



FayoumUniverstiy

Faculty of Education

Foundations of Education Department

**The Role of Church Education in Supporting Some Social Values  
among Children in Light of Parents and Officials Opinion.**

A M. Ed. Thesis

By

**Madonna EmadNashed**

A demonstrator at the Foundations of Education Department

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Supervised by

**Prof. Youssef Sayed Mahmoud**

Professor of Foundations of  
Education And head of the  
department

Faculty of Education  
Fayoum University

**Dr. Asmaa Abdel Salam Ahmed**

Lecturer of Foundations of  
Education

Faculty of Education  
Fayoum University

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### **Summary**

#### **Introduction:**

The role of religious institutions in building the individuals value system is highly increasing in any community. Consequently, these institutions conspicuously play a major role in human education. Religiosity is a human necessity, so there cannot be a society without this phenomenon regardless of its kind or role in order to raise the child religiously from his early childhood to love God and obey His orders. Besides, children should be taught how treat people well and not to abuse others. Thus, proper faith helps to correct behavior, repair defects and develop values.

It is important to mention that Church as a religious institution is interested in forming human personality, developing awareness of responsibility and the desire to serve others in commitment and

dedication as well as developing mutual understanding, extrovert scientific thinking, the desire for change and appreciation of culture of the society. This cannot be achieved without a framework of commitment to spiritual, moral and cultural values. From a Christian point of view, the objectives of the religious education move within the framework of a general aim that leads to the formation of the perfect man who is similar to the Christ's march and learns for him.

In other words, Christian education aims at creating an integrated personality, that is capable of life glorifies God in all fields of the individual, family, church and community. Since personality is a product of interaction between man and the environment, the church intervenes to help the person controlling his personal life. Besides, it helps him moving with his friends, colleagues and citizens without deviation or loss. Thus, Church Education is clearly seen in the schools of church education (Sunday Schools).

Moreover, values are one of the guidelines that leads the behavior of the individual and society. The historical fact attests that the strength and weakness of societies are not only determined by physical standards, but also by their survival, existence and persistence depending on the valuable and moral standards. They are the basis and the general routers, on which the progress and prosperity of societies are based within the cultural and human paths. The features of human development and civilization are also drawn.

Additionally, the study of values is necessary in the process of education through the various social institutions in order to strengthen the constructive values of both individuals and groups. Also, it helps the

community to face the challenges and changes that occur. A man is a social being; he cannot work or live independently away from others in different aspects of life, everyone has an important role towards others and the society, where he lives, whether this community is his home, his church or his town. Thus, he works hard to represent his society's value system and to maintain it.

Most members of society are unconsciously governed by social values and they are asked to represent and adapt them during their interaction and relationships with other society members. Besides, social values are one of the important criteria that contributes greatly to the assessment and construction of the individuals' personality and lead them to the right path, virtue and piety.

The childhood stage is one of the most important stages in the individuals' life. It is the basis of forming a lot of information, knowledge, trends, values and principles. The more the child finds care and attention in this stage by those who raise him, the more he achieves appropriate growth in the following stages like adolescent and adulthood. This makes the initial years crucial in his future and has a profound influence on his formation in the rest of his life.

Due to the importance of this stage and its educational effects that determine the basic features of the human personality in general, it is a priority of serious educational research to pay attention to all that achieve adaptation and appropriate growth of the child at this stage. This is as developing some of the child's social values is a worth matter requires a careful study to identify the role of church education schools

in supporting some of these values and what it needs to strengthen them in an attempt to achieve the desired goals.

### **Problem of the Study:**

Childhood is one of the most important stages of growth that has the greatest impact on human life. It is the stage of forming knowledge, attitudes, values, beliefs and behavior. Hence, the responsibility of religious institutions, including the Church as a social and educational institution, is increasing in supporting and consolidating values, including the social values of its children through its schools (church education schools), which are the first support of life against deviation and adaptation to the evil atmospheres. As a result, they have an effective impact on the children through out the rest of their lives.

Based on the results of previous studies, it is found that there is a lack of study of the role played by the Church in supporting some of the social values for the children. Besides, there is a great interest of various social and educational institutions in order to develop these values. The problem of the current study was specified in trying to shed light on the role played by the schools of church education in supporting some of the social values of the child from the parents and officials perspectives along with identifying the shortcomings that these schools may encounter to deduce some mechanisms for activating and enriching their activities, curricula and programs.

### **The study problem could be stated in the following questions:**

- 1- What are the main features of church education schools?

- 2- What is the reality of church education schools role in supporting some of the child's social values?
- 3- What are the mechanisms needed for activating the role of church education schools in supporting some of the child's social values from the parents and officials perspectives?

### **Objectives of the Study:**

The current study aimed at:

- Identifying the schools of church education its origin, goals and means to achieve these goals.
- Revealing the reality of the role of schools of church education in supporting some of the social values of the child through analyzing the contents of the church education schools textbooks.
- Determining certain mechanisms to activate the role of schools of church education in supporting some social values of the child from the perspective of officials and parents.

### **Importance of the study**

The importance of this current study was represented in:

- ❖ The Theoretical Importance that involved:
  - Enrichment of educational literature with a pattern of education by a Christian-religious institution that has not been subjected to educational studies to the required extent.
  - The study also dealt with an important segment of the children of the society, who attend Sunday Schools and like other children

who represent the human energy and should be responsible for building the society in the future. Also, it has taken care of the task of building and forming the human since childhood and preparing them to effectively contribute to achieve the development of their community.

- ❖ The Practical Importance that represented in:
  - What the study may reach and the suggestions that the study may present. It may also be useful to officials in the development of curricula and study programs at these schools, which activate its role in supporting some of the social values of the child.

### **Methodology and Tools of the Study:**

The study followed the descriptive method in its qualitative and quantitative form. The study also relied on the analysis of the textbooks contents of the church education schools of Pope Twadros II for the primary stage as the modern methods applied in the light of the list of social values by Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim Kazim. In the light of the results reached, a questionnaire was designed to identify the most important obstacles that the church schools face in supporting some social values and the ways of activating this role. The sample included the various church schools in the churches in Fayoum governorate which involved (30) officials of the church schools (the priests and the secretaries of service) in Fayoum governorate and its centers, in addition to (300) parents.

### **Limits of the Study:**

The study was limited to identify the role of church schools in supporting some social values of the child in the churches of Fayoum governorate in its six centers.

### **Procedures of the Study:**

The study followed the following steps:

1. **First:** The general framework of the study which included (introduction of the study, previous studies, the problem of the study and its questions, the aims and importance of the study, the methodology of the study and its tools, its limits and terminology).
2. **Second:** The definition of the schools of church education, its origins, goals and means in achieving these goals, in order to answer the first question.
3. **Third:** the definition of values and their classifications and then identifying the concept of social values and its characteristics and function, as well as the analysis of the content of the books of schools of church education for the primary stage in the light of the list of social values by Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim Kazem.
4. **Fourth:** Conducting a field study which was represented in the implementation of a questionnaire prepared by the researcher on a sample of officials and parents of the Orthodox church education schools for the primary stage in Fayoum governorate in order to identify their opinions and suggestions for what these schools need to support some of the social values of children and the mechanisms to activate and enrich their activities, programs and curricula in order to answer the third question.

### **Results of the Study:**



The study revealed a number of results

❖ The analytical study revealed:

- A list of social values (A) is clearly visible than the List (B) in the analysis.
- The value of the conduct rules ranked first, followed by the value of the sympathy, followed by the value of the public service.
- Some values have appeared in a medium degree such as the value of symmetry, the value of fun, the value of generosity, the value of humility, the value of integration in the community and the value of tolerance.
- A very low set of values appeared as the value of loving home, loving sex, value of friendship, and value of blood relationship.
- Books that are dealt with important topics needed by children, including the subject of sexual culture and the subject of personal hygiene.

❖ The results of the field study were represented in:

1. The obstacles of the role of church education schools in supporting some of the social values of the child:
  - Agreement between officials and parents on the following obstacles as the most important obstacles to support some of the social values of the child:
    - The poor partnership between educational institutions and the Church in supporting social values.
    - The narrow spaces allocated to the classrooms of the church schools which impede practicing the activities that develop the social values.
    - The lack of availability of guidelines and guides for parents who support social values.

- The poor follow-up by parents to the religious education their children receiving in these schools.
- The poor role of some parents in encouraging these schools to support the social values of their children.
- The limited use of instructional methods in explaining some lessons that support social values.

The officials also agreed on the importance of the following obstacles: parents' lack of understanding of the educational role of the schools of church education. The lack of time allocated to these schools impedes the practice of activities that develop social values. The increase in the intensity of children in the classes of church education schools is a major obstacle to church schools while parents see the mediation of the importance of these obstacles.

The officials also agreed on the importance of lack of clarity of the concept of social values of some servants as a major obstacle to schools of church education, while parents see the weakness of the importance of this obstacle.

2. Mechanisms to activate the role of church education schools in supporting some social values:
  - the agreement between officials and parents on the most important mechanisms to activate the role church education schools in supporting some social values:
    - Encouraging the servants to inspect and follow up the children.
    - Using diverse and attractive teaching methods and techniques to support social values.

- Cooperating between parents and the church to provide the necessary climate to support the social values of their children.
- Taking care of involving children in activities that support social values.
- Encouraging children to participate actively in the conferences organized by the schools of church education.

