Moral Education for Junior College to Support Systematization

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Abstract Toward the development of the educational support system for the morality of adults, this paper focuses on the high-order moral actions of college students who will graduate and start working. In order to build a moral educational method for students, we have proposed a method that visualizes their developmental stages by employing L. Kohlberg’s education technique, namely, "Moral dilemma." Furthermore, we have introduced criteria to evaluate the quality of teaching materials. In order to evaluate the criteria, we developed teaching materials and conducted classes on high morality education. We conclude this paper by presenting the results of the classes and discussing the effectiveness of the criteria.

Keywords—Moral, Dilemma, Education method, educational supporting system

I. INTRODUCTION

Information ethics or the ethics of researchers are popular in our daily lives. However, documented rules or ethics cannot be applied to every situation in the real world. The idea that something will be allowed if there is no rule, regardless of the subsequent consequences, is dangerous. We need an educational method to educate adults in morality and support them to discuss both the right and the wrong even if the latter is not included in a list of rules or ethics.

It is difficult to educate adults in morality and furthermore, there is a paucity of research on the moral education of adults. This paper proposes that moral education for college students be instituted before they graduate and enter the professional world. Although one can find the term “morality” in the diploma policies of universities, there are few classes on morality in the curriculum. Furthermore, the term “morality” is not even found in curriculum policies. For example, all members of the staff at Higashichikushi Junior College, for which one of the authors works, have to teach “The founding spirit of our educational institution” in their classes and at school events. However, the educational method is inadequate and the number of hours is insufficient. Therefore, an efficient instructional design of morality and an evaluation method are needed thereof.

In this paper, the definition of moral education to which a college student must adhere is as follows: “The student him- or herself needs to understand the view of high morality and needs to argue accordingly. Society needs to recognize the high-order morality.” Two problems are prevalent in this definition. First, one needs to examine asking a college student to argue according to high morality, and second, one needs to expect that morality, which is not visible be recognized by a third party. In Section II of this paper, related work is summarized. The approach employed is outlined in Section III while the research planning is dealt with in Section IV. The results and a discussion thereof follow in Sections V. The conclusion of the paper and directions for future work are the focus of Section VI.

II. RELATED WORK

A. Moral dilemma materials for junior high school students

L. Kohlberg [1] introduced six stages of moral judgment through practical research on moral education. Moral dilemma is the moral conflict concerning the activities that are selected or not selected on the basis of moral value. As each choice has moral merits and demerits, the students cannot justify each choice immediately.

A lecturer provides a hypothetical story for the junior high school students. Through the moral discussion, each student chooses an activity. Finally, the students select the specific moral value. In Table 1, the stage of development of L. Kohlberg’s morality [1] is shown. The six stages are categorized into three levels of two stages each. Morality is developed from the first to the sixth stage.

The method of developing morality is examined by taking advantage of this technique of visualizing the development of morality. One of the novel points of this paper is that morality is raised; even if a “discussion” is not needed for improving morality, a conclusion can be reached.
III. APPROACH

In this paper, the definition of moral education of a college student is as follows: the student needs to understand the view of high morality and argue accordingly. Society needs to recognize the high-order morality. Although it was possible to have an active discussion in the previous experimental class, only low opinions of morality were exchanged. It resulted in the recognition that it is necessary to set a subject in which an argument about this failure of high moral knowledge is possible. In order for a third party to check whether the student had exercised high-order morality, we had to demonstrate the feelings associated with moral behavior. For example, it is because of deferent morality that ideas shift from noticing the garbage in a passage to gathering it up. Therefore, in the definition of this paper, the time that cannot be completed in one class but constitutes the morality exercise and the time to implement it are required. We employed Jack J. Phillips’s “The fifth level of evaluation” (see Table 2 [4]) as a reference to check that students made a plan to act morally and to determine whether they were capable of doing it.

“The fifth level of evaluation” is a know-how, which mainly visualizes the results of company training, and it is difficult to measure a high level. Although the interest of a company is strong, especially with reference to levels 4–5, companies cannot conduct research on a cause-and-effect relationship between classes and results because of the expensive thereof. However, levels 3–5 were considered in this paper and we devised “The action worksheet” (see Fig.1). As moral education takes place in a school, it is easy to discuss the cost of training. Thus, it is not limited to a business organization and all the members are students who pay almost the same tuition, and thus, it is easy to compare.

The aim of this worksheet is to become conscious of morality set up “in the next week.” “The results” are to be left blank until a certain day. Next, a student will write, “Success,” “Failure,” and “No opinion.” It is necessary for them to estimate these targets until the certain day and to calculate these targets subjectively as a percentage (%).

Table 1. Six stages of moral judgment by L. Kohlberg [1]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Preconventional</th>
<th>Conventional</th>
<th>Postconventional or principled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1: Heteronomous morality</td>
<td>Stage 2: Individualism, instrumental purpose, and exchange</td>
<td>Stage 3: Mutual interpersonal expectations, relationships, and interpersonal conformity</td>
<td>Stage 5: Social contract or utility and individual rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4: Social system and conscience</td>
<td>Stage 5: Social contract or utility and individual rights</td>
<td>Stage 6: Universal ethical principles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Research on the learning materials for information ethical dilemma of students

Research to validate the materials of a class on computer ethics was conducted [2]. Five original problems were provided in the class. The participants included approximately 2/3 incoming students at Hiroshima University. Each problem dealt with one situation in 500 to 700 characters in Japanese and had two options of approximately 200 characters each in Japanese. Every student refuted the opinion, which he or she did not choose from the viewpoint of computer ethics. The five problems were evaluated by rate of choice. At first, it was discussed from the rate of each choice whether the student felt a dilemma regarding the five teaching materials. If 90% of the subjects chose an opinion of a problem and the other 10% chose the other option, the problem was not considered a suitable problem to be discussed as a dilemma. However, when approximately half of the students chose one option and the other half the other option, the problem was regarded as suitable for the purpose. Furthermore, if one of the options was supported by at least one third of the students, the problem was accepted as a dilemma problem.

According to the analysis, which was based on the theory of the developmental stages of L. Kohlberg’s morality [3], a college student has growth from stage 4 to stage 5. The opinion expressed in part a. of each question indicated the fourth step of the development of morality, whereas part b. of each question indicated the fifth step. Therefore, the student who chose b. was arguing from the morality of a level higher than the student who chose a.

In related work, the verification method of dilemma materials of morals was shown. Morality was developed by refuting a document. However, to guide the higher order of students’ morality, the mechanism of evaluating a developmental stage is required. One of the novel points of this paper is that the moral developmental stage of the student who participated in the discussion is quantified. Furthermore, the aim was to set the evaluation standard.

Table 2. The fifth level of evaluation by Jack J. Phillips [4].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1: Reaction/ Satisfaction</th>
<th>Defines a specific level of satisfaction and reaction to the training as it is delivered to participants.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 2: Learning</td>
<td>Defines specific knowledge and skill(s) to be developed/ acquired by training participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3: Application/ Implementation</td>
<td>Defines behavior that must change as the knowledge and skills are applied in the work setting following the delivery of the training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4: Business Impact</td>
<td>Defines the specific business measures that will change or improve as a result of the application of the training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5: Return on Investment: ROI</td>
<td>Defines the specific return on investment from the implementation of the training by comparing costs with benefit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We did not instruct the students about either the standard of the three steps of evaluation or the measuring method of “%.” It was not necessary for the students to hide the sheet with ideas. They could write it without a plan. It is because of detailed instructions that students get confused. Jack J. Philips’s “fifth level of evaluation” is the technique of management by objective for a member of society, and we believed it would be difficult for students. It is important to look back on how students conduct morality exercises in society because moral education is executed by an expression of moral behavior. A teacher gave a sheet to any student who could not do it properly. We explained the relation of “The fifth level of evaluation” and “The action worksheet.” The targets to which “%” were attached were “ROI” of Level 5 and “Business Impact” of Level 4. It is because Jack J. Phillips added instances, which use “%” with the action worksheet in order to measure ROI with the feeling of the subject. The evaluation of “Success,” “Failure,” and “No opinion” showed the “Application/Implementation” of Level 3. This paper was completed in the “career improvement exercise” of 21 second graders of Higashichikushi Junior College.

IV. RESEARCH PLANNING

L. Kohlberg insisted [1] “He respects a child’s autonomy” regarding the justification of the moral development theory approach. Therefore, the teacher should be careful not to take infusion-ism by forcing students to do something (Fig. 2).

Point 1 is required so as not to suggest any answers. It reduces the threat of expecting good results and writing incorrect answers. Point 2 depicts heightened morality; high-order morality is needed in society, and required by education. It is necessary for students to become interested so as to become conscious of morality. Point 3 is required in order to understand the developmental stage of morality profoundly. We are of the opinion that it becomes easy to imagine how to write answers and how to think about problems because students look at examples. Point 4 is needed for students to become centered. It is the secondary purpose of a deep understanding of high-order morality, and thus, examples of such are read. Like the look of a salesperson makes some shopping difficultly, so does a teacher’s look worry students. Point 5 is required in order to promote students’ deep understanding of a lesson, and prevent students from interfering with other students. The college student is asked for the average value of moral development in stage four during this lesson. Consciousness and an idea decided on by students talking about this lesson was also suggested by L. Kohlberg [1]. Therefore, it is because it is more desirable to remove an energetic student’s opinion from this lesson as nothing but a noise. Point 6 is of importance in order to focus on one problem subject in a class. Although described in Point 5, it is one of the techniques of improving morality to talk with others about a subject and hear others’ opinions. It is meaningless if another subject is being discussed other than the one being tackled. Point 7 is called for in order to form the plan of action of high-order morality. If the talk of an action plan is discussed while still tackling the subject (Point 6), we do not think that students will be focused. Research has shown it is necessary to prepare two or more subjects in order to reduce the risk of the moral dilemma not occurring. It is difficult to initiate a dilemma very often. The following procedures were conducted in the class.

1. Distribution of an action plan sheet, a blank sheet of paper, the teaching materials for the six stages of moral judgment by L. Kohlberg and the moral dilemma subject of approximately 500 to 700 characters in Japanese.

2. How to advance the study was introduced. Students read the subject of “moral dilemma” silently, select or not select were chosen, and the reasons for their choices were considered. Moral Development was one of the reasons for judgment, and the teacher explained the stage easily.

3. The teacher wrote an example of a counterargument of other teaching materials of “the moral dilemmas” on the board. The teacher explained how to decide the level of moral development from these texts, and accordingly, the students had a deep understanding of high-order morality.

4. The teacher explained how to write the answer of the subject text. The students read the subject silently and decided which opinion of two choices to approve. The students wrote the counterargument in about 200 characters in Japanese on paper in which they explained why they had not opted for the choice not selected.
5. While students tackled a subject, the teacher wrote a continuation of the explanation of examples on a board. The teacher advised students who had selected a different choice; however, their arguments were permitted.

6. The teacher encouraged a group of 3–4 students who had the same opinion or who sat near one another to have a discussion for about 15 minutes on improving morality [1]. However, the students hardly had a discussion, but were heard gossiping.

7. After 15 minutes, the teacher instructed students who had changed their ideas to add them to their answers. We were of the opinion that discussions in small groups would be more fruitful and practical than a class discussion.

8. Once all the members had finished one subject, the next was discussed.

9. When a discussion on all the subjects was finished, an action worksheet was filled in on each subject. We decided to check the results of the action a week later for two reasons. Firstly, we would be able to use school hours one week later and secondly, we decided that it was difficult for students to remember targets after long periods. As students were conscious of morality, the teacher referred to the action worksheet so that the contents thereof could be judged by the students on the date.

10. Finally, the teacher collected the papers on which they had written and the action worksheets.

The opinion which shows the text of subject 1, which was actually used by the class as a concrete example, and each of the choices follows.

**Problem 1. “The student who gets crosswise of a class.”**

Problem 1 concerns a lesson in the junior college, which focuses on the knowledge that a certain qualification is advantageous to job-hunting activities. It is not a unit required for graduation (we have a unit accepted as an elective subject, of course). However, it is a valuable skill even if it has not been decided how the qualification is to be used in society. It is doubtful whether all the students take studying seriously.

There are four students who always make a noise. They do not care even though the teacher shows much concern during the lesson. They are noisy and what they speak about is unrelated to the lesson, for example, they speak about fashion, sweets, and boyfriends. They feel free to lie down on the desk or turn to friends behind, without acknowledging the teacher. Although a lecture will probably not be heard with the idle talk about which they speak in a loud voice, it is a most serious problem that a lesson is interrupted, especially for the teacher who is most concerned about her four students, and when a curriculum does not progress as planned. It is also troublesome for the students who want to obtain a qualification. They cannot receive authorization for a unit if they have not attended the class a sufficient number of times, but four students attend the lesson each time, and play. Should these students, a) be marked present or b) not present during the lessons?

The reason for “Problem 1. a. The students should be marked present.”

Because four students who are making a noise cannot understand the lesson, they may be bored. If a teacher refuses to teach students because they are noisy, we may forfeit the opportunity to ask the teacher when we have some questions. Although the lesson is taught properly, there may be students who cannot understand the lesson. After measuring the degree of the students’ comprehension, a curriculum aimed at the level of all the attending students should be developed, and the school should investigate what is wrong and what can be done.

The reason for “Problem 1. b. The students should not be marked present.”

When improvement in the ratio of successful applicants who acquire qualifications is considered, merits are important to a school and students. We should eliminate obstructing lessons. If those students, who have a high attendance rate, do not obtain an important qualification, the students themselves will group and this will contribute to lowering the reputation of the school and also causes trouble for the younger members and elders.

If the student who has a friendship with the four students is encouraged to talk, he or she may not be able to refuse. This idle talking may discourage serious students from learning, and also have a negative influence on their academic achievements. We think that students who take lessons seriously should be grouped together.

V. RESULTS

**A. Validity check for the contents of moral dilemma materials**

It was decided by a student avoiding selection whether the teaching materials were able to develop morality. The standard was learned from previous research and was based on both of the choices that had the support of 30% or more. In Table 3, the teaching materials of the morals dilemma class as well as the number of those who applied and a percentage are displayed.

Only the “Problem 1” on January 27, 2017 could be used as part of the teaching material. As the absentee and invalid replies are excluded, the sum total of replies is different.

“Problem 3” on December 16, 2016 was taken from L. Kohlberg’s teaching materials. “Problem 4” on January 13, 2017 used the teaching materials, which “The study group for moral development” had created [5]. “Problem 1 and 2” are the original problems of this paper. From the above result, we can verify the results of the class concerning “Problem 1.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The name of material</th>
<th>The number of those in agreement and percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem 1. “The student who...”</td>
<td>a. 11 (68.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. The validation of the moral dilemma materials
gets crosswise of a class.”

Problem 2. “An overflowing trash box.”

Problem 3. “Heinz’s dilemma.”

Problem 4. “Stork’s cradle.”

B. The results of the moral dilemma class

In Table 4, the results of Problem 1 are displayed. “The student who gets crosswise of a class.” We judged the student’s opinion by the standard of L. Kohlberg’s developmental stage.

In Fig.3 and Fig.4, the distribution of the moral stages is depicted. Although the opinions (a. and b.) were meant for stages 4 and 5, a lower level (stage 3) was evident in the replies. However, regarding the average value, both of the choices were approximately the fourth step of the development of morality. The development from the fourth step to the 5th step was required for college students, and it was met.

One week after finishing the above class, the student wrote these records in an action plan worksheet.

Table 4. The result of Problem 1. “The student who get crosswise of a class.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>The number of those in agreement and percentage</th>
<th>The average of the developmental stage of morality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. It may be present.</td>
<td>11 (68.8%)</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. It is not made present.</td>
<td>5 (31.3%)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig.3. The distribution of the students who chose “a. It may be present.”

Fig.4. The distribution of the students who chose “b. It is not made present.”

Fig.5 shows the total of “In the next week.”

The three step evaluation of “Success,” “Failure,” and “No opinion” is summarized in the figure. In Fig. 6, the target degree of achievement by means of self-evaluation is depicted. In the number of effective replies, “success” exceeded 60%. It may be understood that students have the consciousness to practice morality in society.

Fig.5. 3-point scale of goal achievement

Fig.6. Percentage of goal achievement discussion

When the definition of the moral education of a college student was outlined in this paper, there were two problems with the definition, which needed to be resolved; this was achieved in this paper. The first problem was that the college student who created value argued according to high morality. The second was that morality was not visibly recognized by a third party. “Special subject morality” [6] urges the need for an argument; L. Kohlberg stated that an argument develops morality. However, an active argument is so difficult that it becomes outdated. In two classes carried out with college
students on December 16, 2016 and January 13, 2017 the argument of the whole class did not materialize. We can propose the method of losing the hurdle to have an active discussion. Morality can be developed while refuting the opinion of high-order morality in a document, if one can reach a determination about the adequacy of one’s teaching materials.

In the second problem, to measure the development of morality, it is broadly accepted to compare the same before and after class. However, as the first problem, “high-order morality argument,” was not completed effectively, the development of morality was seen in the class. In this paper, we created a visualization of the development stage of the morality that is desired for a college student. Furthermore, it aims at managing the schedule and the actual achievement of high-order morality in society.

The students were evaluated that evaluation did not get affected regardless of the results. It was presupposed that teaching materials may be freely utilized as their career building. As the student who did not answer let it pass, the possibility of having drawn the answer intentionally was low. The reliability of these results is described. As Table 3 shows, they are counted as invalid answers by students attending a class. It is an object from which the no effect answer of those who attended the class insincerely is excluded rather than those who cannot understand moral development. Even if a student who does not think that morality is useful receives a class insincerely, there is no penalty in the results. On the other hand, the answer was given by the student with an interest in moral education. Moreover, the teacher grades the contents of free description to the stage of moral development by employing L. Kohlberg's index. In order for a student to give a false opinion, which shows high-order morality development, it would be necessary to study L. Kohlberg deeply. It is not believed that insincere students would be able to do it. Although all the papers were read, there was nothing from which to copy the contents. If students cannot judge at all whether it is high-order morality, can you expect a high evaluation and expect an evaluation that does not influence results? Therefore, the reliability of collected data is high and the collection method is also acceptable.

Furthermore, as the standard of teaching materials of dilemma was produced as a result of high-order morality, teaching materials can also be made also from whomever. Moreover, the technique in which an active discussion takes place is also unnecessary. However, training that enhances imagination to allow a student to feel a dilemma remains important.

VI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Regarding internal validity, it is unknown whether the students understood the stages of the development of morality sufficiently. However, students found it difficult to have an opinion on low-order morality. It is because morality progressed by refuting an opinion on high-order morality, or reading, hearing and carrying out an example of high-order morality. It was at a time when the example of a high-order morality opinion was not sought. The experiment which did not carry out example of a high-order morality opinion was conducted. When the influential student expressed an opinion on low-order morality, the rest of the students agreed and the experiment failed. Even if the student did not fully understand high-order morality, when maintaining the viewpoint of high-order morality, it turned out to be the basis of a choice, which one should take, but does not happen. Moreover, debating about morality was difficult to carry out in order for the playful college student to make a noise. However, the technique of the counterargument to a subject sentence also prevented the obstacle of the insincere student. It seems that students concentrated on the subject because the situation of allowing a free discussion did not happen.

Regarding external validity, students expressed the possibility of having expressed a false opinion. As stated previously with reference to internal validity, it is hard to consider the stage of moral development that all the students understand sufficiently. Some excellent students were also unknown. If it is necessary to tell a lie for students, they would understand high-order morality and that would be regarded as low-order morality. It is more difficult for the student who cannot understand the stage of moral development to express false opinions from opinions that are more acceptable.

Next, if the same education is taught to a member of society, it is necessary to consider whether the same result would be obtained. We think that the rate of 30% should determine the validity of teaching materials; in other words, if regarding dilemma, the result of select or not select exceeded 30%. However, it is a problem to determine the validity of teaching materials. One needs to ask whether the dilemma will be the same for everyone regardless of age and occupation. It was difficult to impress the dilemma on the same candidate so the same could be assumed for the experimental class. It is possible that the experimental group that has a sense of values will expect the same from any member of society. One may ask what is necessary to make a group feel a dilemma for a particular “object” to the same extent as the values of the particular “object.” However, a member of society must be able to argue about the morality of the “object.” We have conducted research on moral education for approximately 20 years. We aim to externalize subjective evaluation on moral education. We also wish to investigate the observation of students required to create teaching materials, which lead to the feeling of a dilemma. We also think that the student who finds his or her place in society, will want to know how it changed.

References


