

MODULE 13 - ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

OBJECTIVES

After a study of this e-content module the learners will be able to:

1. Define: Human values, value judgment, moral values, value education, value development, valuing nature.
2. Explain the concept of human values given by Shaver.
3. Describe the categories of human values.
4. Explain the reasons for accepting environment as a value.
5. Describe the roles of value education.
6. Describe the steps for development of environmental values.

SUMMARY

Values are criteria or standards to judge the worth of an idea, object, event, place etc. Since environment supports the life on this earth, therefore environment and its components are having value to mankind. Even today we are in a position to say that environmental components are not valuable because of their utility but because of oneness in all creations and components of nature. To keep the environment balanced it is essential to educate the human being to have a positive feeling and thinking for his/her surroundings as well as to express environment friendly behavior this can be possible if they will value the nature itself.

TRANSCRIPTION

CONCEPT OF HUMAN VALUES

Generally human values have been employed in two distinctively different ways in human discourse. It is often said that a person has a value or an object has a value. These two different usages of have been recognized by authors in different disciplines in areas like philosophy, psychology, sociology and economics. In philosophy, for

example values are relatively stable principles which help us to make decisions when our preferences are in conflict. In economics, the concept of value has a reference to social values, where an assessment of social value of various alternatives serves as a guide to the best choice under a utilitarian ethics.

Rokeach defined 'value' as 'an enduring belief, a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence along a continuum of relative importance'.

A value is a preference as well as the conception of what is preferable. According to Kluckhohn, a 'value' is a 'conception of the desirable and not something which is merely desired'. The meaning of desirable is that it is preference for one mode of behavior over another mode of behavior or it is preference for one end state over another end state.

As for as Shaver's view about the concept of values is concerned, it is more or less a rationalistic view. According to Shaver, 'a 'value' is principle or standard for judging the person, place, event or object to be good or bad, to be of worth or worthless or somewhere in between these two extents'. According to Shaver a value has three key elements. These are:

1. Values are concepts not feelings. Although values embody and express feelings but they are more than feelings. Their criteria for judgment is rational content. Because of the presence of rational content, a value can be defined, analyzed and compared with other values. Therefore, values hold effects but as far as defining their structure is concerned, they are cognitive.
2. Values are not recognized to be explicitly announced. They are put into practice as qualities. In fact, they form the frame of our judgment without our conscious knowledge and deliberate choosing.
3. Values are criteria for judging the degree of good or bad, praise or blame, worth or worthless. They are not just simply the presence or absence of these characteristics but they are the rules or set of principles to weigh these characteristics along a continuum of two extreme ends.

CATEGORIES OF HUMAN VALUES

Shaver has categorized values into three categories – aesthetic values, instrumental values and moral values. By aesthetic values beauty is judged. If a person is judging the beauty of an object or scene, it is only a personal taste. Aesthetic judgment is different from moral judgment. A boy wearing dirty clothes may not be immoral.

Instrumental values are standards set in order to achieve other standards. They are derivatives rather than fundamental principles. Discipline and punctuality are not ends but means to achieve some goals or perform some tasks effectively. Classroom instructional objectives are instrumental values for long term educational goals.

Moral values are the standards to judge whether aims or actions are proper. Moral values vary widely in their importance and applicability and are more than merely matters of personal taste. They can be placed on a continuum from personal preference to basic values. For example, we can take the value of cleanliness; it is one of the least important moral value because it is involved with the issue of personal preference. On the other hand, the value of sanctity of human life is the most basic value because it is essential for humanity. In a democratic setup the basic values may be freedom of expression and justice. Between the poles of personal preference and basic values there lies a wide range of middle level moral values such as honesty, cooperation, patriotism, and dedication.

Moral values may be referred to as resistance to temptation or inhibition of behavior which is regarded as wrong, although pleasurable. Thus, an immoral person is one who does not inhibit such impulses but pursues the immediate satisfaction of desires. The action regarded as moral is entirely dependent on the social definition of the behavior as good or bad. Moral values may be referred to as 'the control of behavior by reference to an internalized standard, rather than by reference to the possible consequences of the behavior for the action'. Moral values of the behavior which are carried out with reference to some principles or rules. They are rationally accepted because the reasons for accepting them is well understood and they are legitimate. In this sense, moral behavior entails moral judgment.

VALUE JUDGMENT

Values and value judgment are two different concepts. Value judgment is the assertion an individual makes on the basis of his or her values. Thus, values are grounds, not conclusions. For example, if a father tells his son to go to school on time, he is making a value judgment. The criterion which supports this judgment may be punctuality. In fact, values are constructs that underlie value judgments, not judgment per se. There may be a relationship between value judgment and values. To justify the appropriateness and property of value judgments, the values should be consulted on which the value judgments are based.

Values cannot be kept separately in air-tight compartments. They form interlocking parts of a total value system because human values are linked to one another. One value often impinges on another value. For example, we can take values like 'liberty' and 'equality'. The value of 'liberty' provides opportunities of freedom and self expression to all. The value of 'equality' gives the guarantee to every individual to equal opportunities and benefits. In valuing equality, therefore some compromise has to be made with liberty. If we take another example of two values – 'truth' and 'honesty', we find that these two values go hand in hand. A truth loving person will automatically love honesty and vice versa. Here, in making a value judgment of an honest person required to consider his or her level with respect to another value, the value 'truth'.

ENVIRONMENT AS A HUMAN VALUE

In our general conversation we talk about truth, honesty, devotion, friendliness and some more similar concepts as human values. The logic behind this may be the importance of adoption of these ideas and related practices to develop humanitarian qualities in man. If the survival of man is in danger because of any reason, can we develop these qualities? The answer is probably 'no'. Thus, it can be said that the factors which are responsible for the survival of man on this earth must be considered at first step. Since environment carries and supplies commodities and all the requirements for the survival of human being. Therefore there is no doubt to consider the environment as a human value.

In sociology, social psychology and political science there are two views about environmental values. According to one view, relatively consistent theoretical and empirical supports, favor the relationship between values and environmentalism. This view focuses on four value clusters namely self interest, altruism, traditionalism and openness to change. The other view suggests the emergence of environmentalism, after the fulfillment of basic material needs. Pro-environmental behaviors are exhibited by individuals and societies that are post materialist in their values.

The modern western approach gives importance to only natural resources, but in their true sense, environmental values should not be restricted to water for river, timber for forest or fish for sea. In reality environmental values are inherent in feelings that generate the sensitivity to protect nature. According to our Indian view there is oneness in all creations and components of nature. Therefore, our environmental values must be translated into conservation-oriented activities in our daily lives. In fact, our day-to-day routine activities have adverse environmental impacts unless we consciously avoid them. It can be said that values lead decision and decisions lead action. With respect to environmental education, the decision-making process can be learned through understanding and appreciation of oneness of nature and the importance of its conservation.

Value Education

Values are ones own principles and standards which are used to judge the worth of things, events, ideas, behavior, etc. whether they are good or bad, right or wrong, acceptable or not acceptable. As far as values in environment are concerned they bring to mind several new ideas like:

- Why should we use less resources and energy?
- What are the ways to use less resources and energy?
- Why should we keep our surroundings neat and clean?
- Why and how should we use less fertilizers, pesticides and insecticides in farming?
- Why and how should we save water and keep water resources clean?

- Why and how should we separate garbage into degradable and non degradable types before disposal?

All these issues are related to bring about a quality human life and go beyond simple economic growth. They are concerned with the well being of humans as well as to show love and respect for nature. These are the values which are responsible for making us better humans so that we can live healthier, more productive and happier lives, in harmony with nature.

On the other hand, unsustainable development is a part of economic growth. It makes the poor poorer and results in increased consumerism. If consumerism is the index of development, then the consumption and destruction of natural resources has been thriving. Recently, the world has partly realized that this trend cannot continue for a longer period. Today environment has been given prime importance to bring about a better way of life. Therefore, we are required to consider nature and environment as one of the important values. As a result, value education has become the need of the hour because it is expected to bring about a new, sustainable way of life.

It is an accepted fact that environmental values cannot be taught in a classroom by adopting formal methods of education. They can be inculcated and developed only through the process of appreciation of environmental assets and sensing the problems caused due to destruction of nature and environmental pollution.

STEPS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE DEVELOPMENT

Some of the steps to be taken for the development of environmental values are:

1. All human beings have different types of feelings for different aspects of their surroundings. True environmental values go beyond valuing a river for its water, a forest for its timber or the sea for its fishes. Environmental values are inherent in feelings that bring about sensitivity for protecting nature on the whole. Our Indian philosophy support the concept of oneness of all creations as well as a high level of respect for all the components of the nature. Therefore, we should create a social

environment so that environmental values can be translated into day-to-day activities to conserve environmental resources and assets.

2. We have an innate potential to explore the natural phenomena. Unfortunately, modern social trend and educational activities are suppressing these inborn traits. If humans are exposed to the wonders of nature they tend to come close to nature. They begin to appreciate her beauty and unity. As a result, this germinates into a desire to protect the natural heritage.
3. Human values are not static. The concepts of what constitute right and wrong behavior change, with respect to time and place. For example, there was a time when hunting was considered a sport. It was a royal, brave and desirable activity to kill a tiger, but in today's context it is a crime because it is against biodiversity conservation. The value system has been changing with time and circumstances. Therefore, value education should develop an affectionate behavior among individuals, based on feeling and rational thinking.
4. We are also required to appreciate the negative effects of our actions on the environment. Since India is a developing country, our value system extols economic and technical progress. In this condition, our value system should be modified in such a view that it supports sustainable development, in harmony with nature.
5. Whatever environmental degradation and pollution has taken place, it is not just because of economic and technological development, but rather due to a lack of awareness about the consequences of unlimited and unrestrained anti-environmental behavior. In this regard, people should be oriented to exhibit appropriate behavior in relation to our surroundings and biodiversity.
6. All individuals must be conscious about the environmental consequences of their every action. This consciousness leads to the creation of pro-environmental behaviour and prevents individuals from anti-environmental actions. Here it is justifiable to say that at present we are in a need of having new educational processes to orient our youth particularly those who are studying at school or college level with respect to their duties and responsibilities for conservation and protection of environment. No doubt students are very curious and energetic to know consequences of their activities with respect to environment. They are interested to

know that how these activities are affecting the environment and how they will regulate their activities so that there will not be any adverse effect about the environmental balance and so far as environmental resources are concerned. Teachers, as elders of society, respond to such questions, the innate curiosity of students is satisfied and thus they develop a set of values. As a result, pro-environmental thinking and actions begin to move from the individuals' domain to that of the community.

7. Almost all professions influence or can influence the environment directly or indirectly. Policy makers, agriculturists, land-use-planners, media practitioners, architects, medical personnel, health care workers, etc, must be aware of the environmental consequences of the activities of their professions. Teachers at school and college levels must make their students aware about anti-environmental consequences of the activities of their future profession.
8. Through value education students should be oriented about the importance of the environmental resources which we use, like food, water and other products. Special attention must be paid to explain nature's mechanisms of cleaning the air, through removal of carbon dioxide and addition of oxygen by plants, recycling of water through nature's water cycle, maintaining climate regimes, etc.
9. In nature there are a variety of species. Every species is important in the food web. There are a number of species which we admire for their beauty alone. A variety of attractive plants, beautiful flowers, animals like tigers, whales, monkeys, birds, colorful fishes and many more, beautify the environment. The evergreen forests, the great power of the ocean waves and the tranquility of the Himalayan Mountains are valuable things, even if we do not experience them directly.
10. Urban gardens and open spaces are the lungs of a city. They provide psychological support, mental peace and relaxation to the city's residents. Students must be oriented about the importance of these places and gardens, as well as how to protect them.
11. Through value education, students must be educated to preserve ancient structures. Architecture, sculpture, artworks and crafts of ancient cultures have immense

environmental value. They communicate to us about the past, the present status as well as the directions of the future destination of our journey.

12. There is no doubt that environmentally conscious individuals have a deep sense of values which are linked with a better and sustainable way of life for everybody. They also possess positive feelings and attitudes to support an environment that includes valuing nature, cultures, heritage and equity. Feelings and attitudes towards the degradation of the environment, loss of species, pollution, poverty, corruption in environmental management, the rights of future generations and animal rights make the environment balanced.

VALUING NATURE

The best strategy for protecting the environment is to value nature herself. Nature has unity in her diverse components. We must realize and appreciate the idea that we belong to a global community that includes 1.8 million known forms of life. Many a times we claim that we are the most developed among all species of the globe. Then, in this condition, it is our prime responsibility to protect life in all its glorious forms and respect the wilderness, with all its living creatures. We need to develop a sense of values that will lead us to protect the natural ecosystems, as well as to respect all human diverse cultures.

GLOSSARY

Value: A value is a criterion for judging the degree of good or bad, praise or blame, worthless or somewhere in between of these two extremes.

Aesthetic values: Criteria for judging the beauty of an object or scene.

Moral values: Moral values are standards to judge whether aims or action are proper.

Instrumental values: Instrumental values are standards set in order to achieve other standards.

Value judgment: Value judgment is assertion an individual makes on the basis of his or her values.

Value education for environment: The inculcation and development of through the process of appreciation of environmental assets and sensing the problems due to destruction of nature and environmental pollution.

Valuing nature: Giving value to nature and components of nature.

FAQs

1. Write the definition of value as given by Rokeach.

Ans : Rokeach defined 'value' as 'an enduring belief, a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence along a continuum of relative importance'.

2. Write the three key elements of value as given by Shaver.

Ans: According to Shaver a value has three key elements. These are:

4. Values are concepts not feelings. Although values embody and express feelings but they are more than feelings. Their criteria for judgment is rational content. Because of the presence of rational content, a value can be defined, analyzed and compared with other values. Therefore, values hold effects but as far as defining their structure is concerned, they are cognitive.

5. Values are not recognized to be explicitly announced. They are put into practice as qualities. In fact, they form the frame of our judgment without our conscious knowledge and deliberate choosing.

6. Values are criteria for judging the degree of good or bad, praise or blame, worth or worthless. They are not just simply the presence or absence of these

characteristics but they are the rules or set of principles to weigh these characteristics along a continuum of two extreme ends.

3. What are instrumental values?

Ans: Instrumental values are standards set in order to achieve other standards. They are derivatives rather than fundamental principles. Discipline and punctuality are not ends but means to achieve some goals or perform some tasks effectively. Classroom instructional objectives are instrumental values for long term educational goals.

4. Write the characteristics of moral values.

Ans : Moral values are the standards to judge whether aims or actions are proper. Moral values vary widely in their importance and applicability and are more than merely matters of personal taste. They can be placed on a continuum from personal preference to basic values. For example, we can take the value of cleanliness; it is one of the least important moral value because it is involved with the issue of personal preference. On the other hand, the value of sanctity of human life is the most basic value because it is essential for humanity. In a democratic setup the basic values may be freedom of expression and justice. Between the poles of personal preference and basic values there lies a wide range of middle level moral values such as honesty, cooperation, patriotism, and dedication.

Moral values may be referred to as 'the control of behavior by reference to an internalized standard, rather than by reference to the possible consequences of the behavior for the action'. Moral values of the behavior which are carried out with reference to some principles or rules. They are rationally accepted because the reasons for accepting them is well understood and they are legitimate. In this sense, moral behavior entails moral judgment.

5. What do you meant by judgment?

Ans : Value judgment is the assertion an individual makes on the basis of his or her values.

6. Why we should consider environment as a human value?

Ans : The factors which are responsible for the survival of man on this earth must be considered at first step. Since environment carries and supplies commodities and all the requirements for the survival of human being. Therefore there is no doubt to consider the environment as a human value.

7. Describe relationship among values, decision making and actions.

Ans : values lead decision and decisions lead action. With respect to environmental education, the decision-making process can be learned through understanding and appreciation of oneness of nature and the importance of its conservation.

8. What are questions generated by values in environment ?

Ans : As far as values in environment are concerned they bring to mind several new ideas like:

- Why should we use less resources and energy?
- What are the ways to use less resources and energy?
- Why should we keep our surroundings neat and clean?
- Why and how should we use less fertilizers, pesticides and insecticides in farming?
- Why and how should we save water and keep water resources clean?
- Why and how should we separate garbage into degradable and non degradable types before disposal?

9. Why do we need environmental value education?

Ans: Today environment has been given prime importance to bring about a better way of life. Therefore, we are required to consider nature and environment as one of the important values. As a result, value education has become the need of the hour because it is expected to bring about a new, sustainable way of life.

10. Write the main points to be focused through environmental education.

Ans :

1. We should create a social environment so that environmental values can be translated into day-to-day activities to conserve environmental resources and assets.
2. If humans are exposed to the wonders of nature they tend to come close to nature. They begin to appreciate her beauty and unity. As a result, this germinates into a desire to protect the natural heritage.
3. Value education should develop an affectionate behavior among individuals, based on feeling and rational thinking.
4. Our value system should be modified in such a view that it supports sustainable development, in harmony with the environment.
5. People should be oriented to exhibit appropriate behavior in relation to our surroundings and biodiversity.
6. All individuals must be conscious about the environmental consequences of their every action.
7. Teachers at school and college levels must make their students aware about anti-environmental consequences of the activities of their future profession.
8. Through value education students should be oriented about the importance of the environmental resources which we use, like food, water and other products.
9. Students must be oriented about the importance of these places and gardens, as well as how to protect them.
10. Through value education, students must be educated to preserve ancient structures.
11. There is no doubt that environmentally conscious individuals have a deep sense of values which are linked with a better and sustainable way of life for everybody.