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**PATTERNS AND MORAL VALUES PROMOTED THROUGH
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

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Abstract

Throughout history, human societies have been defined and led based on principles, norms and laws that had been taken or that stemmed from objective realities. Quite often, Christian morality generated moral principles and values. Thus, the Christian Decalogue represented an ethical and moral code that was used both to maintain domination over certain social classes and for the phenomenon of emancipation, consolidation of democratic structures. Our study aims to investigate the existence of a possible relationship between the 10 commandments in the Bible and contemporary educational practices. Empirical research based on a questionnaire highlighted a worrying behaviour manifested by a large number of students with disruptive accents: students are selfish, indifferent, preferring to maintain their privileges at any risk. Despite the fact that love is the highest value promoted by religious education, our study has highlighted the fact that we cannot talk about the emergence of educational models in the biblical decalogue, and especially about their subsequent reflection in the moral behaviour of the students. Although human values are consistent with Christian moral values, our study has not revealed dependence on the use of educational patterns in school practice with knowledge, the acquisition of elements promoted by Christian morals.

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1. Introduction

If initially education was accomplished through literature and all kinds of art, the models being taken from the philosophical writings of the epoch, nowadays we witness a paucity of educational models, whereas the lack of value has become something natural. The discovery of beauty in the technological era is not necessarily a matter of line, shape, colour, sound, but it depends on the time unit in which it is being sent, namely where information is shared. We expect the good and the bad to be differentiated based on a natural, ancestral criterion, and not at all an infusion of the two dimensions. Like Socrates, today's educator will produce learning only when he learns in relation to the others and the environment by positioning himself inside of them.

2. Problem Statement

Moral education occurs after a process of internalization of principles, norms and moral values, moral conscience being the trigger of desirable behaviors. Consequently, "the moral shaping of the human personality is the result of the interrelation between social determination, represented by social moral requirements, and personal self-determination, represented by internal, subjective factors in this process" (Albulescu, 2008, p.59). In shaping the moral values, the main indicators identified in expert studies were: cognitive interests, the humanist orientation of the individual, self-knowledge, improvement and moral self-control, knowing the moral values through public and professional activities, interest in spiritual activities, the culture of one's own country, understanding the role in shaping the moral conscience of the young generation (Mikhaylovna, 2017). In the effort of developing educational practices to overcome the shortages caused by moral and character crises that occur both at individual and collective level, from secondary school institutions to higher education, Suherman (2018) suggests the implementation of values that build character by integrating physical education in the totality of learning activities. Other authors consider that, when educational activities are organized during the initial stage of education, it is very useful to use active methods of dialogue-based interaction. They suggest an ethical-cultural enlightenment system, whose methodological base is the differentiated interpretation of the specific of internal moral culture and the teachers' a Moral values such as: truth, justice, honesty and fairness, love, courage, trust, forgiveness, respect have been and still are desirable in all societies (Dulamă & Ilovan, 2017; Ilovan et al., 2018). Religious education promotes such values by illustrating them with models and/or biblical parables (The Bible Scripture, 2001); Examples of educational models/parables: the mode of the Good Samaritan; generosity: "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving" (Acts 20:35); love and tolerance: "if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing....love ...keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice, but rejoices whenever the truth comes out. Love never gives up, never loses faith."(1 Corinthians 13:2-4-7); forgiveness: "make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you" (Colossians 3:13). Religious education aims not only to shape, but also to transform the young man. Consequently, the teachings of the Apostolic Fathers, especially the Cappadocian Fathers- Saint Basil the Great and Saint John Chrysostom, show us that true education aims to cultivate the soul, namely the virtues. Moreover, Saint John Chrysostom's pedagogical conception is structured around two ideas: the child needs not be prepared for an earthly life, but for eternal life, in the Hereafter; the educational act has a sacred function, of purification and spiritual

enlightenment. Saint John considers it is not pedagogical to educate the child in such a way that he smothers and refuses fury; we must teach them how to manage and channel anger in a creative way; to practice anger management so that he could receive a certain disappointment or futility of his wishes without fury or anger (Chrysostom, 2012). An accurate management of feelings ensures our mental comfort and generates the action directions that are necessary for personal development. Religious education is not only responsible for the formation of moral behavior in students, but also other types of education, such as intellectual, aesthetic, physical and cultural education (Manea, 2014).

3. Research Questions

The question, ie the concern underlying the investigative approach, is the existence of a possible relationship between the 10 commandments in the Bible and the contemporary educational practice..

4. Purpose of the Study

Based on the field investigation we intended to investigate the degree to which moral values are found in educational practice, identified to some of the elements of the biblical Decalogue or whether they represent emergences of these values, namely: 1. You shall have no other gods before Me; 2. You shall not make idols; 3. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain; 4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy; 5. Honor your father and your mother; 6. You shall not murder; 7. You shall not commit adultery; 8. You shall not steal; 9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor, 10. You shall not covet. Please replace this text with context of your paper.

5. Research Methods

A questionnaire was applied, with the purpose of measuring the opinion of professionals regarding the investigated issue. The questionnaire we elaborated was made of 10 items with closed questions. The survey was applied on a sample of 126 subjects with initial training or preparing for a teaching career.

6. Findings

Given the space allocated to the current article we will present and analyze 5 items of the applied questionnaire. The first item takes inventory of the values that are promoted especially through religious education (Table 1).

Table 01. Values promoted through religious education

<i>Values promoted through religious education</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
honesty	17	13.49%
altruism	16	12.69%
respect	32	25.39%
courage	7	5.55%
love	43	34.12%
truth	11	8.73%

The data presented above indicate that *love* is the moral value that is especially promoted by religious education (34.12%). The explanation for this is natural and in accordance to the religious dogmas, where love stands as the essence of divine creation. Nearly a quarter of respondents, namely 25, 39%, believe that *respect* is a moral value that is promoted/supported by religious education. We reckon that the promotion of this value, which originates in the biblical code (the 10 commandments), is natural. We would have expected *honesty and altruism* to be highly promoted by religious education, and not only in a percentage of 13.49%, namely, 12.69%, considering the fact that we always find them mentioned in the religious dogmas. Values such as *truth, courage* are promoted even in a less percentage, under 10%. We believe these values are of utmost importance in shaping the moral character of the student, and it is good that religious education promotes them. The registered data for the item of the questionnaire that allowed us to identify the educational model as originating in the Ten Commandments are in Table 2.

Table 02. Educational models emerging from the biblical Decalogue

<i>Educational models emerging from the biblical Decalogue</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Unconditional forgiveness	11	8.73%
Acceptance of the individual, but not of his behavior	3	2.38%
Respect between generations	21	16.66%
Justice and truth	15	11.90%
Tolerance and altruism	76	60.31%

The data analysis indicates there is confusion or lack of knowledge of the meaning for each element in the biblical Decalogue, as *tolerance and altruism* is the behavioral model that bears the highest score (60.31%), while *respect between generations* is an emerging mode from the Decalogue only for 16.66%. The expectation was that *respect between generations* represents the behavioral model identified by the great majority of respondents as originating in the biblical Decalogue, according to the 5th commandment, which explicitly states: “Honor your father and your mother: that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God giveth you.” The fact that other behaviors such as: justice and truth (11.90%), unconditional forgiveness (8.73%), acceptance of the individual but not of his behavior (2.38%) are indicated to a higher or smaller percentage to be stemming from the biblical Decalogue may be explained in light of the global perception of the biblical content focused on behavior/moral models that are explicit or implicit.

Another item of the questionnaire regards the set of rules in the Internal regulations of the school/class.

Table 03. Prevalence of rules at the level of internal regulations

<i>Rules from the School/Class Internal regulations</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
It is forbidden to take an object that does not belong to you	31	24.60%
Students show teachers respect	6	4.76%
We are honest to one another	53	42.06%
We are fair to ourselves and those around us in all circumstances	36	28.57%

According to the data presented in Table 3 we notice a high prevalence-42.06%-of the rule regarding *honesty*(we are honest to one another). We reckon the presence of this rule is a positive element, given that the contemporary man has social obligations, interaction and interdependence duties with his kin. Building relations based on trust is essential, even more so as lies destroy these relations and prevent progress of social life. Other values such as *correctness*(we are fair to ourselves and those around us in all circumstances) or *integrity* (It is forbidden to take an object that does not belong to you) are also found in the Internal regulations as 28.57%, namely 24.60%, while *respect*(Students show teachers respect) is under a very low score (4.76%). This situation calls for attention in drafting the Internal regulations and inserting norms and values in it, especially since we are facing the problem of losing a major value in youth' behavior-the lack of respect towards the other.

Table 04.indicates the answers regarding the presence of certain moral behaviors in educational practice.

Table 04. Contemporary educational practices

<i>Contemporary educational practices</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Give help and you shall receive help!	85	67.46%
Ask, and it shall be given to you!	28	22.22%
Evil is punished with evil, and good with good!	2	1.58%
One good turn deserves another!	11	8.73%

Therefore, the most popular behavior in educational practice as indicated by respondents (67.46%) is the one regarding *altruism, generosity, goodwill* (Give help and you shall receive help!). This situation is rejoicing, especially since it strengthens the ethical and moral behavior expected to be seen at the level of a democratic society. A secondary position, with a rank of 22.22%, is held by *faith/trust* (Ask, and it shall be given to you!), which may be explained through the encouragement to express one's needs and necessities explicitly and sometimes even imperatively by each person. Educational practices that require the treatment of the individual according to his/her behavior are found to a lesser degree (One good turn deserves another!: 8.73%; while Evil is punished with evil, and good with good!: 1.58%), which may be explained easily through a reduced understanding or practice of education from the perspective of the biblical "an eye for an eye", namely the effect, boomerang law. Another item of the questionnaire reveals the students' moral behavior, the data being indicated in Table 5.

Table 05. Moral behaviors of nowadays students

<i>Behaviors characterizing the nowadays student</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Respect for parents, teachers, kin, nature, objects and things	2	1.58%
Indifference and egoism	24	19.04%
Suspicion and envy	1	0.79%
Mythomania	1	0.79%
Deceit and stealing	6	4.76%
Defending self-interest at any cost	92	73.01%

The data analysis indicates that *defending self-interest at any cost* is the assimilated behavior by 73.01% of nowadays students in the view of our respondents. The second behavior also poses great concern, namely *indifference and egoism*, considering the fact that the group of surveyed students knows the educational particularity from the perspective of their profession, and therefore that data allow us to trust them. Even if other unwelcome behaviors such as *deceit and stealing, suspicion and envy, mythomania* have very low values (4.76%, 0.79%), we cannot say the same about the low rate of only 1.58%, corresponding to the *respect for parents, teachers, kin, nature, objects, things*. It is obvious that regarding moral values offered at educational level, these failed to produce positive effects in the students' behavior. *Egoism* is a non value that must be replaced by *altruism and reciprocal respect*.

7. Conclusion

As a result of reviewing the moral values, educational models that are provided in the contemporary Romanian educational system and observable moral behaviors of students we may refer to the following conclusions: We cannot say that the offered educational models, even if they are related to values stated in the biblical Decalogue (honesty, respect), genuinely emerge from the biblical model; Love stands for the moral value that religious education promotes in particular; Even though contemporary educational practices emphasize the promotion of values such as tolerance, generosity, goodwill, students' behavior indicates that these have not been assimilated by them, and we may easily find some undesirable aspects in students nowadays, such as: defending self-interest at any cost, indifference and egoism; Regarding moral behaviour, we reckon there has been an inversion of values, which led to the building of disruptive behaviors (students are egoistical, indifference; they would rather keep the privileges regardless the others). It is necessary both to identify new sources of inspiration in displaying essential and universal values and to adopt innovative strategies in building and knowing moral values and norms, in shaping ethical and moral behaviors.

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