of their potential of moral intelligence and develop it if they have less developed level of this intelligence (Altan, 2011).

This paper advocates that instead of placing courses under various names (democracy and human rights, civic rights, social justice and democracy, etc.) into curricula, integrating and practicing moral intelligence activities into each and every lesson of any subject matter would serve better to prepare both more democratic citizens and more skilled and committed teachers in social justice and for a better and more democratic future.

2. Education, Democracy & Social Justice

Although our aims change from time to time and from situation to situations we educators should always share the vision and purpose to foster democracy. Kelly (1995) argues that one of the major tasks that education must perform in a democratic society is preparing its citizens properly for the roles and responsibilities they are supposed to take on during their life time.

As Dewey saw it, *“a democracy is more than a form of government: it is primarily a mode of associated living, a conjoint communicated experience”* (1916:87). He approached education as part of a broader project that encompassed an exploration of the nature of experience, of knowledge, of society, and of ethics.

The development of democracy was an expansion of sociability. The democratic community is usually in effect the community that best realizes the very nature of sociability. Therefore, moral growth involves the acquisition of a capacity for communal life as well as personal fulfillment and as a result, we become a whole person and more

able to offer ourselves to others. (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). Therefore, democratic societies depend on their existence upon a thoughtful citizenry that believes in democratic ideals and is willing and able to participate in the civic life of the nation.

If we think that all citizens of our nations are equal and free, then all free and equal citizens of a society should be able to have the benefit of a democratic education. Therefore, all teachers must have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to teach toward the democratic ideals. In particular, in today's rapidly changing and increasingly diverse society, all teachers desperately need knowledge of the social and cultural contexts that shape education as well as knowledge of the role of culture and language in mediating learning of democratic values.

Social Justice is also a part of democracy and includes a vision of society in which the resources are shared equally by all citizens and all citizens are both physically and psychologically safe and secure.

Social justice can be considered both a process and a goal. And the goal of social justice is *"to able both full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet the needs of all citizens"*. (Bell, 2007:1)

With the above vision in mind, it can easily be asserted that the most important goals of teaching and teacher education are social responsibility, social change, and social justice. However, it seems obvious that we have forgotten all these aims and made preparing students to the exams or placing them to certain schools and programs as the most important goal of teaching and how to teach the subject matter in teacher education!

3. Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Howard Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences helped educators to revolutionize their concept of human potential.

Gardner (1983) refused to accept the monolithic and stable conception of intelligence and he opposed to the idea of identifying and measuring of intelligence through tests and he proposed that humans are better defined by saying that they possess a series of relatively independent intelligences than by saying they have just a single intelligence defined by IQ (Intelligence Quotient).

In this view, intelligences are not something that can be seen or counted, but rather neural potentials that may be activated or not depending on the values of a particular culture and the decisions made by each person, their parents, their teachers, etc.

The original seven intelligences according to Gardner are:

Linguistic Intelligence: *"Sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages and the capacity to use language to accomplish goals"* (Gardner 1999:41). Sample skills include; understanding order and meaning of words, convincing someone

of a course of action, explaining, teaching, and learning, humor, memory and recall, etc. Lawyers, speakers, writers, poets are among the people with high linguistic intelligence.

Logical/Mathematical Intelligence: The capacity to analyze problems logically, carry out mathematical operations, and investigate issues scientifically (ibid, p.42). Sample skills include; abstract pattern recognition, inductive /deductive and scientific reasoning, discerning relationships and connections, etc. Mathematicians, logicians, and scientists exploit logical-mathematical intelligence.

Visual/Spatial Intelligence: This intelligence features the potential to recognize and manipulate the patterns of wide space (those used, for instance, by navigators and pilots) as well as the patterns of more confined areas (ibid, p. 42). Sensitivity to form, space, color, line, and shape. Sample skills include; perceiving from different angles, recognizing spatial relationships, image manipulation, active imagination, etc.

Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence: This intelligence entails the potential of using one's whole body or parts of the body (like the hand or the mouth) to solve problems or fashion products (ibid, p.42). Sample skills include; coordination, control of voluntary and pre-programmed movements, mind/body connection, etc. Dancers, actors, and athletes foreground this intelligence.

Musical Intelligence: This intelligence entails skill in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns (ibid, p.41). Sensitivity to rhythm, pitch and melody. Sample skills include; recognizing the structure of music, sensing qualities of a tone, etc.

Interpersonal Intelligence: This intelligence denotes a person's capacity to understand the intentions, motivations, and desires of other people and, consequently, to work effectively with others (ibid, p.43). Sample skills include; creating and maintaining synergy, working cooperatively, making distinctions among others, etc. Salespeople, teachers, clinicians, religious and political leaders need this intelligence.

Intrapersonal Intelligence: This intelligence involves the capacity to understand oneself, to have an effective working model of oneself—including one's own desires, fears, and capacities—and to use such information effectively in regulating one's own life (ibid, p. 43). Sample skills include; transpersonal sense of the self, awareness and expression of different feelings, understanding how one is similar to or different from others, higher order thinking/reasoning, etc.

Gardner (1993) argued that everyone is born possessing the seven intelligences. He also warned us that this list is a preliminary one and is not limited to seven intelligences only.

As a result, Gardner introduced the possibility of three new intelligences, although he points out *"the strength of the evidence for these varies, and whether or not to declare a certain human capacity another type of intelligence is certainly a judgment call"* (Gardner, 1999:47). These additional candidate intelligences were:

Naturalist Intelligence: *“Naturalist combines a description of the core ability with a characterization of a role that many cultures value. A naturalist demonstrates expertise in the recognition and classification of the numerous species—the flora and fauna—of his or her environment”* (ibid, p.48). According to Gardner the individual with high naturalist intelligence is *“able to recognize flora and fauna, to make other consequential distinctions in the natural world, and to use his ability productively [in hunting, in farming, in biological science]”* (Gardner, 1995: 206).

Spiritual Intelligence: Gardner argues that *“if we humans can relate to the world of nature, we can also relate to the supernatural world—to the cosmos that extends beyond what we can perceive directly, to the mystery of our own existence, and to life-and-death experiences that transcend what we routinely encounter”* (Gardner, 1999:54). Furnham points out that *“it is the ability to master a set of diffuse and abstract concepts about being, but also mastering the craft of altering one’s consciousness in attaining a certain state of being”* (Furnham, 2008:212). Such intelligence can help us to understand the ultimate questions, mysteries and meanings of life: who are we? Where do we come from? What does the future hold for us? Why do we exist? What is the meaning of life, of love, of tragic losses, of death?

Existential Intelligence: Although Gardner finds Existential Intelligence difficult to define, he proposes that it involves *“the capacity to locate oneself with respect to the furthest reaches of the cosmos—the infinite and the infinitesimal—and the related capacity to locate oneself with respect to the most existential features of the human condition as the significance of life, the meaning of death, the ultimate fate of the physical and the psychological worlds, and such profound experiences as love of another person or total immersion in a work of art”* (ibid, p. 60).

Although Gardner introduced three new intelligences, he later on concentrated on two of them; Naturalist and Existential Intelligences.

3.1 Moral Intelligence

It should be noted that disadvantage and/or social injustice do not arise from a person’s own attributes. They generally arise from other people’s actions, assumptions, ignorance, misconceptions, attitudes, beliefs, values and prejudices. Whether it is their gender, ethnicity or culture, mother tongue, accent, with language, lifestyle, and religion or their physical and mental well-being, people can be treated unfairly, sometimes in a patronizing way!

In *“Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st century,”* Gardner warned us that the most important task in the new millennium will not be to *“just hone our various intelligences and use them properly, but figure out how intelligence and morality can work together to create a world in which a great variety of people will want to live”* (Gardner, 1999:4). However, Gardner and his colleagues excluded moral capacities since they found these capacities normative rather than descriptive. He feels stretching

intelligence to include moral behaviors and attitudes creates several problems, one being the cultural specificity, complexity and diversity of good and bad (Gardner, 2007). Though the social, emotional, spiritual and moral domains can be measured with some degree of consistency on inventories and some genetic influence are evidenced as identical twins reared apart, share similar traits, yet according to the present evidence and criteria Gardner established for his intelligences, these candidates do not qualify as a separate intelligence. In spite of the fact that it is difficult to please everybody with just one definition of morality, we cannot ignore the possibility of a definition as a universal moral code.

For example, Churchland (2011) argues that morality originates in the biology of the brain. She describes the “neurobiological platform of bonding” that, modified by evolutionary pressures and cultural values, has led to human styles of moral behavior. So in a sense it is grounded in inborn behavioral dispositions or virtues and naturally possessed by all human beings but in various levels. Churchland (ibid) tries to persuade us that recent discoveries in brain science can teach us some important things about morality. And she insists that morality is a feature of flesh-and-blood humanity, not of some abstract or supernatural world.

Robert Coles, one of the world’s most respected scholars on the inner workings of children, has explored the dimension of morality in several of his works (Coles, 1986, 1997). His studies suggest that the moral lives of children are very rich and begin developing in infancy as they learn about good and bad, how to behave and be through interactions with others and observing behavior. Our morals are greatly affected by our social environments. In the important and influential early years, that environment is largely the parents and immediate family. As children become socialized and enter schools, more and more of their moral character is open to the influence of peers and society.

Many philosophers also view moral intelligence as a vital and important part of human nature (Boss, 1994). In our current society and educational systems, its importance and necessity grows. However, issues of democracy, global justice, environment, human rights and citizenship, nepotism, social justice, biased perspectives of ethnocentrism, national chauvinism are, for the most part, not major components of the curriculum in K-12 schools and are given not if not very little attention in teacher education programs.

Education has a power to influence both individual and collective moral development. Things happen in the classroom can either encourage or discourage the ability and desire to seek truth and serve the greatest good. As the As Goodlad points out education has a moral aim and requires effort to accomplish this aim (Goodlad, 1990), as it is the case of our lives. As Hansen, 1985 argues the classrooms are generally saturated with moral meaning and it is the duty and responsibility of teachers to create

a moral rich environment in their classrooms where justice and caring prevail so that it becomes part of every and each individual (Tom, 1984).

Educational leaders, administrators and teachers are to be models of moral intelligence, exemplifying the virtues they seek to engender in others (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990; Lennick & Kiel, 2005).

Although some courses under different names such as social Justice, civil rights and democracy, value education, etc., have been included in both teacher education programs and in general, education curriculum, they all failed to prepare both teachers and citizens believing in diverse democratic ideals.

Things human beings witnessed in the 20th century and especially in early years of the new millennium force us strongly to think about the Moral Intelligence (Altan, 2001, 2010). Altan claims that *“Moral Intelligence is going to be one of the most valued intelligences in the next century since we have witnessed a lot of smart people lacking moral values which caused people to suffer all over the world”* (2010:63). And he believes that it is definitely the time for the Moral Intelligence. Although the degrees can be changeable, in no culture bribing, telling lies, burgling, smuggling, corrupting, attacking others' rights and laws, etc. can be seen as legal, normal or acceptable. Moral Intelligence can be defined as the ability to differ the good from the bad and the right from the wrong; to have strong ethical faith and to act on them to behave in the right and honorable way; to accept and implement the rules of democracy, law of order, freedom of speech, freedom of belief systems or choice and basic human rights, and respect the environment, etc. Moral intelligence can also be defined as the mental capacity to determine how universal human principles should be applied to our personal values, goals, and actions (Lennick and Kiel, 2005:7). And those individuals having, showing and fighting for such values could be considered with a capacity of high Moral Intelligence.

On the other hand, The Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Panel on Moral Education defines person with high moral capacity as one who respects human dignity, cares about the welfare of others, integrates individual interests and social responsibilities, demonstrates integrity, reflects on moral choices and seeks peaceful resolution of conflict (1988).

Can you believe that those performed apartheid for nearly half a century in South Africa; those closing their eyes to the ethnic cleansing and those killing hundreds of thousands wildly in Ruanda; those killing millions of people mainly women and kids just because their religions were different in Bosnia; those continuing killing of thousands of people for years in Palestine, those causing injustice and breaking the rule of law by ignoring basic human dignity, freedom of speech, thinking and beliefs and those killing animals, destroying forests without pity were not clever enough and did not have average IQ and did not have university degrees?

Altan points out that we have had many intelligent leaders, politicians and army generals who failed to show moral attitudes and behaviors as a result we have witnessed wars, ethnic cleansings, domestic violence, inhumane attitudes etc. in South Africa, Bosnia, Ruanda, Palestine, Myanmar and in many parts of the world including the Middle East, Europe, South America and the US, etc. We have had many intelligent businessmen who were so greedy to make more money so they either cheated or they were blind in making more money and as result a global economic crises happened where millions of people became unemployed and thousands have been added to the list of starving. The last economic crises in the US, in Europe (e.g. in Greece, Ireland and Spain, etc.) would be good examples of this kind ((2010:63).

Environment has been destroyed for building new houses, dams and factories. Purposefully caused forest fires have caused to lose millions of age forests and massive tree cuttings in rain forests etc.

We cannot claim that those causing such problems were lacking the aforementioned very well-known intelligences. They all had the seven or eight intelligences in their profiles especially, Verbal/Linguistic and Logical/Mathematical Intelligences which are highlighted throughout education systems from kindergarten to Post Doc all over the world. What was lacking was the Moral Intelligence! Nazi leaders and army chiefs had all got very good education and they were all successful in two mostly regarded intelligences. For example, during Nurnberg Trials Nazi leaders were all given IQ tests and they have all got above average scores. However, Hermann Göring requests to get the test again after becoming the third in the group! They were all “well-educated” and all had above average IQs, but caused the Holocaust!

Serbian leaders and army chiefs were again had very good educational backgrounds but caused a true human tragedy in the middle of Europe towards end of 20th century! Syrian Leader also has a very good university degree (a medical doctor) and even is educated abroad but this background is not enough to stop him torturing his citizens in 21st century! Stephen Hawking in one of his recent articles warns us on the war in Syria and argues that the place of our emotional intelligence is where our sense of collective justice is! (The Washington Post).

4. What to do with students

It is obvious that it is not possible to raise individuals with high level of virtues, respectful to basic human rights, freedom of speech, choice and belief systems, law of order and democracy by just nurturing their Linguistic, Mathematical, Spatial, etc. intelligences. Therefore, moral intelligence, as in the case of other intelligences, should be activated and taught with very well planned activities so that individuals can become more aware of their potential of moral intelligence and develop it if they have less developed level of this intelligence (Altan, 2010).

Therefore, instead of placing courses under various names (democracy and human rights, civic rights, social justice and democracy, etc.) into curricula, integrating and practicing moral intelligence activities into each and every lesson of any subject matter would serve better to prepare both more democratic citizens and more skilled and committed teachers in social justice and for a better and more democratic future.

Teaching with moral intelligence in focus is as much a matter of how we teach as of what we teach. This involves a shift from passive to active learning, from teacher to student-centered and more importantly to learning-centered classes.

Issues related to social justice and democracy can be integrated into lesson plans by focusing on a different issue each week. Some of the activity types could be listed:

- ❖ Reading about social injustice and anti-democratic implementations
- ❖ Writing about these issues
- ❖ Discussing these issues
- ❖ Learning facts and figures about these issues
- ❖ Working on possible solutions
- ❖ Working on maps and learn more about where the problem happens or happened
 - ❖ Finding and using real pictures about these issues
 - ❖ Organizing activities and tours for taking pictures related to these issues
- ❖ Drawing pictures of different issues
- ❖ Creating simulations related to the issues
- ❖ Organizing walks, demonstrations and other activities for awareness raising of the society
- ❖ Listening to music from diverse ethnicity, cultures and groups
- ❖ Singing songs of diverse ethnicity, cultures and groups
- ❖ Keeping personal diaries related to the issues
- ❖ Coming together with people facing problems
- ❖ Organizing charity campaigns for those who need help
- ❖ Cooperative group works
- ❖ Learning more about environmental problems both the society we live in and the world faces
- ❖ Learning more about the animals at the edge of extinction
- ❖ Learning about the natural resources and possible threats
- ❖ Thinking and talking about the reason of being born?
- ❖ Group discussions on our roles in the world, why people keep silence against anti-democratic issues and the reasons of why human beings kill each other.
- ❖ Watching movies related to various forms of moral issues
- ❖ Can we ignore morality?
- ❖ How can we prepare future generations with better moral behaviors and attitudes?

- ❖ What is wrong? What's right?
- ❖ International acceptability for moral issues
Students could also be:
 - ❖ Provided with opportunities to engage in significant intellectual work for awareness raising!
 - ❖ Given opportunities to build on what they bring to school with them so that they can build on prior knowledge to scaffold new learning.
 - ❖ Taught necessary skills to bridge gaps between their prior knowledge to new information.
 - ❖ given opportunities to discuss racism, inequity, ethnicity, religious, sexual and other beliefs oppression and advantage

5. Assessment

Another important point is diversifying the forms of assessment. Ultimately, assessment has to address a variety of learning outcomes. Today's 21st century or 'new' learning skills are making demands for alternative new assessment. Most standardized testing practices perpetuate inequities in the educational opportunities and do not help individuals to be open minded, reflective, creative and risk takers. Therefore, teachers should definitely diversify assessment and should not rely on standardized tests as the sole and only way to assess students' knowledge and overall success especially on the topics related to democracy and social justice.

Alternative, performance based or authentic assessments are generally used to determine what students can and cannot do, in contrast to what they do or do not know. As a consequence, alternative assessment measures applicable proficiency rather than the pure memorized knowledge. Typical examples of alternative assessments might include portfolios, cooperative project works, group discussions, observations, essays, interviews, performance tasks, exhibitions and demonstrations, journals, teacher-created tests, self and peer evaluations and other activities requiring some type of rubric.

In performance based assessments, students are usually given the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities, perform a meaningful task and/or receive feedback by a qualified person in terms of relevant and defensible criteria. In short, the purpose for using alternative assessments is to assess students' proficiency in performing complex tasks that are directly associated with learning outcomes.

5. Conclusions

The ambitions that most parents have for their children naturally include the development of important moral dispositions. Most parents want to raise children to

become persons of a certain kind, persons who possess traits that are desirable and praiseworthy, whose personalities are imbued with a strong ethical compass. (Lapsley, 2008). Adults realize that the young need moral direction. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to provide it — to pass on a moral heritage. The school has a responsibility to stand for good values and help students establish their personality around such values. Although values are relative, such an education can assert the rightness of certain universal values — such as respect, responsibility, honesty, caring, and fairness — and help students to understand, care about, and act upon these values in their lives. Therefore, such core values can and should be taught in schools. Therefore, Moral Intelligence, as in the case of other intelligences, should be given importance and be activated and taught with certain very well planned activities so that each and every individual can become more aware of their potential for Moral Intelligence and develop it if they have less developed level of this intelligence. And this process cannot be accomplished by just placing a course into the curriculum.

It will be meaningless to believe that sustainable democracy and social justice could be established and maintained by ignoring morality as it was the case in previous centuries! It is obvious that it is not possible to solve problems by just thoughts and intelligences explaining these thoughts. Since it is known that morality can be explained by feelings rather than thoughts (Hume, 1777), it is a must that human beings should put not only thought-related intelligences into action but also those related to our senses in order to solve ever growing global issues.

Moral intelligence can be the source of compassion and it is clear that individuals lacking or not having certain level of moral intelligence would be not enough to help humanity no matter how developed logical and verbal intelligence level they have! If schools are going to be successful in making significant improvement in the education of children who believe in democracy and social justice, teachers entering the profession must possess the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and strategies that will enable them to work effectively and raise children with moral values, high moral intelligence and strong believers of democracy. Therefore, education systems must be able to recruit teachers who already have these values and who will be effective in cultivating moral intelligence among students in the classroom and if teachers are to be effective and ready to meet this qualities, faculties of education must be able to produce teachers with these qualities too.

If it is not now, when? And if not teachers, who?

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