

Doi:<https://doi.org/10.61841/qkv89b32> url:<https://nnpub.org/index.php/SSH/article/view/2640>

## Single National Curriculum of Early Childhood Care and Education, Pakistan for Inculcating Moral Values in Children – an Analysis

**Hina Amin Khowaja, Dr. Fayyaz Shaheen, Dr. Muhammad Akhtar Kang**

PhD Scholar, Department of Education, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities  
Hamdard University, Karachi, Pakistan Email: [hinaamin.khowaja@gmail.com](mailto:hinaamin.khowaja@gmail.com)  
Telephone number: +923443574554

Lecturer, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, Hamdard University, Karachi,  
Pakistan Email: [fayyaz.shaheen@hamdard.edu.pk](mailto:fayyaz.shaheen@hamdard.edu.pk) Telephone  
number: 92-21-3002852402

Lecturer, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, Hamdard University, Karachi,  
Pakistan Email: [dr.akhtar@hamdard.edu.pk](mailto:dr.akhtar@hamdard.edu.pk) Telephone  
number: 92-21-36440042

### How to cite the article:

Khowaja, H. A. ., Shaheen, F., & Akhtar Kang, M. (2025). Single National Curriculum of Early Childhood Care and Education for Inculcating Moral Values in Children – an Analysis. Journal of Advance Research in Social Science and Humanities (ISSN 2208-2387), 11(1), 44-54.  
<https://doi.org/10.61841/qkv89b32>

---

### ABSTRACT

The curriculum of any nation plays a vital role in promoting the students' knowledge and skills and defining the country's future well-being. Developing a Single National Curriculum of Early Childhood Care and Education in Pakistan aims to enhance social cohesion and equality among children by providing unified education. This study analyzed the curriculum and explored only one area or competency that helps to inculcate children's moral values. This study was qualitative in design and used a document analysis approach to focus on curriculum content. The result of the study portrayed that there is the provision of promoting moral values in the curriculum.

However, the clarity about moral values concerning the age group and alignment of values with competencies and learning outcomes require consideration. Further, teaching these values in the early years needs explanation, elaboration, and demonstration in the holistic sense.

**Keywords:** Single National Curriculum, Early Childhood Care and Education, Mora Development, Values, Children

## INTRODUCTION

The education system of any country defines its people's future aspirations and progression. It entails the establishment of states by educating their children from schooling till university or beyond, who will work for the country's benefit. Suppose the system is not well-established and promotes the disparity of race and social and economic background in the nation. In that case, it deteriorates progress and does not provide a solid future for the nation. In Pakistan, there is a vast deviation in the education system as numerous systems are existed run by various public, semi-private and private agencies. Each system has a distinct vision and purpose and a different curriculum that deals with approaches to increasing the nation's literacy rate and capacity building (Aftab, 2015; Asif).

While looking at the situation of Pakistan's education system, the government of Pakistan has tried reformation by introducing one system of education for all and initiating the development of a Single National Curriculum for Pakistani students to apply to all public, semi-private and private systems (Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training). However, if we look around the globe, many countries, instead of national curricula, outline the core curriculum guidelines for each subject, which include science, mathematics, the national language, history and other basic subjects. Countries include England, France, Japan, the United Kingdom, some states of the United States of America and so forth (Edinformatics). Though Single National Curriculum of Pakistan also mentions each domain's core competencies rather than the subject. Nevertheless, it does not entail the roots on which these core values are based.

Similarly, if we look at Finland's curriculum, it also follows the National Core Curriculum and inculcates the objectives and assessment of the essential subjects. Concisely, studying the existing curriculum standards of international countries are required to explore them further. However, it seems that the international standards were not considered or measured in the development of Single National Curriculum of Pakistan.

Looking to the development stages of Single National Curriculum, in the first phase, the Early Childhood Education curriculum and one to five grades curriculum were formed in 2021. Different consultants from distinct public, semi-private, and private educational institutions were involved in the development process. The main objectives of developing a Single National Curriculum are to enhance social cohesion and equality among children so that all children of the country receive a unified education level and learning opportunities. This curriculum will also help align the existing education system. One vision, equal opportunity, the same level of the assessment process, and a suitable medium of instruction will apply to all children. (Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training).

The early Childhood Care and Education curriculum was revised in the Single National Curriculum development process. The Early Childhood Care and Education curriculum considered local context, international and contemporary standards, and SDG goals.

One of the salient features of this curriculum is to focus on a child's personality and character development by inculcating values of tolerance, empathy, patience, citizenship, and accepting the diversity of the people. Moreover, building morals, values, ethics, and civic sense is also part of the objectives of this curriculum. This dimension of teaching moral values to the children in the early years comes under the segment of social and moral development, considering developing the positive relationship of children with themselves, others, and the environment in the curriculum. The age groups of children for which this curriculum has been designed seem to be 3-5 years old.

This study focused on how the Single National Curriculum of Early Childhood Care and Education helps impart moral values to children in their early years. Therefore, the objectives of this study were to:

- Analyze the content of the curriculum in terms of inculcating moral values in children in the early years
- Identify the specific values focusing in the curriculum for a child's moral development

This study was mainly based on the Single National Curriculum of Early Childhood Care and Education content. This research only explored key learning areas of moral development and did not focus on other domains. There were two primary reasons for emphasizing ethical development in this study. One was the researcher's area of expertise in moral values. Through different strategies and curriculum development, the researcher is more engaged in imparting moral values in children in their early years. For that reason, this study will help to examine the Single National Curriculum of Pakistan from the aspect of a tool for the moral development of a child. The other rationale behind this work was that very little research had been done to study the curriculum for teaching moral values to children in the early years. Though, the moral development of a child is very significant for nurturing the values in the children that will become part of their character and personality. It will also support a child in socializing with others, regulating and calming their emotions, responsibly using their mental abilities and so forth. Thus, this domain impacts their areas of development which were little explored earlier.

This study could provide a base for future researchers to investigate this area and expand their research zone.

However, this research only examined the Single National Curriculum of Pakistan document and did not analyze the textbooks, syllabus, and other documents.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. How does the content of the Single National Curriculum of Early Childhood Care and Education (SNCECCE) inculcate moral values in children in their early years?
2. What values does the curriculum help impart to children's moral development?

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study was qualitative and used the document analysis approach by reviewing the content of the Single National Curriculum of Early Childhood Care and Education's moral values concept. The moral values terms were extracted from the curriculum for further analysis and discussion. It found that only the first key learning areas of personal, social, and emotional development are talked about in the moral aspects; for that purpose, this essential learning area was analyzed in this study.

## ANALYSIS

The Single National Curriculum of Early Childhood Care and Education structure, as defined in chapter 2, is shown in diagram 2.



**Table one**

*Extracts from the curriculum*

Key Learning Outcomes	Competency	Expected Learning Outcomes	Examples and Ideas for implementation
	# 2: emphasizing the sharing and working in collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- respect other's feelings and opinions</li> <li>- sharing materials, and</li> <li>- cooperating in working with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Different roles during play to respect each other</li> <li>- Respectful of views of others in classroom discussion</li> </ul>
	# 3: acceptance, respect, and appreciation for the diversity of cultures and languages	Respect the feelings of others irrespective of their religion, creed, caste, colour, and people with special needs	

Personal, Social, and Emotional Development: encompasses the moral development of the child	# 4: understanding their religious values Respect for others' religious values Acceptance and appreciation for the differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appreciate and respect similarities and differences among people</li> <li>- Appreciate "peace" (love, care, friendship, tolerance, kindness, and respect for others)</li> <li>- Respect other religions and have tolerance for other religions</li> </ul>	Promote the values of tolerance and respect for everyone
	# 5: the sense of responsibility for self and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sense of responsibility for the property</li> </ul>	Encourage a sense of
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Responsibly used the water, food, electricity, and paper</li> </ul> <p>Take care of peers</p>	<p>responsibility and care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help others</li> </ul> <p>Respect for others' property</p>
	# 6: use courtesy words: thank you, greetings, please, welcome, sorry, excuse me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respect others</li> <li>- Use courtesy words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Roleplay, charts, discussion for practising and using courtesy words</li> </ul>
	# 7: Sense of citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow the rules in the classroom and traffic rules</li> <li>- Listen patiently</li> <li>- Everyone has different opinions and understanding</li> <li>- Respect each right</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Designing classroom rules</li> <li>- Story and poems for rules sharing</li> </ul> <p>Listen to others in the discussion</p>

	# 8: develop and demonstrate ethical and moral values such as honesty, inner accountability, social justice, empathy, compassion, and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand the term kindness and its importance</li> <li>- Sharing things with others</li> <li>- Mistakes are part of learning</li> <li>- Personal accountability for actions</li> <li>- Understanding of truthfulness, honesty, fairness, and trustworthiness in their actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Real-life experiences on kindness</li> <li>- Sharing within and beyond the classroom</li> <li>- It's okay to make mistakes</li> <li>- Admit mistakes, ask for forgiveness, appreciation</li> <li>- Moral stories, role play</li> </ul>

The above table demonstrated that except for competency # 1, all other personal, social and emotional development competencies key learning areas dealt with moral aspects. Overall, respecting others and sharing with others are significant values portrayed in the competencies and learning outcomes.

## DISCUSSION

This study analyzed personal, social, and emotional development key learning areas of the Single National Curriculum of Early Childhood Care and Education to inculcate moral values in children. This study explored the extracts dealing with moral values from the curriculum—the discussion on each component in terms of moral values is done in the following headings.

## KEY LEARNING AREAS.

The curriculum has seven key learning areas based on the developmental domains. However, only one personal, social and emotional key learning area facilitates inculcating children's moral values. However, this key learning area was vast and consisted of all developmental domains of the children, such as social, ethical, and emotional. However, this area mentioned the different moral aspects of developing and promoting values early on. However, the term moral is not written in the main heading of key learning areas but is described in the explanation. It entails us that anyone skimming the heading of key learning areas has found moral development missing from the curriculum.

## COMPETENCIES

There are eight competencies in the personal, social, and emotional learning areas. All competencies deal with moral values except competency one, mainly regarding self-identity. The competencies from two to eight discussed some moral aspects of teaching in the early years.

Below is the discussion of each competency to analyze the content in detail.

Furthermore, each competency emphasizes different moral values in different situations.

### **COMPETENCY # 2:**

This competency deals with two moral values: sharing and working in collaboration. This competency helps make children willing to share their materials and work with peers, teachers, family members, and neighbours. The expected learning outcomes further discuss the values of respect for other's feelings and ideas while working with others. The desired learning outcomes are pretty supportive of achieving this competency. Moreover, the examples and ideas given are also well-relevant. Though the exact terms are not used in examples and ideas for implementation, it allows the teachers to explore different activities and ideas further to achieve learning outcomes and competency. Concisely, this competency applies to all age groups of children 3-5 years old. However, this competency also highlights accepting differences in gender, race, ethnicity, language, culture, and ability while sharing and working with others. But the expected learning outcomes, examples, and implementation ideas do not prompt the acceptance of differences. It is required that accepting the differences should be highlighted very clearly and made part of expected learning outcomes to ensure children's willingness to share materials and work in collaboration. However this area of accepting differences has been discussed in other competencies, but it is also very significant in this competency to focus.

### **COMPETENCY # 3**

This competency deals with accepting, respecting, and appreciating diverse cultures and languages by learning cultures and heritage. However, this competency focuses on various cultures and languages only. But, the other areas, such as diversity in likes and dislikes, hobbies, and outlook, are not touched in this competency, which is a big area. Competency # 1 talks about the children's likes and dislikes, feelings, and emotions but not others. If acceptance of these differences can be added, it will be more value-added.

Moreover, this competency for younger children of age three could be challenging compared to age 5. If the bifurcation of expected learning outcomes according to the age group is mentioned, it could be more effective in implementation. Moreover, the desired learning outcomes are not dealt directly with developing the respect, acceptance, and appreciation of diversity; instead, it focuses more on discussing cultures and different heritages. But, what values a child will develop through this talk and exploration of culture, heritage, and languages are not emphasized through expected learning outcomes. Only one expected learning outcome is direct telling about respecting others' feelings and views, but the person with special needs is not considered. Thus, an addition is required to develop a sense of acceptance, respect, and appreciation of diversity and strategies.

### **COMPETENCY # 4**

This competency is most significant and deals with respecting and accepting own and others' religious values and practices. Suppose a child develops a sense of respecting different religious values and practices in the early years. In that case, it will remain with the child forever, and many conflicts and issues in the name of religion will not be raised. The primary sense of religious values and practices is stated in the expected learning outcomes to develop. The ideas and examples are also appropriate to the age group of children. However, there is a thin line in understanding Pakistan's different religious values and practices. It becomes chaos if understanding with some ambiguity or any misconception is delivered to the children.

Moreover, this curriculum seems to focus more on Islamic values and practices, particularly the Madrassa system. Still, the diversity of religious beliefs within Pakistan is also not focused. For this purpose, it is required that for imparting this competency, teachers or practitioners should have a clear and broader understanding of different religious values and practices by putting their own beliefs and biases aside.



### **COMPETENCY # 5**

This competency talks about a sense of responsibility to the children and others. This skill is very significant in the early years. However, this competency is vague; children could show a sense of responsibility in what aspects? Moreover, what others mean by, does it include strangers also? The responsibilities are not explained clearly here. For instance, this competency could be like the sense of care, help and love for self, families, friends and neighbourhoods.

Furthermore, responsibilities towards places like parks, playgrounds, hospitals, country, etc. are also missing. Though, expected learning outcomes, examples, and ideas for implementation reveal some sense of responsibility regarding belongings, properties, resources, and cleanliness. Still, the competency could not give clear ideas. At the same time, viewing the expected learning outcomes of this competency highlights many relevant areas where responsibility and taking care could be considered.

### **COMPETENCY # 6**

Children's use of common courtesy words is highlighted in this competency, which is good to develop in the early years. Common courtesy words such as please, thank you, sorry, excuse me, welcome, and greetings are presented in the competency. However, the expected learning outcomes for using the common courtesy words require further explanation. It must mention the situation for uttering these words and the reasons for using these words in everyday conduct are required to add. It is essential to provide the sense to the children for using these words by rationalizing themselves based on the situations. For that purpose, the essence of these words and how to make these words part of our daily lives are very significant.

Moreover, the tone and gestures of politeness and humbleness are also essential while using these words. This habit of using courtesy words in daily life is required to develop by rationalizing it to maintain the significance of these words. Children themselves realize the usage of these courtesy words in different situations.

### **COMPETENCY # 7**

This competency focuses on developing a sense of citizenship in children. This competency supports children in becoming good citizens of the country, community, and even schools. The expected learning outcomes for achieving this competency confine with rules to follow and respecting and listening to the views of others, which are good to go for the sense of citizenship. However, values like honesty, kindness, compassion, integrity with the nation, and respect for national flags and identities are needed to include this competency. Further, digital citizenship is now a revolving area where using technology safely and responsibly could be part of this competency. Here, it is necessary to add those areas which prepare a child for the future world at least 30 or 40 years ahead of today. So, a child will serve the nation and country with true citizen spirit rather than leave the country. Unfortunately, this competency is not developed with that lens.

### **COMPETENCY # 8**

This competency directly underscores moral values such as honesty, internal accountability, social justice, empathy, compassion, and respect. This competency makes conscious efforts to build moral values in the children. However, many other values are mentioned in the expected learning outcomes, such as kindness, trustworthiness, fairness, and truthfulness, which are not rightly described in the competency. The expected learning outcomes mentioned in this competency enhance the moral values, but an understanding of all these moral values at 3-5 or 6 years of age might be complex. Instead of understanding all these moral values, focusing on the practical demonstration of these moral values that could be mentioned will become more effective.



However, there is a dire need to enrich further the examples and ideas for implementation by including the practical demonstration and case studies reflecting how these values could be taught to children.

Furthermore, a habit of self-reflection, forgiveness, and forgetting mistakes are required to add and discuss in this competency. It is core for building a child's personality, affecting their social and emotional development. Still, strategies and processes are required to make these values part of a habit. This competency is central to the moral development of the children. It requires more emphasis and elaboration, including case studies, reflective questions and examples, practical demonstration, experiments, real-life experiences, action plans and a way forward.

## CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the content of the key learning areas of personal, social, and emotional development in the Single National Curriculum of Early Childhood Care and Education for teaching moral values in children. Moreover, the significant values used in the curriculum for imparting to the children were also explored. This study concluded that the curriculum has some provisions for teaching moral values to children in the early years, which is also part of the curriculum's significant objectives. The competencies and expected learning outcomes provided enough capacities for imparting moral values to the children. However, the clarity of moral values is required to enrich further while dealing with self, others, and the environment. There are some suggestions which could be included for refining the curriculum. Such as:

1. The competencies must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound for effective implementation.
2. Expected learning outcomes should portray what a child can demonstrate at the end of achieving this competency.
3. Implementation ideas and examples should segregate the age group of children. For instance, activities for 3-4 years, 4-5 years and 5-6 years old children. It must demonstrate the progression in the learning of a child.
4. Elaboration, practical examples, experiments, real-life experience and case studies are some strategies to include in the curriculum.
5. The alignment of developing and promoting moral values is required throughout competencies, expected learning outcomes, examples, and ideas for implementation.

Overall, this curriculum can help develop and promote moral values in children, but teaching these values in the early years requires further explanation, elaboration, and demonstration in the holistic sense.

## RECOMMENDATION

This study analyzed one key learning area and its competencies. It is required to explore other key curriculum learning areas for future studies. Further, implementing moral values through this curriculum in the classroom could also be considered in the future. Different materials like textbooks, syllabi, and other documents related to ethical aspects could also investigate in the future. Another area of study for the future is to analyze the understanding of teachers or practitioners in imparting moral values to children.

## DECLARATION

### ETHICS APPROVAL AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

This study was part of the Mphil programme offered by Hamdard University, Pakistan. The affiliated faculty teams made the ethical consideration for this study. Further, this study is based on the Single National Curriculum document analysis, which is freely available on the internet for download. Consent is given in advance by the authority. Furthermore, information and documentation to support this should be made available to the editor on request.

### CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

The Single National Curriculum content used to analyze in this study is universally and freely accessible via the internet in a downloadable version. The general public may see it. The author(s) or copyright owner(s) in advance and perpetuity, the right to use, reproduce or disseminate the article/book in its entirety or part, in any format or medium, provided that no substantive errors are introduced in the process, proper attribution of authorship and correct citation details are given, and that the bibliographic details are not changed. This must be clearly and unequivocally indicated if the article/book is reproduced or disseminated in part.

### COMPETING INTERESTS

The author(s) declare(s) that they have no competing interests.

### FUNDING

There was no fund involved in any stage of this study.

### AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors mentioned in this manuscript contributed to the study's planning, analysis, and completion. Each author made their approval before submission of this manuscript.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Not Applicable.

### AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIAL

Not applicable.

### REFERENCES

1. Aftab, H. (2015). *Education system of Pakistan: issues, problems and solution*. Retrieved from <https://ipripak.org/education-system-of-pakistan-issues-problems-and-solutions/>
2. Asif, M. (n.d.). *Education system in Pakistan: key issues, problems and future challenges*. Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/39501577/Education\\_system\\_in\\_Pakistan\\_Key\\_issues\\_problems\\_and\\_future\\_challenges](https://www.academia.edu/39501577/Education_system_in_Pakistan_Key_issues_problems_and_future_challenges)
3. Heckman, J. (2011). The Economics of Inequality: The Value of Early Childhood Education. *American Educator, Spring*, pp. 31-36. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ920516.pdf>
4. Hunzai, Z. (2006). A Long-Term Investment in Pakistan: Early Childhood education. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 7(2), 174–176. <https://doi.org/10.2304/ciec.2006.7.2.174>

5. Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training. (2017). *Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan
6. Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (2020). *Single National Curriculum*, retrieved from <http://www.mofept.gov.pk/ProjectDetail/MzkyNDc2MjMtY2VjYy00ZDA4LTk5OTUtNzUyNDI3ZW/MzN2Rm>
7. Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (2020). *Single National Curriculum – Early Childhood Care and Education* Islamabad: Government of Pakistan
8. Sindh Education Foundation. (2011). Early Childhood Development. *Nurture Magazine*, XI. Pakistan
9. Sindh Education Foundation. (2009). *Early childhood development initiatives in Pakistan: A mapping study*. Retrieved from [http://www.sef.org.pk/ecdpak/latest-news/ECD%20Mapping%20Study\\_02\\_Oct%20by%20Sjz.pdf](http://www.sef.org.pk/ecdpak/latest-news/ECD%20Mapping%20Study_02_Oct%20by%20Sjz.pdf)
10. UNICEF. (2018). *Early Childhood Development in the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021*. Retrieved from [https://www.unicef.org/media/48126/file/UNICEF\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_2018-2021-ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/media/48126/file/UNICEF_Strategic_Plan_2018-2021-ENG.pdf)
11. World Bank group. (2017). *Early Childhood Development*. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/earlychildhooddevelopment>