



Monograph: August 2012

THE COMPULSORY IMPARTING OF MORAL EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS BILL, 2012

Bill number 3 of 2012; Presented in the Parliament on 27th April 2012

The background: need for such a bill

Bill Objectives

Bill summary and analysis

- Coverage
- Structure - Advisory Councils
- Structure - Moral Education Teachers
- Financial implication
- Means and ends

Conclusion

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- As mentioned in the Bill, the country is facing widespread challenges with respect to moral degeneration of the society.
- The proposed bill mentions, *“We are losing our great values with the result that we tend to become hypocrite”*.
- It further states *“It is reflected in our day-to-day brawls between teachers and students, disrespect to elders and cases of abandonment of old-aged parents by their own off-springs”*.
- Hence, it is purported that such a bill, when enacted to become a law, will raise the moral standards of our society in times to come.

Eduvisors Comment:

- While we cannot agree more on the need to lift the moral standards of our society and the need to equip the young populace of our society with the right inputs, we do not believe that enacting a law for *“compulsory imparting of moral education”* will address the objective.

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▪ The primary objective of the proposed bill is to provide for compulsory imparting of moral education in educational institutions up to secondary level in the country. Further, the bill assumes that preparing a conducive atmosphere to learn moral values will have salutary effect on minds of school going children and when they grow mature they will be able to easily distinguish between the right and the wrong.

Eduvisors Comment

▪ The problem identified (of moral degeneration of the society) is not only genuine and relevant but also critical and must be addressed on priority. However, solving the problem through enactment of a law on compulsory imparting of moral education is not the right approach.

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▪ The bill proposes that the geographical coverage of the act shall be entire country. In terms of the classes, the bill proposes to cover all educational institutions up to secondary level. However, the bill mentions that minority institutions will be covered if the management of any institution conveys willingness to impart moral education.

Eduvisors Comment

▪ Coverage only to secondary level appears logical as various studies have indicated that the value system is firmed-up in early stage of one's life and it is harder to change as the child grows from teenage into adolescence. However, making the imparting of moral education voluntary for minority institutions is inexplicable and gives an inappropriate sense that moral education is not really essential.

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▪ The bill proposes that moral education teachers in adequate numbers be hired and that Advisory Councils be formed in each district, which will include persons with specialized knowledge of moral principles, values and experience of teaching moral education. The Advisory Council will be mandated to:

- Take steps to encourage media, non-Governmental organizations and other agencies in providing moral education in educational institutions; and
- Coordinate with the appropriate Government and educational institutions with a view to ensuring effective implementation of the provisions of the Act.

Eduvisors Comment

▪ Creating the Advisory Council related structure that will encourage media, NGOs and other agencies in providing moral education is unnecessary. Also, making the Advisory Council responsible for effective implementation appears to be a wasteful expenditure as effective implementation can be done with the existing resources. If required, the option of District Education Officers to take up the responsibility of implementation of the Act, as an additional responsibility, should be considered.

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- The bill proposes Advisory Council in each district. Also, the Bill mentions that adequate number of teachers will be required to be hired for the classes upto secondary level.

Eduvisors Comment

- Teacher availability for various subjects, specially in primary and secondary levels is an enormous challenge. Getting teachers specializing in moral education in adequate numbers looks like a gargantuan task for every school. We would recommend revisiting the assumption of hiring subject specific teachers. Instead, the bill may consider providing moral education training to all the existing teachers. In any case, moral education is a topic which has to be not limited to certain number of periods/sessions - it is an all pervasive topic cutting across the boundaries of specializations. Hence, all the existing teaching staff of each school is recommended to become a part of the moral education curriculum after undergoing certain moral education training modules.

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- The financial memorandum of the proposed bill states that Rs 500 crores will be required as one time expense and Rs 500 crores will be required on annual basis as recurring expense for appointment of teachers and establishment and running for Advisory Councils.

Eduvisors Comment

- It appears that the amount of recurring expense has not been worked out in detail and needs a detailed working. With the estimate of Rs 500 crores, the amount of money allocated per student (upto secondary level) comes out to be less than Rs 30 per annum. Even if one teacher is able to teach moral education to 500 children in one year (this itself is a huge number), the total amount allocated will come to Rs 15,000, which is not even one month's salary for the teacher (considering 6th pay commission salary). We believe that the real amount of recurring expense will be many times the amount specified in the Bill.

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- The bill touches upon an extremely relevant topic, which, if addressed well, can potentially transform our society in the years to come. However, unfortunately the Bill considers Moral Education as just any other subject (e.g. Social Studies or Physical Education).

Eduvisors Comment

- While we agree with the need to do 'something' with regard to arrest the falling moral standards of our society and believe that a large-scale intervention in schools is a great starting point, we do not agree with the approach adopted by the Bill. Considering that moral education is not a mere subject, the approach has to be holistic in nature. Also, National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has done good amount of work in the area of moral education. We should take certain advise from NCERT as to how best can one raise moral standards of the society using schools as the starting point. In fact, way back in 2000, a resource centre was set up within the NCERT to research, examine and evolve a framework for the place of values in education and their inculcation through appropriate learning process. It is recommended that learning from research work already done be considered rather than moving ahead with yet another Act.

- The role of the parents and society must be considered, without which the Act will be weak and ineffective. As all know that moral education is not a subject like mathematics or language that can be taught by a specialized teacher – moral education must be woven at systemic level.

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The Bill provides a rather simplistic solution to a deep and complex topic of *'raising the moral standards of our society'* through moral education in educational institutions. We recommend the following for the Bill to become an Act that is effective and implementable:

1. The Bill should consider a variety of stakeholders, from school teaching and non-teaching staff to qualified professionals and even parents/guardians in the implementation of the Act.
2. Tap the resources of the existing teaching and non-teaching staff in the schools to double-up as resources for moral education
3. Consider innovative models of delivery of moral education.
4. Do not leave out minority run institutions
5. Seek assistance from agencies such as NCERT for effective design and implementation of moral education related curriculum.
6. Take help from the existing District Education Officers, rather than creating a parallel structure or additional layers in the form of Advisory Councils.
7. Do a detailed exercise on cost implications of imparting moral education in all educational institutions in India.

In summary, The Compulsory Imparting of Moral Education in Educational Institutions Bill is a poorly thought-out bill for a highly critical and much needed area. The Bill attempts to address the right problem in a wrong way. There is a lot of reworking to be done for the Bill to be effective.



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Thank You

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