

International Conference 'Character Education in Latin America: Challenges and Opportunities'

ABSTRACT

Philosophical and Psychological Insights on Character Education

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In this presentation I give an overview of some of the most recent philosophical/conceptual and psychological issues that characterise the ongoing discourse on character education. I begin by defining some core concepts, like character (as distinct from personality), virtue (as distinct from a 'soft skill') and character education (as distinct from moral education more generally).

I distinguish between instrumental and non-instrumental (esp. Aristotelian) forms of character education, and I dispel some of the myths that still surround the subject. I then ask why many psychologists remain sceptical of the nature and content of character education and what may be needed to appease them.

I finally discuss some remaining theoretical problems that need to be addressed to give character education more philosophical and psychological gravitas.