

A Study of Nel Noddings Theory with Special Reference to Life, Work and the Ethics of Care

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Abstract

Nel Noddings has a crucial contribution to our gratitude for education. Specially, her studies of the ethics of care and their relationship to schooling, welfare, and to learning and teaching within families and local communities came at an especially apposite moment. Nel Nodding has faith in the students that learn the skill and knowledge necessary to help them to navigate the world around them, while consecutively caring for children, the elderly and the environment. Hence, the present study emphasised on Nel Noddings theory with special reference to life, work and the ethics of care.

KEYWORDS: Nel Nodding, caring, Life, Work and Ethics of Care

Introduction

Nel Noddings was an American Feminist, Educationist and Philosopher, is well known worldwide for the contribution to the educational theory, philosophy of education and ethics of care. Nel Noddings was born on 13th January, 1929 in the United States and she has worked in most of the aspects of teaching 17 years in primary school and high school where she taught Mathematics. She received her Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Physical Science from Montclair State College in New Jersey, USA and master's degree in Mathematics from Rutgers University and she has completed Ph.D. in Education from Stanford University. In Stanford University she has worked as a professor and the dean of the University. She established some of the important roles of educational development and worked for the improvement of education. Her future venture creates her work toward an academician in the fields of theory of education, ethics and philosophy of education. Noddings was hailed with her crucial work on ethics of care. Nel Noddings thrice (1981, 1982 and 1997) awarded for her teaching excellence. Noddings after retirement, she joined Columbia University and also chaired the presidential position of the John Dewey Society and the Philosophy of Education Society.

Works

Nel Noddings published many books and articles. Her first sole-authored book is *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* (1984). The next publication she was accompanied by Paul J. Shore in 1984 and authored the *Inner Eye: Intuition in Education*. Apart from these she has many publications works those are-

- Philosophy of education (1965)
- Women and Evil (1989)
- Educating for Intelligent Belief or Unbelief (1994)
- Educating Moral People: A Caring Alternative to Character Education (2002)
- Happiness and Education (2009)
- Peace Education: How We Come to Love and Hate War (2011)
- Education and Democracy in 21st Century (2013)

Objectives of the Study

1. To study educational theories of Nel Noddings' life and work.
2. To study the Nel Noddings contribution in terms of ethics of care.

Methodology

The investigator in this paper had chosen a philosophical topic, "A study of Nel Noddings theory with special reference to life, work and the ethics of care", so researchers have employed the philosophical method and the primary and secondary data related to Nel Noddings. In this study philosophical in the sense that ideas of Nel Noddings were systematised and critically evaluated. The primary data were collected from the writings and correspondence of original drafts of speech, articles, autobiographical and addressees of Nel Noddings. Secondary sources were collected from the journals and the research report on Nel Noddings.

Major steps taken by the investigator to formulate the study

The researcher began the justification of the study after identifying the theme that is "A study of Nel Noddings theory with special reference to life, work and the ethics of care. The researcher data collected from various journals, books, research reports through the internet, library work and after gathering the data the researchers were logically organised the data. Focusing on the theme the researcher studied and interpreted the data in a specific context. The researcher focuses on maintaining logical sequences for reporting the results of the study so that proper approaches were extended.

The Ethics of Care of Nel Noddings

Ethics of care implies that there is moral significance in the fundamental elements of relationship and dependencies in human life. Ethics of care seeks to maintain relationships by promoting the well-being of caregivers and care receivers.

Nel Noddings contends that caring should be a foundation for ethical decision-making. Care makes the relationship more fundamental than the individual. While men and laddies are guided by an ethic of care, 'natural' caring can have a big basis in experience. A state of care comes into existence when one is in a state of anxiety or concern toward a thing or person. Care finds its

perspective in the practice and form of relations between the caregiver and care for.

In the theory of Nell Noddings the ethic of care has been distinguished into two- one is natural care and another is ethical care. She suggests that morality is an 'active virtue' that requires two feelings. One of the feelings is a natural feeling that flows without any effort. This can be the feeling that a mother has for her child. The second feeling emanates from our memories of moments in our life when we were cared for. Thus, the natural caring sentiment becomes the basis of the second ethical feeling 'I Must'.

And she also discusses the relationship between 'the one caring' and 'the care for' is more basic for care than the individual. To establish caring relations the 'one caring' must exhibit 'engrossment' and 'motivational displacement' and the 'cared for' must respond. Engrossment here refers to a deep understanding of what the other person wants. It goes beyond empathy or any kind of action that the one caring will take for the one who is cared for. Motivational displacement takes the engrossment to the next level and it enables the person to act in accordance with the needs of the other.

Components of Care Perspective

Nel Nodding discusses four key components of nurturing the ethical ideal. They are- Modelling, Dialogue, Practice and Conformation.

Modelling

To be a good teacher, modelling is very important, if we really want the growth of students. Modelling in the sense it does not give the students a textbook to learn about care. But teachers have to demonstrate in or out of the classroom in act with them in small, small activities about caring (Nodding 1998: 190).

Dialogue

Dialogue is one of the important components of caring for the teachers, caring will not be fruitful without the communication with another peer. To demonstrate caring to another person or to make it feels about caring; dialogue is must. The dialogue can be related to God, politics, sex, killing and loving etc. She states that in the present scenario, values are not being discussed in the schools leaving them in the religious organisation and at home. School is the crucial place where those issues should be part of dialogue critically.

Noddings states that the dialogue should take place in teaching of subject matter as well. According to her the teachers should listen and take note of his or her students and also respond to them. Teachers should give freedom to take part in the discussion and the students may act in the subject matter dialogue as 'Thou' and then respond. According to Nodding the purpose of dialogue is to interact with others and understand the other.

Practice

In this component the teacher must put practice in students first about the caring starting small act from the home, to the classroom like showing the students sharing their tiffin, when someone tiffin is empty at that moment and to help someone, when the person is able to deal with topic or understand at the moment to help out the person. Nel Noddings (1998: 191) argues that the experiences wherein we immerse ourselves have a tendency to provide a mentality.' If we want to create people such behaviour who will take care of another, then it is useful to provide students exercise in caring and thinking of that exercise'. The practice approach argues through cooperative learning and also emphasises that students acquire better experience in groups than individually. She also argues that the whole curriculum must be revisited to create it more based on experiential learning and engaging students.

Confirmation

Care the teacher must demonstrate the student in such a way that the students may see goodness in another person and the teacher must also develop the feeling or sense to the students the act of encouraging to the another person. The principal challenge in confirming others is available in case of evaluation. The instructor is torn among reporting in keeping with hooked up requirements and being concerned with the mindset toward students. To solve the struggle the instructor can search for different appliances to improve and encourage learning.

Conclusion

In the light of discussion can see that Nel Noddings developed crucial roles and a big contribution to educational improvement. According to her, the students should have a free environment and opportunities to explore experience. The teacher should create a conducive environment for practising care. Nel Noddings argues that "aim should be encouraged in the process of growth of competent, caring, loving and lovable individuals. Noddings theory about the 'ethics of care' is frequently considered as 'relational ethics'. She views that caring is rooted in 'receptivity, responsiveness and relatedness' and it is frequently a fundamental, organised and desired approach to ethics (Caring 1984, p.2). Therefore, her ethic of care plays crucial roles in teaching of subject matter as well.

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