

I. Value education

Meaning of Value Education:

Value Education is the education which enables to understand 'what is valuable' for human happiness. It is all about enabling a transformation in the human beings to help them move from Animal Consciousness to Human Consciousness.

Character oriented education that instills basic values and ethnic value in one's psyche is called 'Value Based Education'. The subject that enables us to understand 'what is valuable' for human happiness is called value education. Value education is important to help everyone in improving the value system that he/she holds and puts it to use. Once, one has understood his/ her values in life he/she can examine and control the various choices he/she makes in his/ her life. Value education enables us to understand our needs and visualize our goals correctly and also helps to remove our confusions and contradictions and bring harmony at all levels. It also helps remove our confusions and contradictions and enables us to rightly utilize the technological innovations.

Values form the basis for all our thoughts, behaviours and actions. Once we know what is valuable to us, these values becomes the basis, the anchor for our actions. We also need to understand the universality of various human values, because only then we can have a definite and common program for value education. Then only we can be assured of a happy and harmonious human society.

II. Need for value education

A.Need for value education is:

Correct identification of our aspirations

The subject which enables us to understand 'what is valuable' for human happiness is called 'value education' (VE). Thus, VE enables us to understand our needs and visualize our goals correctly and also indicate the direction for their fulfillment. It also helps to remove our confusions and contradictions and bring harmony at all levels.

Understanding universal human values to fulfill our aspirations in continuity.

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Complimentary - values and skills.

To fulfill our aspirations both values and skills are necessary. When we identify and set the right goals and produced in right direction, this is known as value domain, the domain of wisdom, and when we learn and practices to actualize this goal to develop the techniques to make this happen in real life, in various dimensions of human Endeavour (struggle), this is known as domain of skills. Hence, there is an essential complementarily between values and skills for the success of any human Endeavour. **For example, I want to lead a healthy life. Only wishing for good health will not help me keep my body fit and healthy and without having understood the meaning of health, I will not be able to choose things correctly to keep my body fit and healthy.**

Evaluation of our beliefs.

Each one of us believes in certain things and we base our values on these beliefs, are they false or true which may or may not be true in reality. These beliefs come to us from what we read, see, hear, what our parents tell us, our friends talk about, what the magazines talk of, what we see from TV etc. Value Education helps us to evaluate our beliefs and assumed values.

Technology and human values

The present education system has become largely skill-based. The prime emphasis is on science and technology. However, science and technology can only help to provide the means to achieve what is considered valuable. It is not within the scope of science and technology to provide the competence of deciding what really is valuable. Value Education is a crucial missing link in the present education system. Because of this deficiency, most of our efforts may prove to be counterproductive and serious crises at the individual, societal and environmental level are manifesting.

B. Need for value education in technical and other professional institutions:

The subject that enables us to understand 'what is valuable' for human happiness is called value education. The present education system has become largely skill-based. The prime emphasis is on science and technology. However, science and technology can only help to provide the means to achieve what is considered valuable. It is not within the scope of science and technology to provide the competence of deciding what really is valuable. Value Education is a crucial missing link in the present education system. Because of this deficiency, most of our efforts may prove to be counterproductive and serious crises at the individual, societal and environmental level are manifesting.

III. Content/Scope of value education

The subject that enables us to understand 'what is valuable' for human happiness is called value education.

The scope of value education includes

- all dimensions :thoughts, behaviour, work and realization, and
- all levels :individual, family, society and nature – existence.

Accordingly, the content of value education will be

- to understand myself, my aspirations, my happiness;
- to understand the goal of human life comprehensively,
- to understand the other entities in nature, the innate inter-connectedness, the coexistence in the nature- existence and finally
- to understand the role of human being in this nature/existence entirely.

Hence, **it has to encompass understanding of harmony at various levels** and finally, learning to live in accordance with this understanding by being vigilant to one's thoughts, behaviour and work.

IV. Basic guidelines for value education

The subject that enables us to understand 'what is valuable' for human happiness is called value education. In order to qualify for any course on value education, the following guidelines for the content of the course are important:

Universal: It needs to be applicable to all the human beings irrespective of cast, creed, nationalities, religion, etc., for all times and regions.

Rational: It has to appeal to human reasoning. It has to be amenable to reasoning and not based on

dogmas or blind beliefs.

Natural and verifiable: It has to be naturally acceptable to the human being who goes through the course and when we live on the basis of such values it leads to our happiness. It needs to be experientially verifiable, and not based on dogmas, beliefs or assumptions.

All encompassing: Value education is aimed at transforming our consciousness and living. Hence, it needs to cover all the dimensions (thought, behaviour, work and realization) and levels (individual, family, society, nature and existence) of human life and profession.

Leading to harmony: The value education ultimately is targeted to promote harmony within the individual, among human beings and with nature.

Values and skill complement each other.

Values means importance or participation and skills means qualities, training, and capabilities.

To fulfill our aspirations both values and skills are necessary. When we identify and set the right goals and produce it in right direction, this is known as value domain, the domain of wisdom. Basically we must know what really is useful to achieve human happiness, the happiness to all and for all the time.

And when we learn and practice to actualize this goal to develop the techniques to make this happen in real life, in various dimensions of human Endeavour (struggle), this is known as domain of skills. Hence, there is an essential complementarity between values and skills for the success of any human Endeavour.

For example, I want to lead a healthy life. Only wishing for good health will not help me keep my body fit and healthy and without having understood the meaning of health, I will not be able to choose things correctly to keep my body fit and healthy. So I have to learn the skills to achieve the goal of good health i.e. food to be consumed, the physical workout to be designed. So without knowing the meaning of good health, health cannot be achieved and also it is necessary to make use of the goal to achieve the goal of the goal.

V. Process of value education.

The process for value education has to be that of self-exploration, which includes two things: verification at the level of natural acceptance and experiential validation in living. Self exploration is the process to find out what is valuable to me by investigating within myself, what is right for me, true for me, has to be judged within myself. Through self exploration we get the value of ourselves. Various aspects of reality facilitating the understanding of human values will be presented as proposals. We need to verify these proposals for our self and examine our living in this light.

Self exploration

Self exploration is the process to find out what is valuable to me by investigating within myself, what is right for me, true for me, has to be judged within myself. Through self exploration we get the value of ourselves. We live with different entirety (family, friends, air, soil, water, trees, etc.) and we want to understand our relationship with all these. For this we need to start observing inside. The main focus of self-exploration is myself - the human being. Content of self exploration is just finding answers to the following fundamental questions of all human beings:

1. The Desire/Goal: What is my (human) Desire/ Goal? What do I really want in life, or what is the goal of human life?
2. Program: What is my (human) program for fulfilling the desire? How to fulfill it? What is the program to actualize the above?

In short, the above two questions cover the whole domain of human aspirations and human Endeavour. Thus, they form the content of self- exploration.

Natural acceptance and experiential validation

Natural acceptance is a mechanism of self exploration. Self exploration is a method to explore ourselves. Natural acceptance is process to understand ourselves first. Natural acceptance implies unconditional and total acceptance of the self, people and environment. It also refers to the absence of any exception from others. In other words, Natural acceptance is way to accept the good things naturally.

Experiential validation is a process that infuses direct experience with the learning environment and content. It may be regarded as a philosophy and methodology in which the direct experience and focused reflection of the individual helps to increase knowledge, develop skill and clarify values.

Most of what we know about our self is not only through our own opinion of our self but also because of how others view us.

When what we already believe to be true of us is validated by some situations, phenomena or outcomes. We may term it as experiential validation.

Purpose of self exploration

Self exploration is the process to find out what is valuable to me by investigating within myself, what is right for me, true for me, has to be judged within myself. Through self exploration we get the value of ourselves. The purpose of self exploration is:

1. It is a process of dialogue between “what you are” and “what you really want to be”: It is a process of focusing attention on ourselves, our present beliefs and aspirations vis-à-vis what we really want to be (that is to say, what is naturally acceptable to us). If these two are the same, then there is no problem. If on investigation we find that these two are not the same, then it means we are living with this contradiction (of not being what we really want to be) and hence, we need to resolve this contradiction this conflict within us. It is a process of discovering that there is something innate, invariant and universal in all human beings. This enables us to look at our confusions and contradictions within and resolve them by becoming aware of our natural acceptance.
2. It is a process of self evolution through self investigation: It successively enables us to evolve by bridging the gap between ‘what we are’ and ‘what to be’. Hence, the self exploration leads to our own improvement, our self evolution – we will become qualitatively better.
3. It is a process of knowing oneself and through that, knowing the entire existence: The exploration starts by asking simple questions about ourselves, which gives our clarity about our being, and then clarity about everything around us.
4. It is a process of recognizing one’s relationship with every unit in existence and fulfilling it: It is a process of becoming aware about our right relationship with other entities in existence and through that discovering the interconnectedness, co-existence and other in the entire existence, and living accordingly.
5. It is a process of knowing human conduct, human character and living accordingly: It is a process of discovering the definitiveness of human conduct and human character and enabling one to be definite in thought, behaviour and work.
6. It is a process of being in harmony in oneself and in harmony with entire existence: This process of self exploration helps us to be in harmony with ourselves and with everything around.
7. It is a process of identifying our innateness and moving towards self organization and self expression: This process of self exploration helps us to identify our swatva and through that acquiring swatantrata and swarajya.

Swatva: Innateness of self – the natural acceptance of harmony

Swatantrata: Being self- organized – being in harmony with oneself

Swarajya: Self-expression, self- extension – living in harmony with others

The swatva is already there, intact in each one of us. By being in dialogue with it, we attain swatantrata enabling us to work for swarajya.

Happiness and Prosperity

Happiness may be defined as being in harmony/synergy in the state/ situation that I live in. “A state or situation in which I live, if there is harmony in it then I like to be in that state/situation. The state of liking is happiness.” Happiness is a state of mind or feeling characterized by contentment, love, satisfaction, pleasure or joy. Happiness may be described as consisting of positive emotions and positive activities. There may be three kinds of happiness: pleasure, engagement, and meaning. In other words, freedom from want and distress, consciousness of the good order of things, assurance of one’s place in the universe or society, inner peace and so forth. Happiness is the state of mind, where we feel good in most of the walk of life.

The feeling of having or making available more than required physical facilities is prosperity. Almost all of us feel that wealth alone means prosperity and try to explain this phenomenon on this nonexistent or half fact. We are trying to achieve happiness and prosperity by maximizing accumulation and consumption of physical facilities. It is becoming anti-ecological and anti-people, and threatening the human survival itself. For prosperity, two things are required-

1. Identification of the required quantity of physical facilities, and
2. Ensuring availability / production of more than required physical facilities.

We can be prosperous only if there is a limit to the need for physical facilities. If there is no limit what so ever be the availability the feeling of prosperity cannot be assured. Secondly, just assessing the need is not enough. We need to be able to produce or make available more than the perceived need.

Difference between prosperity and wealth

Prosperity is a feeling of having more than required physical facilities; it is not just physical facilities. Almost all of us feel that wealth alone means prosperity and try to explain this phenomenon on this nonexistent or half fact. Wealth is a physical thing. It means having money, or having a lot of physical facilities or both. This is a very important distinction. We mostly fail to make this distinction today. We keep working for wealth, without realizing that the basic desire is for the feeling of prosperity, to have a feeling of having enough. Prosperity is more acceptable to us because wealth is just a part of prosperity. We are trying to achieve happiness and prosperity by maximizing accumulation and consumption of physical facilities. It is becoming anti-ecological and anti-people, and threatening the human survival itself. A person has lot of money, but does not want to share even a bit of it. The person ‘has wealth’ but feels ‘deprived’. If one felt prosperous he/she would have shared what one has, since there is lot more than enough wealth anyway.