

Values and Morals in Contemporary Society: Role in Various Domains

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ABSTRACT

Values are internalised cognitive frameworks that help people make decisions by instilling a feeling of fundamental moral standards, a sense of priorities, and a propensity to interpret the world and recognise patterns. Values can be investigated at the individual or group level, just like other cognitive structures. To put it another way, societies, cultures, and other social groups have values-based norms, priorities, and rules that specify what people should do in order to act in a proper, moral or valued way. Currently, the study of values is more specifically concerned with the situations in which values influence behaviour. In doing so, the study elaborates on the ramifications of creating value education in various domains.

Keywords: Contemporary Society, Values, Value and Society, Value and Education, Societal Domains.

INTRODUCTION

Education must include a process of instilling moral principles to prepare students to live fulfilling lives in line with the society's ideals and valued values. The importance of education for character development, "*bringing out the innate potentialities and inherent qualities*," and "*developing an integrated personality*" for the welfare of the individual and the society at large has been emphasised by philosophers, spiritual leaders, and educationists in our nation in various ways. Whatever phrase we choose, the concept of cultivating moral character has long been ingrained in India's ancient customs and centuries-old cultural legacy. Our country's

vast and rich cultural legacy, which we have the good fortune to inherit, serves as a metaphor for the basis and source of principles from which we derive our moral nutrition. Examples of values like self-discipline, sustenance in the absence of material resources, convenience, handling conflicts without violence, and exploring simple but revolutionary ideas as a threshold of superior conduct and living can be found in the lives of individuals, communities, and our saints, sages and philosophers. Our important policy documents occasionally include references to the problems regarding value education. The National Commission of Secondary Education (1952–1953) was an important turning point in post-independence education by emphasising character development as its primary objective, "*The supreme end of the educative process should be the training of the character and personality of students in such a way that they will be able to realize their full potentialities and contribute to the wellbeing of the community.*"

FINDING VALUES IN SOCIETAL DOMAINS

The value of education is not solely based on the improvement of educational quality. The present rebirth of interest in education as a potent tool for instilling values in pupils is also a result of how quickly values are eroding in our nation. Our civilization is rocked by conflicts, corruption, and violence despite significant advances. Our values system has been distorted. We may discover deception and corruption

everywhere. Most people are more concerned with their personal families than they are with carrying out their social obligations. Although values have been lost throughout human history and throughout all civilizations, our nation is deeply concerned about the current state of values degradation. Instances of value erosion include: people becoming more avaricious and self-centred; honesty starting to disappear from society; violence becoming the norm; and an increase in corruption, abuse, and power. The issue of deteriorating values is multifaceted and results from a confluence of powerful societal forces, including terrorism, globalisation, materialism, consumerism, and risks to humanity from climatic change and environmental degradation. They have brought in fears, individualistic lifestyles, the acceleration of demands, the abuse of science and technology, pessimism, a sense of isolation, and other undesirable outcomes. Education is necessary to instil in children and young people the principles of peace and harmony with oneself and others. Children are the future's emissaries.

Literature has been playing a key role in society since it offers a large and incredibly diversified corpus of written information that tackles continuing human concerns. With literature, students can creatively explore other worlds, both close to home and far away, and gain insight into both the self and others in a variety of diverse social, cultural, and historical contexts (Gorain, Nayek & Saha, 2022). This is why reading is so important for developing morals and a sense of what is right and wrong. Feminist writing techniques have created a new set of rules that look at society through the lens of empathy for women (Adhikari & Saha, 2021h; 2021i). Several female authors talk about how society is falling apart and how empathy and ideas can fix it (Adhikari & Saha, 2021j). For women to reconcile the principles of freedom and participation in the new pitch (Adhikari & Saha, 2021k). In addition to playing a role in guiding people towards diverse value systems,

society aids in the accumulation and integration of values through generations (Gorain, 2023; Adhikari, 2023; Ansary, 2023). He asserts that culture is an effort in perfection, an attempt to make things better than they already are, motivated by a moral and social fervour for doing what is right (Adhikari & Saha, 2021c). As a result, educators and educational institutions have an important job to do. According to Vivekananda, everyone ought to have access to true knowledge. The pursuit of authentic knowledge is impossible without moral values. Therefore, the development of moral standards is essential for the pursuit of truth (Roy & Saha, 2022). While fighting against social problems like untouchability, prejudice, and poverty, Tagore did not hold the Western world responsible for all evil. Together with Western science, he valued Western concepts of human value, freedom, and democracy (Mondal & Gayen, 2021). Women educators and social reformers have long prioritised discussing morality and values as a driver for social change. Despite the obstacles in their way, they had extraordinary willpower. Women of eminence, Tarabai Modak, Anutai Wagh, Pandita Ramabai, Durgabai Deshmukh, and Nawab Begum Sultan Kaikhusrav Jahan, Savitribai Phule, (Gorain & Sen, 2021) were those who not only fought for equality but also made excellent attempts to educate and advance women (Adhikari & Saha, 2021d; Hossain & Saha, 2013). The Montessori Approach encourages self-directed learning that builds values, self-assurance, and autonomous thought and action while fostering intellectual and social-emotional development (Adhikari & Saha, 2021e, 2021f). Mary Wollstonecraft, who similarly emphasises the significance of ideas, contends that neither women nor men are inherently submissive. She also claims that unless someone has struggled for independence, neither men nor women will respect it (Adhikari & Saha, 2022b; 2022c; 2023). American philosopher Nel Noddings created one of the earliest comprehensive theories of care and argued that morality

and values are based on compassion (Adhikari & Saha, 2021g). In order to convey themselves, their art, and the societal issues that still disproportionately affect women, women had to step outside of their comfort zones.

According to academic research, mythology is commonly described as highly regarded tales that explain a society's existence and social structure, such as tales of a society's creation, foundations, god(s), founding heroes, man's relationship to the 'divine,' and eschatological tales. The same concept develops into a very well-liked template for the numerous, fundamental and religious stories that have the same themes. Mythology serves a number of purposes and makes use of the sacred myths, artwork, and rituals of the culture in order to sustain its principles and morality. This method was employed throughout the whole subcontinent to produce volumes about mythology, leading to the development of native Sanskrit literature. A sizable majority of the general populace was unaware of these events and values since literature including mythology was only accessible to the elite, literate, scholars, and other members of a very limited class of people. One such masterwork is *Abhijnanam Shakuntalam* by the well-known Sanskrit author Kalidas (Adhikari & Saha, 2021a). Rasa can be used in any kind of art, stirring the reader's or audience's emotions and guiding them out of the world of the mortal and into the world of spiritual and moral consciousness. How values are derived also demonstrates how widely the Rasas are used in artistic forms (Adhikari & Saha, 2022a). Art is nothing more than the concretization of human imagination into a form and structure, and all kinds of art, especially literature, must unavoidably be connected to one another in order to advance the discovery of truth, morality, and the blending of cultures (Adhikari & Saha, 2021b; Saha, 2023).

NECESSITY OF VALUE

One of the most important arguments in favour of realigning education towards values is the fact that current methods of school education considerably contribute to children's uneven development. By focusing all of the attention on the cognitive domain and disregarding the affective domain, they show that the mind and the heart are separate. Many social forces, including as terrorism, globalisation, materialism, consumerism, and the dangers posed to humanity by climate change and environmental degradation, are at play in the multifaceted problem of declining values. These have spawned anxieties, egocentric lives, an increase in expectations, the misuse of science and technology, pessimism, a feeling of isolation, and other unpleasant effects. Schools are the microcosms of the world (Gorain, Adhikari, Saha & Sen, 2021; Gorain, Saha, Maji & Sen, 2021; Mahanti, Mondal & Saha, 2016). The disorder of the outside world appears in many different ways in schools. Children and adolescents in our country are growing up in increasingly different ways. Scientific surveys are not required to provide information that supports what our own eyes and ears tell us. Families who are dissatisfied have become more prevalent. Children commit crimes and act violently both inside and outside of schools. While it is crucial to develop in children a spirit of enquiry and the ability to think critically, we find that many youngsters treat teachers with disdain and ask them questions out of arrogance or a desire to overthrow their authority. They are significantly influenced by their peers.

Today's sociocultural milieu has experienced a substantial change. A ubiquitous culture is indicated by globalisation. Today, nearly the entire world is encompassed in our cultural worldview. Our societies are becoming less and less monocultural. Due to the increased complexity and diversity of our globe and the development of numerous civilizations, it is no longer practical to think about

adaptation to a uniform environment. The problem is more with adapting to a highly complicated, multi-cultural environment. The rejection of one's own priceless traditions and culture as a result of globalisation may lead to harsh competition. Teaching children about the environment and the need to protect it is a crucial social issue (Saha & Maji, 2013; Saha, 2012). Careless environmental use, deforestation, ozone layer depletion, global warming, soil erosion, industrial pollution brought on by overpopulation, new technological advancements, and lifestyle choices, among other things, have all been observed over the past century and have contributed to environmental degradation (Halder, Roy, Gorain, Adhikari & Saha, 2022; Saha, Maji & Saha, 2012). It is essential to promote the values of reverence for the natural world and the physical environment, responsible resource use, understanding of the interconnectedness of humans and the environment, and coexistence with the environment (Saha, 2013). People's health cannot be maintained without taking environmental sustainability and protection into account. It appears clear that science and technology will continue to grow quickly in the upcoming decades despite the fact that people will likely find it difficult to keep up with their current issues. It has both predicted and unexpected beneficial and negative effects. How science and technology should be used depends on one's values. To use science and technology more sanely and humanely is a moral and ethical imperative. Values and attitudes can act as a guide for individual behaviour based on the ideas of justice, goodness, constructive criticism, and wisdom to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of scientific and technological advancements (Roy & Saha, 2021).

Education must be viewed as a catalyst for this, helping to spread among students the value and significance of social responsibility and social awareness. In addition to a gradual shift of consciousness from the self to the other, this requires

learning about oneself as a part of a family, village, community, nation and global society. With each level, one becomes more aware of their loyalty to each of the aforementioned groups. From an early age, students need to be taught the importance of having a feeling of duty and responsibility towards their families, communities, cultures, nations, etc. It is essential to give educating students how to meet their obligations as responsible citizens top priority in order to avoid them from growing up with a preoccupation on rights while neglecting duties and responsibilities. The majority of individuals concur that promoting values must be driven by education. But it is not yet apparent how this would be carried out in schools. Values education should be included into regular classroom activities, according to certain organisations and institutions, while others want to keep it as a separate subject. The focus also changes. Others lay a higher emphasis on democratic and national ideas while some place a strong emphasis on religion education, yoga, and meditation (Saha, 2021; Saha, Sen & Adhikari, 2021; Khatun, Ansary, Adhikari, 2022). On the objectives of value education and the most effective delivery methods, various viewpoints exist.

CONCLUSION

Both from a global and a national perspective, social values and how they are applied in institutions and personal life are crucial. Social values display the best way for a society to think and behave. Growing disparities between ideal society's thinking and behaviour and the real reality are thought to be indicators and catalysts for a variety of societal issues. It is crucial that the values of the real world and the ideal world overlap. The most crucial requirement for creating a peaceful society and a peaceful world is to comprehend and rationalise the extraordinarily complex nature of values in national and international settings. This study has demonstrated the positive effects of moral values on human

existence and the various social agents through which these values are transferred, with art, literature, culture, and education acting as a crucial tool in promoting moral value acquisition.

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