

Contemporary Significance of Value Education

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Abstract

Contemporary situation of India should be visualized with respect to its growing impact of urbanization, increasing competition, and complex socio-economic issues. This changed focus can be related with identifying the importance of instilling values like integrity, empathy, social responsibility, and respect for diversity. In this framework, value education becomes a mode to equip the growing uncertainties in the periphery of micro as well as macro level. Value- education talks not just about teaching morals; it is also about shaping of responsible, compassionate individuals who will perform their duties for future society. The important issue of discussion is making the relevance of value education in a highly competitive and fast-paced social milieu. Thus, morality and ethical sensibility play significant role in the newly developed social construct. Integration is needed between the thought process and real execution.

CONCEPTUALIZATION:

Values are shared beliefs about the goals toward which humans should strive. Values are linked with principles that – a] guide our decisions and behaviour , b] influence our emotions and 3] help define who we are, what we believe and how we live. [Palmarozza: 2014] Education is an institution which is related with several learning processes. French sociologist Durkheim opined that the major function of education is the transmission of society's norms and values. On a holistic term education is linked with value. Value education acts as a blueprint for understanding and improvement of students in a more systematic and concrete way. In value education human values are inculcated through curriculum with the motive of cognitive, affective and sensory motor level of development. Actually, it is a medium of channelization of life energy in pursuit of internal and external growth of personality. Thus, value education must not be taken as an independent subject rather it should be linked with an integrative approach. According to some theoretician, value education ultimately leads to 'self and social empowerment'. Through this medium school can link individual with wider society. Palmarozza [2014] pointed out that in order to be effective, a value based education programme would need to a] educate students from an early age on the nature and the importance of fine values as guides for life, b] show that values are common to all traditions – spiritual and temporal, c] demonstrate the practical application of values in the studies and activities of the school and d] highlight the importance of living the values in developing effective relationships.

METHODOLOGY:

The paper is mainly based on secondary sources like books, journals, newspapers and so on. There are some objectives of the present researcher to clarify the issues. These are – 1] to explain the nature of value education and 2] to analyse the relevance of value education in contemporary society. A small survey is completed with 100 respondents from Kolkata who are linked with educational institutions like schools and colleges.

Some specific assumptions are associated with value education.

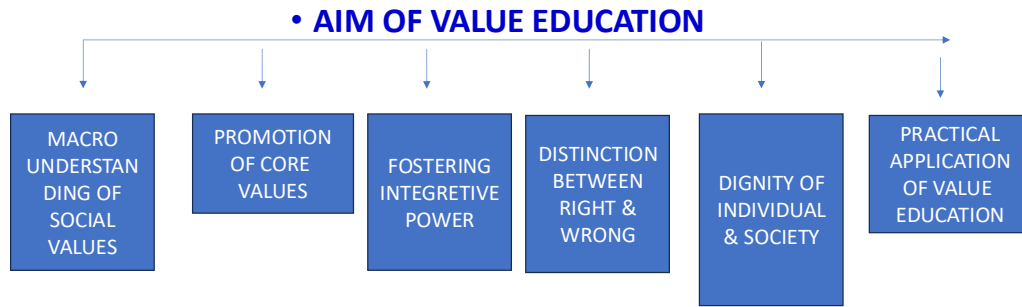
First, education of value is a continuous process. There is no final stage in this aspect.

Second, it is an indirect and complex process. Values are also dynamic and fast changing. Third, it is a time taking process. There is no short cut method. Several levels and layers are linked with this process. Here focus is on development of values. Fourth, for nurturing values a proper coordination is needed for planning for resource and time management. Fifth, value education is a collaborative effort. Various agents are there for proper execution of value education. Formal agents like family, education, work place, mass media, religion and so on are playing significant role here. Informal agents like recreation, literary fact, music and other artistic activities have considerable functions in this sphere.

Need: Concept of value education becomes very popular now due to increasing demand of this kind of educational aspects. Today's world is governed by excessive and aggressive competition in all spheres of life, education is no exception. So, students have to learn the skill of detachment from this kind of hostile scenario. The ever-growing importance of individualism is focused in contemporary society. To escape from the eternal trap of detachment emotional bonding must be enhanced. Learners can't relate the significance of their schooling and studying several subjects of curriculum in a specific manner. Their learning is delimited into parochial periphery of syllabus. They are completely ignorant about the association of them with society and environment. They are interested in taking part in welfare activities of society, but they are unknown about the means to reach the goal. Value education can show them the path of establishing the close bonding with society. They will be matured, complete as well as satisfied after attaining this bond of relationship. Value education can act as a bridge in this context. Henceforth it can be said that value education is seen as a mechanism to make the students complete social beings.

Now society is going through a phase of degradation with multi-dimensional aspects of modernization. Globalization, materialism, consumerism, commercialization are some external social processes which are considered as causes of deterioration of social values. These can be known as direct factors of this kind of degeneration. There are some important indirect factors like climatic changes, environmental degradation, violence and so on. After unmasking the truth behind this, it is found that direct and indirect factors collectively lead to insatiable insecurities. In a broader sense these insecurities and instabilities ultimately take shape of feeling of acceleration of personal desires specifically in individualistic life styles. These kinds of mentality would be dangerous because there are possibilities of over whelming presence of alienation and pessimism.

Coping strategies are mainly linked with seeking of mental equilibrium and harmony. Thus collectivism, cooperation, modesty are mechanisms of maintenance of societal patterns. So apart from cultural diversities in multicultural societies like India, cultural assimilation becomes the leading value for maintenance of unified cultural identity. Value education teaches the tenants of cultural synthesis with harmonizing tradition and modernizing orientation. It also helps to realize the balancing aspects between individual and societal interest. Beena Indrani [2012] pointed out several reasons for degradation of value in contemporary scenario. These are absence of respects to others, breaking of laws, regulation and rules, breakdown of parental control in families, crime, corruption and so on.



The Diagram is prepared by the researcher

Palmarozza [2014] divided social values in two types --- universal and modern. Universal values are a) natural to all human beings, b) applicable to all, c) appropriate to all time and space. These values bring balance, happiness and peace to all. Truth, love, justice and freedom are examples of such values. Related values are honesty, integrity, compassion and friendship, fairness and lawfulness, responsibility and duty. The focus of modern times is the achievement of quantifiable short term goals. This includes making money, gaining recognition, assuming a position of authority, valuable possessions and experiencing various tangible pleasures. Excess is the buzz word in this society. Palmarozza [2014] defined that the Oxford dictionary has added a word ‘affluenza’. This is a disease afflicting only the affluent people.

THEORETICAL LINKAGE:

| NAME OF THEORETICIAN | MAIN ISSUES |
|----------------------|---|
| DURKHEIM | functional relation of value education with society -- Transmission of society’s norms and values are principal function of education according to him. Society can survive only if there exists among its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity; education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the child from the beginning the essential similarities which collective life demands. Social life would be impossible without these essential similarities, cooperation, social solidarity. Through the existence of fixed set of rules members of society interact with each other. Durkheim defined that it is by respecting the school rules that the child learns to respect rules in general, that he develops the habit of self control and restraint simply because he should control and restrain himself. |
| T. PARSONS | Parsons discussed that school takes over the role as the focal socializing agency. School socializes individual into the basic values. Parsons maintains |

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|----------------------|---|
| | that value consensus is essential for proper societal operation. |
| SMELSER | Another version of functionalist theory is seen in human capital theory of education. Smelser [1993] defined that education is not something that is consumed by its receivers; rather, it is an investment in their future. |
| CONFLICT PERSPECTIVE | Conflict perspective focuses on disharmony. Conflict, dissociation, competition all aspects are parts of conflict theory as a whole. A growing disagreement is visualized between modern values and traditional value related with education. |

As a result, a synthesis takes place. Value education begins with the synthesis. Interactionist perspective is linked with action and interaction on the basis of meaning. Value education encourages interactions between mother, father, other guardians, teachers, students and so on. Act of spreading value is somewhat related to a pyramid of process of communication. It can help to analyse the way of spreading value from individual level to society wide process.

Value education is linked with manifold possibilities of positive impact. It helps to initiate the process of self development within the students. In this component there are some related virtues like confidence, politeness, modesty, honesty, integrity, patience, sincerity and so on. Value education inculcates the feeling of responsibility towards work. Resourcefulness, motivation, cooperation, team spirit are related criteria of this aspect. Social responsibility also enhances with the proper execution of value education. Consciousness towards core universal values like justice, freedom, equality, secularism, sustainable development is associated virtues. Belief in dignity and real worth of human potential comes with value education. Concentration, receptivity, love, kindness, care, trust, gratitude, respect are closely linked virtue of this aspect. Creative thinking as a power emerges within students with the focus of analysis, experimentation, insight, imagination and similar other feelings. Appreciation of beauty incorporates the emotions like love for art and aesthetics, harmony and mental balance among the students. As a result, they can feel the force of connection within themselves.

Education as a whole is linked with transmission of culture. Value is a part of culture. So in other words, value education is also cultural transmission from one generation to other. Cultural heritage is also transmitted in this way. Value education is very closely linked with the process of socialization. Hence apart from school and educational institutions family and relatives act as important agent of value education. Value education operates as a social force in the formation of personality traits of an individual. Attitudes of individuals become reformed with the execution of value education. As a result, individual can go towards betterment. Value education performs the role of integrative force in society. It should be remembered that the term ‘value’ is relative and subjective. Elitist version of value is different from the subaltern perception. Thus, value education can’t be objective and ethically neutral. Value education is linked with mental paradigm.

On the basis of a primary survey of 100 respondents, it can be said that value education becomes a need of today’s life in most of the cases.

NEED OF VALUE EDUCATION

| OPINION | FREQUENCY (%) |
|---------|---------------|
| Yes | 86 (86%) |
| No | 6 (6%) |
| Neutral | 8 (8%) |
| Total | 100(100%) |

RELEVANCE:

Value education positively shapes relationships, behaviour, choices and sense of self. Hence this becomes a necessity for future success of the students in general. In Indian society value education has a glorious tradition from ancient period. This trend is interlinked with philosophy of life with a spark of divinity and spirituality. In some school value education is known as moral science. Modern school system is going through a planned execution of value education. Some schools have specific books on this subject. In activity oriented focus some schools arrange programmes on specific occasions to highlight values like solidarity, unity and so on. Different relevant stories with appropriate morals can be used as study materials for this purpose. Several video clippings, power point presentation, project work all are potential sources of value education. Proper planning and utilization of potential source can be considered as great help in this context. The concept is not new, but the presentation and packaging of this genre is highly attractive. It can be presented in contextual forms and contents with the eternal worth. Miraculous result will indicate a bright future of the new generation with the aid of value education. Hence with the help of value education India can go ahead with the dream of peaceful, balanced and happy society.

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