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Recognition and redefinition of theoretical challenges in religious and moral upbringing and training: force and upbringing

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ABSTRACT

Human is the result of upbringing and needs upbringing more than any other creature; therefore, the most valuable human affair is upbringing. Regarding the influence of force on upbringing whether about ourselves or others, at first, it is enough to answer this question that what the meaning of force is and whether it has middle point or extravagance and wastage. Can it have stages and levels or be mild? When can we benefit from force in upbringing? Are upbringing and force external factors or internal ones? The main purpose of present study is to answer the question that whether we can use force as an influential method in upbringing? It is clear from this question that force is recommended in some cases and refused in some others and must be applied based on the age and proper condition; therefore, attention to these points pave the way for reaching upbringing goals. Methodology of this study was qualitative and researches, papers, texts, lectures and books which relate to force were studied to answer the research question.

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1. Introduction

It can be said that upbringing needs attention more than any other subject and Islam has not ignored this important subject and it has determined programs and strategies for the guidance of mankind; it means just reaching the goal is not enough rather the way to reach the goal is equally important. First, the meaning of force and upbringing is studied in order to investigate the application of force method in upbringing and after familiarity with Islamic and moral philosophy of upbringing; force will be emphasized as a peripheral not main method of upbringing. Next section deals with the relationship between freedom and moral and offers guidelines which can substitute force. Finally, this essay ends with a conclusion.

2. Definition of upbringing

Upbringing means training, growing, teaching, policy, development, and benefaction to students and other pupils. (Dehkhoda 1994) the roots of this term in Persian are Rabi, Raba which mean superiority and growth. Therefore, this term means providing backgrounds for development. Moreover, upbringing also means refinement. Upbringing also is defined as reaching perfection by practice and gradual purification; therefore, upbringing a person means strengthening virtues and developing abilities and refining behavior in a way that can live in a specific place in a proper condition. (Saliba, 1991, p120)

Emil Durkheim believes that the behavior of older generation toward younger generation, who is untrained and raw, is called upbringing. Its purpose is to stimulate and grow some specific moral, mental and physical moods that are required because of political conditions in general and specific environment that the child belongs to. (Dorkheim, 2012, p65, 66)

3. Upbringing in Islam

The basis of upbringing in Islam is that people have the ability to learn. Thus, Islam recommends learning from birthday to death. The purpose of upbringing in Islam is vicinity to God. Human perfection is in the recognition of self and God. Both trainer and trainee are active in teaching and training. The trainees' interest and choice are respectable. Islamic methods emphasize science and practice, refuse punishments, and consider individual differences. In Islam Upbringing begins within a person. Among Islamic upbringing methods are enunciation (besharat), warning (Enzar), punishment (Tanbih). Islamic curriculum includes all useful knowledge which matches the needs of the time. (MirzaMohammadi, summer 2004, p80)

4. The prophet, the messenger of god not force

There are a lot of phrases in Quran that order the prophet that he is responsible to narrate the God's exact words not to force people to believe in God.

Among them are: « وَ كَذَّبَ بِهِ ي قَوْمَكَ وَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ قُل لَّسْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِوَكِيلٍ »

Thy people (O Mohammad) have denied it, though it is the truth. Say: I am not put in charge of you. (Al-anam, 6, 66, p135).

We have not set thee as a keeper over them, nor art thou responsible for them. (Al-anam, 6,107, p141)

(مَا جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا وَ مَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيلٍ)

Thou art not at all a warder over them. (Al-ghashiyah 88-22 P592)

(لَسْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ)

Thou (O Mohammad) art in no wise a compeller over them. (Al-Ghaf, 50, 45, P520) (مَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِجَبَّارٍ)

The duty of the messenger is only to convey the message. (Al-maidah, 5, 99-P124) (« مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ »)

Wouldst thou compel men until they are believers? (Yunes, 10, 99, P124)

(أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ)

Thou art not assigned except to make people aware. (Fater, 23 P520)

(إِنْ أَنْتَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ)

There is no compulsion in religion. (Al- Bagharah 2,256 P42). (لا إكراه في الدين)

5. Moral upbringing

It is the phenomenon of preparing background and using methods for blooming, reinforcement and creating characteristics, behavior, moral virtues and refinement or omission of immoral behavior in ourselves or others. (Hemat Benary, 2003.p9)

Whenever the purposes of this kind of upbringing are chosen in a wrong way or there are misunderstandings, deviance or mistakes in methods or the trainee is not qualified enough, damages to moral upbringing are inevitable.

The implementation of force in training moral and religious behaviors is one of these damages and challenges.

6. The meaning of force

Force: (تاج) insistence on something. (منتهى الارب) (منتهى الارب) insistence on something. (ع مص) [] relate to force. (منتهى الارب) relate to force. (تاج المصادر) reluctance the opposite of willingness. (Dehkhoda)

force somebody to do something (Amid,2010,p73) [ع]. [] اجبار-مص. ()

(اجبار) force roots from (جبر) and means force somebody to do something unwillingly; therefore, whenever trainer forces trainee to do moral deeds, there is compulsion. For example, when the teacher forces one of the students to give his/her only pencil to his/her classmate who needs it more; trainer forces the student to self sacrifice. This method which is unfortunately used by some parents and trainers is not a proper method for internalizing moral affairs in trainee. Even God has not forced human beings to accept guidance path and recommended the prophet: And if their Aversion is grievous unto thee, then if thou canst seek a way down into the earth or a ladder onto the sky that thou mayst bring onto them a portent (to convince them all) if Allah willed he could have brought them all together to the guidance so be not thou among the foolish ones. (Al-Anam,6, 35)

Imam Sadegh (peace be upon him) told his follower Omar Ibn Hanzaleh: (لا تحملوا على شيعتنا: يا عمر) Omar, don't force our followers to do whatever you do and tolerate them since all people don't have your ability; therefore, trainers should pay attention to their trainees' capacity instead of their own and perform their training activities based on that. (Hoseinkhani, 2007)

7. Force in nahjbalagheh

Upbringing means training, that is, developing internal talents that potentially exist in an object. Upbringing is true for living beings and must match the nature of the creatures. If something is to bloom, inner talents must develop naturally and mildly not by force and reluctantly.

Observing the mood of soul: in Nahjbalagheh (strenuous words), there are three places in which we find the following meanings: (the heart has a tendency, try to train hearts based on their will)

In saying 78 Imam Ali announced that God command people while they have liberty and forbid them to fear, He has ordered simple and not difficult commands and gives a lot of blessing for little good deeds. He is not overthrown by the disobedience of the people and is not obeyed by force. He is so determined in sending prophets and their holy Books and has not created the heavens and the earth in vain. (Dashti, 2004, saying 78, P 455)

8. People against external force

When can we say that a person is trained and up brought? Can we say that a person who does things by force is a trained person and does those things without force? Is the value of actions that are done by force equal to those that are done willingly and based on knowledge?

Parallel to the discussion of the influence of the environment on the person's upbringing, we can discuss upbringing as something that is applied from outside and the person achieves it. Immanuel Kant

German philosopher is among those who in spite of emphasis on human freedom and willingness in upbringing phenomenon; considers force as complementary and even necessary:

It is said that we should offer upbringing activities to children in a way that they do them willingly. It is true and right, but there are things which we must command them to do because it is useful for them throughout their life. (Naghibzadeh, 1989, P140)

It does not mean that trainer is allowed to force trainee to do moral things; therefore, we should pay attention to some points in applying force:

1. Complete familiarity of the trainer with the subject.

2. Observing moral happiness and willingness as it is mentioned in the section entitled "force and Nahjolbalagheh"

3. Observing physical strength of the trainee; as it is mentioned in holy Quran « لا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا » «Allah tasketh not a soul beyond its scope (Al-Bagharah 2, 286) Therefore, we must not force trainee to do something beyond his/her ability. On the other hand, it is not acceptable to ignore virtues and to be indifferent with the excuse of low ability of the trainee « لا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا » .

4. Avoiding severity: It is highly recommended to preach Islam kindly and mildly. (Koleiny, volume 2, P 86)

Also in the story of holy Musus and inviting Pharaoh, God said: « فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَيِّنًا لَعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَى » and speak unto him a gentle word that peradventure he may heed or fear. (Ta-Ha, 20, 44)

Otherwise, the person resists and opposes. Therefore, we shouldn't fight with people, we cannot base training on force because human stands against force till death.

«وكان الانسان اكثر شىء جدلا» but man is more than anything contentious (kahf, 54) people are very fightable and if we fight people, it will be endless; therefore, we should avoid quarrel. In upbringing, fight results in the defeat of the trainer because it is unequal fight. If a person tries to change the scene of the training to fight and introduce force as the logic of this battlefield and confronts the students or children with force, that person will be defeated because trainees are growing and developing but trainers are declining. It is clear that new generation is more capable than older one in information technologies and children are ahead of their parents in this field. It shows that parents belong to past and children belong to future and it is an unequal fight; children are growing physically and mentally and parents are declining; therefore, declaring war is unreasonable and results in the parents or trainers defeat. (Bagheri, Lecture)

9. Attention to and evaluating self as internal necessity and self construction

When a person gains knowledge, s/he is not really trained; in other words, although s/he has enough knowledge about God and religion, s/he must internally think about worshipping God and doing religious activities and it is internal upbringing that stimulate a person and change one's view toward affairs that are good for him or her. If a person considers observing religious commands and morals as one's duty, this consideration becomes internal and shifts one's behavior into good deeds. Therefore, we should make a difference and try hard to succeed. If we try hard to worship God, we will understand the sweetness of it.

In the discussion of watchfulness (that has been ignored in secular schools of thought), it means that we should treat ourselves as a partner in whom we don't trust; we should always watch ourselves as an observer.

Regarding evaluation, we should evaluate ourselves before we are evaluated in the other world. This is so important that our religious leaders stated that if a person does not evaluate oneself during the day, that person is not among our followers. First, a person should sign a contract with him/herself and design a plan. If a person does not do this, s/he cannot watch him/herself. He makes a contract with him/herself to do according to that and watch him/herself. That person evaluates him/herself once a day to see whether s/he has done according to the signed contract; whether s/he has watched him/herself. If that person has done according to the contract after that s/he must thank God and if not, there is self punishment. If there is little deviation, s/he just reprehend him/herself and if there is much deviation, that person should punish him/herself by bearing hard religious activities such as fasting, praying,... these are basic principles of Islamic moral and upbringing. (Motahari, 1994, P373)

Here force appears peripherally, internally and mildly and the person forces oneself to do what he must do.

10. An example of practical force without knowledge

In moral books, sometimes we can see scholars who put slithers in their mouth to force themselves to be silent and not to talk about sinful things, that is, they made practical force for themselves. This method is a complete example of virtue while creating practical force to avoid sin and then eluding it, is not perfection. If we do not commit sin in this way, we will avoid it by force. This kind of avoidance is at the preliminary stages of virtue and higher stages will be achieved by practice. However, the truth of virtue is something else; our soul is the same dragon that existed before and just avoids sin by force. Avoiding sin is considered perfection when there is no force and there is background for sin, but the person does not commit sin. The truth of virtue is powerful, supreme and sacred moral that keeps people from committing sin. We should try to find this truth that has value.

11. Forceful moral or moral freedom

There is much debate over the issue that whether moral limits human freedom and whether this freedom benefits or harms him/her. A lot of these discussions result from wrong interpretations of the meaning of the freedom.

Freedom and will are among the conditions of responsibility, that is, a person is responsible to do one's duty when there is no force and if there is force; responsibility will be cancelled. (Motahari, 1994, P46)

The role of will and power of human in selections and actions are so important that the existence of punishments depend on them. Therefore, people are as responsible as they have freedom and will. Attention to this point makes people active and dynamic and reduces tendency toward sin and decreases the excuse of environment, history and heredity. (Mesbahyazdi, 2002, P120)

Why do people want freedom wholeheartedly? Why must people be free? What is the role of freedom in developing soul and body? What is the philosophy of freedom?

In short, the answer to these questions is that: within human beings there are talents, qualifications and potentials that do not bloom without freedom. Since human beings seek perfection, they need freedom which is the means of reaching it. Is this freedom which develops talents and abilities without curb and conditions or it is guided and planned freedom?

Consider a gardener who prunes a tree to let it have better growth and development. That gardener may prepare a stand for the tree and fasten the trunk to it firmly to make it straight. Nobody can protest to this gardener for cutting additional branches or fastening it firmly.

It is true regarding human beings; freedom means being free in using forces in ways that guide human beings toward higher goals. Another example is traffic rules; being free in driving on small and large streets does not mean chaos in driving, and standing behind red light in streets does not limit drivers.

Basically, most of these false freedoms are a kind of slavery. A person who abuses his or her freedom and becomes addicted, in fact is a slave. Freedom along with observing moral rules gives people real freedom which makes them free from deadly desires and whims. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) stated that virtue is the key to divine blessing and makes people free from slavery (of devil) and saves people from destruction. (Nahjolbalagheh, lecture 230)

Real freedoms are differentiated from false freedoms or slavery. We must avoid abusing this sacred concept. Nobody can question moral values with the excuse that they limit human beings.

Some people believe that moral rules suppress desires which are determined by God. But it is clear that human desires are like life-giving drops of rain that fall from the sky. Undoubtedly, they are necessary; otherwise, God did not create them. However, it does not mean that we let drops of rain come together and create a destructive storm; rather reason and tact tell us to make a dam against it and make channels and streams and guide it in an organized way. Human desires are like these drops of rain that can change into a destructive storm and ruin everything if they are not guided.

We can clearly conclude that moral rules neither limit people and stop them from development nor suppress their desires, rather, they benefit from human freedom in the happiness path and lead desires to reach perfection. (Rahmati Shahreza, summer 2012, P 259)

12. Negative effects of irrelevant force

The effects of force on upbringing show themselves in different forms such as unwillingness, reluctance, hypocrisy and duplicity. It is observed that compulsory religious activities in schools and other centers such as putting on cover and taking part in public pray by force do not consider the person's understanding and insight. Since doing these compulsory activities is encouraged by trainers and teachers by giving privileges and prerogatives, the students think that they must do these activities to get those advantages and gradually they proceed toward hypocrisy and duplicity and using religion as an instrument. One of the definite principles in religious upbringing is creating religious understanding and insight so that people understand religious changes in themselves; religion is understood properly and people know what their place is in different stages of belief. People must not just have knowledge of the religion; rather they must understand it wholeheartedly. Having information and knowledge about religion without insight is not religious upbringing. If we put great importance on religious rules and offer superficial knowledge, people face weak insight and never gain deep and inner incentive to do religious commands; they think religion is just limited to these ceremonies and either they become reluctant or hypocrite. Therefore, paying attention to appearance and refining it is not religious upbringing. We should pave the way for emotional, heartily and inner absorption of religious commands. In order for an inner revolution to take place, people should have religious and moral behavior willingly and not by force. The soul of the religion and religious upbringing is based on freedom and the emphasis of religion is on gaining belief together with good deeds. Thus, force and reluctance cannot result in belief and religious upbringing. Force and reluctance have instant and often satisfactory results. Although students and trainees seem superficially proper, this can prepare the ground for deviation in religious upbringing. Religious belief and behavior must encompass the soul of the person. Basically, belief relates to the heart and soul of the human beings; therefore, any behavior which is free from right religious understandings cannot be verified by religion.

Force, habit, inclination, dictation and encouragement can be used as temporary rather than permanent tactic. True and healthy religious upbringing must combine belief and practice and create proper understanding of religious teachings to provide background for selection and will; otherwise, using the term belief for doing superficial commands without insight is not correct and God mentions this fact in the holy book and separates the truth of heartily belief from superficial terms in this way:

(قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ نُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ)

The wandering Arabs said: we believe. Say (onto them O Mohammad) ye believe not but rather say we submit for the faith hath not yet entered into your hearts. (Al-Hojorat, 49, 14)

13. Some examples of strategies for substituting force

13.1. Avoiding haste and observing the principle of gradation

Imposed upbringing is in most cases the result of a kind of haste in trainers. They want to reach the goal in a short time and lead the people toward perfection in a short time. (Bagheri, summer, 2001, P22) These trainers ignore gradual training and just think about the least labor and activities and the most gain while the phenomenon of upbringing is gradual and slow. God sent His messages gradually over the years to forbid people from drinking wine without haste in different stages. God made people familiar with the religious commands regarding wine and encourage them to obey these rules.

13.2. Explanation and revelation

As reluctance, force, imposition and order result in the unwillingness and escape of the trainee, explaining the subject and the revelation of the reason and philosophy of it result in the tendency and interest of the trainee toward moral content and the message of the upbringing. When the trainees are

not aware of the reason behind a command, they consider it as imposed activity and try to avoid it but when they are aware of its philosophy and secret they accept it without force. The subject of revelation and explanation has such a high state in upbringing activities that in the holy book, Quran God consider it as a background for creating virtue, thinking, reminding, thanking and guidance. (Hoseinkhani, 2007, P25)

13.3. Trainer as a pattern

In order to have correct training, we should avoid force and give comprehensive pattern. To reach this goal, we should select and train teachers who can absorb students. If teachers become good patterns of religious activities, the students become interested and love teachers and their lessons. In religious training, patterns can be various and be used based on addressee, place and time. God remind people of pattern in Quran and consider the prophet as a good pattern and stated: Allah verily hath shown grace to the believers by sending onto them a messenger of their own and recite on to them his revelations and cause them to grow and teach them the scripture and wisdom; although before he came to them they were in flagrant error. (Al-Emran 3,164)

Belief does not appear by taking part in class. The most constructive learning experiences are those in which we have not been successful. We should learn from our failures and we should not limit religious upbringing to teaching principles, rules and commands. If we teach religious commands by force, we do not get optimal result.

13.4. Religious upbringing based on affection

We should benefit from affection in the training process whether encouraging some actions or forbidding them. This can be done in two ways whether giving affection or refraining from it. Therefore, teachers of theology must be among the best and the kindest teachers. If we want to put religious activities in their real place, we should base our training on affection; moreover, we should be patient in this way. We cannot offer religious training in the same way that we teach mathematics, chemistry, biology and physics; rather, we should endeavor in this way, be patient and offer religious commands wholeheartedly. If training does not stem from hearth, it is done reluctantly and reluctance influences our body. We cannot say that since school is compulsory, doing religious activities are also compulsory; rather, having belief is optional and combining school lessons which are compulsory and belief which is optional requires the art of the teachers. (Cheraghcheshm, P159)

We end our study with some beautiful sayings of Haj Mohammad Esmael Dulabi (God bless him) from his book (Mesbahalhoda)

- ✓ If a person loves and follows Mohammad, Ali, Fatimah and their offspring, this affection will guide him or her.
- ✓ Affection changes people and paint them. If you love a person; your beloved changes your behavior and you become like him or her. Our religious leaders paint us with a divine color. (Tayeb, P108)
- ✓ All parts of the body and even our thought are influenced by our heart. Our heart is the king of our body. Our body follows our heart. (Tayeb, P109)
- ✓ If you want your heart to follow God, give whatever you love for God; in this way your heart goes toward God and you are with your beloved in the other world.
- ✓ A person's deeds are as valuable as his or her wisdom. The purity of the action depends on the cognition. Actions that stem from affection have more purity. (Tayeb P110)
- ✓ The first thing that God created was affection. All things are creatures but affection. (Tayeb, P111)

14. Conclusion

In the discussion of force in upbringing especially religious upbringing, it can be said that if we use force in a wrong way and use it as a basis, we create a problem and a challenge in the process of upbringing but if we use it as a peripheral and complementary method besides the other methods it is so useful. In religious training, trainee should understand the importance of the subject, and the training process should match his or her ability and it should be away from hostility and severity. In the discussion

of training and upbringing, we have self discipline which means attention to self and force self to do religious commands and it is also necessary in this field.

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