

Reflection on teaching themes of care



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Reflection on Teaching Themes of Care The essay aims to proffer a reflection based on the article entitled “ Teaching Themes of Care” written by Nel Noddings and published in Phi Delta Kappan on May of 1995. Specifically, the following concerns would be addressed: (1) to provide a description of the article’s major points and questions that arise from the material; (2) to present the main argument or message that the author intends in this article; (3) to indicate the significance of the argument for education; and finally, (4) to show evidence in support of this argument or one’s critique of this argument.

Reflection on Teaching Themes of Care Major Points and Questions Raised Noddings (1995) initiated the discourse with the bold plan to reorganize contemporary school curriculum to focus on questions and issues pertinent to human existence. As suggested, the curriculum is envisioned to be organized around themes of care: “ caring for self, for intimate others, for strangers and global others, for the natural world and its nonhuman creatures, for the human-made world, and for ideas” (Noddings, 1995, 1). To engage the readers into justifying his contentions, the author opted to resolve questions such as: (1) why teach caring? (2) How can teaching themes of care be chosen and organized? (3) And, what kinds of preparations should schools and teachers focus on to ensure effectiveness in teaching themes of care? The questions were addressed through a discussion of the benefits of teaching and incorporating themes of care in the schools’ curriculum. Further, Noddings (1995) expounded on the two significant approaches in teaching themes of care, such as the interdisciplinary approach (where themes of care units or points of discussion would be tackled by interdisciplinary teams over a specified period of time) and the themes of care could be discussed by individual

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teachers to be incorporated in the subject that they teach intermittently during the school year. As for the preparations, schools must first acknowledge teaching themes of care as one of its primary goals and eventually provide a guiding policy for its implementation through the curriculum. On the other hand, several arrangements for preparing teachers to incorporate themes of care in their instructional methods were suggested.

Main Argument or Message The main argument or message of Noddings (1995) is two-fold: “ first, that we should want more from our educational efforts than adequate academic achievement and, second, that we will not achieve even that meager success unless our children believe that they themselves are cared for and learn to care for others” (Noddings, 1995, 1).

Significance of the Argument for Education The significance of teaching themes of care were discussed by Noddings (1995) as he emphasized the various benefits of including themes of care in the curriculum, to wit: (1) the ability to expand students’ awareness on cultural orientations and literacy; (2) the enhanced capacity to link themes of care topics with standard school subjects; (3) the increased propensities to address existential questions to both themes of care and school subjects; (4) the enhanced ability for closer interpersonal relationships (teachers with students, for instance); and (5) to develop knowledge, skills and abilities that focus on one’s ability to contribute towards positive growth and development, regardless of endeavors. **Critique of the Argument** I personally agree that themes of care must be incorporated in contemporary schools’ curriculum to provide a closer link on core issues of human existence and dilemmas to the standards subjects being taught. Today’s generation seem to be lost on the intricate and complicated details of theoretical concepts and formulas that there is a

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tendency to lack regard for others. The ultimate objective of teachers and students focus on the attainment of a numerical rating based on some mathematical formula that could not be applied in future endeavors. The only point where I disagreed is the author's contention under supporting structures where he suggested that " teachers and students who hate or distrust one another should not be forced to stay together" (Noddings, 1995, 5). I totally disagree because how exactly would these people resolve their indifferences when they are encouraged to avoid one another – which are antithetical to the themes of care being admonished to be taught. To sum, teaching themes of care could be challenging but for sure, would be rewarding and most relevant to be incorporated in schools' curriculum globally. By doing so, most of the global problems of poverty, indifference, crimes and disrespect for human rights could actually be openly discussed, addressed, and possibly ultimately solved. Reference Noddings, N. (1995). " Teaching Themes of Care." Phi Delta Kappan. Volume 76, Number 3, pp. 675 - 679. Retrieved 30 May 2011. http://www.judithgeltedpsych.org/uploads/5/9/8/9/5989506/noddings_themes_of_care.pdf>