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12:00 AM, May 11, 2018 / LAST MODIFIED: 12:00 AM, May 11, 2018

EDITORIAL

Grim findings of education survey

Moral education should be a priority



Education as we know it today, especially at the primary and secondary levels, summons up images of all the wrong kind: question paper leaks, cheating in exams, coaching business, emphasis on rote learning, etc. A new survey published on Wednesday provided a statistical explanation of the fault lines of our education by collating responses by students,



teachers and parents on matters of ethics and values. The results, while startling, explain these unethical practices, with some 17.2 percent of boys and 21.6 percent of girls at the secondary level saying using “any means” necessary for a high score in exams is sometimes essential. Forty-nine percent of the respondents believe honesty is not a practical option.

It is deeply disturbing when large numbers of students, many of whom will go on to lead our country, think that moral values are dispensable in the pursuit of higher gains. Underlying this perception is a shift in our expectations from education. Education, sadly, is no longer considered a means to enlighten a student, but one the value of which lies in its capacity to ensure a smooth entry for the student into the job market. Such an attitude and the general degeneration of ethics and values in society that had led to this condition also explain why three quarters of the students surveyed do not look upon their teachers as role models for ethical and moral conduct. These findings are a grim reminder that we need to take a critical look at our existing education system. Unless we take that long, hard look and redesign this system to transform it into a balanced one, with a special focus on the attainment of moral values governing all our activities, we cannot expect to see a positive change anytime soon.

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