

A study of Values education in India: Multinational school-based values education schemes

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ABSTRACT

In terms of socialization, the modern system of mass education is second only to the family in importance. It promotes two main socializing tasks: homogenization and social sorting. Students from diverse backgrounds learn a standardized curriculum that effectively transforms diversity into homogeneity. Students learn a common knowledge base, a common culture, and a common sense of society's official priorities, and perhaps more importantly, they learn to locate their place within it. They are provided with a unifying framework for participation in institutional life and at the same time are sorted into different paths. Those who demonstrate facility within the standards established by curriculum or through the informal patterns of status differentiation in student social life are set on trajectories to high-status positions in society. Those who do less well are gradually confined to lower, subordinate positions in society.

1. Introduction

Value education is the process by which people give moral values to each other.^[1] It can be an activity that can take place in any human organisation during which people are assisted by others, who may be older, in a condition experienced to make explicit our ethics in order to assess the effectiveness of these values and associated behaviour for their own and others' long term well-being, and to reflect on and acquire other values and behaviour which they recognise as being more effective for long term well-being of self and others. There is a difference between literacy and education.

There has been very little reliable research on the results of values education classes, but there are some encouraging preliminary results.^[2]

One definition refers to it as the process that gives young people an initiation into values, giving knowledge of the rules needed to function in this mode of relating to other people, and to seek the development in the student a grasp of certain underlying principles, together with the ability to apply these rules intelligently, and to have the settled disposition to do so.^[3] Some researchers use the concept values education as an umbrella of concepts that includes moral education and citizenship education.^{[4][5][6]} Themes that values education can address to varying degrees are character, moral development, Religious Education, Spiritual development, citizenship education, personal development, social development and cultural development.^[7]

There is a further distinction between explicit values education and implicit values education^{[8][9]} where:

- *explicit values education* is associated with those different pedagogies, methods or programmes that teachers or educators use in order to create learning experiences for students when it comes to value questions.

Another definition of value education is "learning about self and wisdom of life" in a self exploratory, systematic and scientific way through formal education.

2. Literature review

Material wealth is considered the hallmark of success in many nations of the world, but as Emerson (2009) is reputed to have said, a person's real success should be measured instead by the values that he or she possesses such as empathy, care, love, enthusiasm, and humaneness. Today, there is a gradual moral decline in society's and humankind's values. Wars ravage nations, indifference marks general human relations, love refers more to the body than to the mind, and redeeming the society of evils that stalk it is more of a vision of the future than an immediate need. It is time that educators stepped in and made efforts to rekindle the desire of human beings to develop personal, social, and professional moral values. Today, there is a need to re-introduce the subject of moral values in the curriculum of Indian students, especially in the higher education sector, since society seems to have lost much of its faith in the ethical values of humanity.

These values have always been emphasized in Indian epics, which were orally learned in the past. What has been viewed for so long as a family responsibility, value education should become an important part of the curriculum of any educating body. The responsibility of strengthening the values of a society lies not only in the individual's hands; educators must assume the role of mentors in this time of need and bring about change to usher in a better world—a world of unselfish concern for those around us. India, as any other country, is going through an identity crisis—the new and vibrant present challenges its rich past and values. This paper discusses the need for promoting moral values in society and the role of educators in imparting value education to students, especially in the Indian context. The Indian economy is rapidly globalizing, and India's reputation as a land of seers and savants who have laid emphasis on personal and societal values needs to be recognized.

India has a glorious reputation for being the land of wise and spiritually uplifted souls. Her people's innate sense of appreciation of life and fine values has added strength to the cultural ethos of the innumerable communities of different religions, ethos, and customs. Their strong principles have groomed them into rulers of the finest caliber. The warriors and clans people found in the Mahabharatha have taught the world the value of courage; the Indian king Harishchandra exemplifies the victory of human spirit over weak flesh; the social reformer Ambedkar stands for the very essence of joyful and vibrant existence in the face of oppressive casteism; the Indian Queen, Rani Jhansi who led the Indian soldiers in a battle against the British in the very first Indian War of Independence manifests the never-say-die spirit; the noble and compassionate King Ashoka teaches the very concept of compassion and mercy; the Indian leader, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi shows us the power of non-violence; and the list goes on. These men and women have proved that the timbre of soul-strength measures success and not material gains or status. Such men and women stand tall because they teach us the significant message that humanity's dreams and visions are born out of the noble values that they have cherished throughout their lives. Indian epics such as Ramayana and the Mahabharatha have given utmost importance to the ideal man or woman possessed of virtues who are role models to humankind. These epics and the Panchatantra stories that emphasize the need for personal values have long been the traditional resources to impart value education to Indian students. The Thirukural, a compendium of couplets in Tamil, presents 1330 values. These values that its author Thiruvalluvur espouses are still held as models of a virtuous human being in Tamil Nadu, where Thiruvalluvar lived.

For all Indians, these values form the basis on which even grandmother tales are built. But certain values like dignity of labor, punctuality, and team spirit are found lacking in the Indian ethos, leading to communities based on the types of work their members do or profession they follow. Because there is little spirit of co-operation in group work, brilliant individual efforts occur more often than group efforts. These are markedly noted when good companies offer plum jobs to the student community. To the sheer desperation of all concerned, students display an unwillingness or resistance to participation in group work. Educators should give prime importance to rectifying these shortcomings as preparation for Indian students to take jobs in global environs. It is necessary to analyze the factors that influence values in order to understand how they can be used to strengthen moral values in students. Students who will make up a knowledgeable and skillful work force with strong ethics and sound moral principles will then be able to stimulate and propel the country's economic growth.

3. Commonality in many "educations"

Moral education

Morals as socio-legal-religious norms are supposed to help people behave responsibly. However, not all morals lead to responsible behaviour. Values education can show which morals are "bad" morals and which are "good". The change in behavior comes from confusing questions about right and wrong.^{[10][11][12][13]}

American psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg who specialized in research on moral education and reasoning, and was best known for his theory of stages of moral development, believed children needed to be in an environment that allowed for open and public discussion of day-to-day conflicts and problems to develop their moral reasoning ability.^{[14][15][16]}

Teacher education

Cross has made a start at documenting some teacher training attempts.^[17]

Multinational school-based values education schemes

Living Values Education Programme (LVEP)

This project of worldwide proportions inspired by the new religious movement called the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University incorporates twelve values (unity, peace, happiness, hope, humility, simplicity, trust, freedom, co-operation, honesty, courage, love),^[18] and has formed the basis of the whole-school ethos approach in schools such as West Kidlington Primary School, Kidlington whose head master Neil Hawkes and Values education coordinators Linda Heppenstall used the work and other programmes to help them form a values-based school.^{[19][20]} The LVEP website lists 54 countries where values education projects are undertaken.^[21]

Human Values Foundation

The Human Values Foundation was established in 1995 to make available worldwide, a comprehensive values-themed programme for children from 4 to 12 years entitled "Education in Human Values". Its fully resourced lesson plans utilise familiar teaching techniques of discussion, story-telling, quotations, group singing, activities to reinforce learning and times of quiet reflection. Following the success of "EHV", a second programme was published – Social and Emotional Education ("SEE"), primarily for ages 12 to 14+ but it has also proved constructive for older children identified as likely to benefit from help getting their lives 'back on track'. The programmes enable children and young people to explore and put into practice a wide spectrum of values with the potential to enrich their lives. Through the experiential learning, over time participants develop a well considered personal morality, all the while gaining invaluable emotional and social skills to help them lead happy, fulfilled, successful lives.

Character education

Character education is an umbrella term generally used to describe the teaching of children in a manner that will help them develop as personal and social beings. However, this definition requires research to explain what is meant by "personal and social being". Concepts that fall under this term include social and emotional learning, moral reasoning/cognitive development, life skills education, health education; violence prevention, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and conflict resolution and mediation. Lickona (1996) mentions eleven principles of successful character education.^[22] It seems to have been applied in the UK^[23] and the United States^[24]

Science of Living

Science of Living (Jeevan Vigyan; Jeevan = Life and Vigyan = Science) is a detailed program that complements the

current educational approach with spiritual and value based learning. While both mental and physical development is needed for a student's growth, Jeevan Vigyan adds a third pillar – that of emotional intelligence and morality (or values) – to education in schools and colleges. A combination of theory and practice, Jeevan Vigyan draws on the findings of various life-sciences as well as nutritional sciences. Our parasympathetic nervous system and endocrinal system are known to be the drivers of our emotions and our behavior. These biological centers can be influenced Science of Living through a system of yogic exercises, breathing exercises, medication and contemplation. Science of Living's source of inspiration is Jain Acharya Ganadhipati Shri Tulsi (1914–1997). His thoughts were further developed and expanded by Acharya Shri Mahapragya (1920–2010). Currently Muni Shri Kishan Lal Ji, under the leadership of Acharya Shri Mahashraman, is the Principal of SOL.^{[25][26]}

4. Conclusion

It is to be remembered that in the past, elders themselves taught values to their wards. Parents led by example. Grandparents enlightened young receptive minds with stories, fables, and parables. Today, many Indian parents have hardly any "quality time" for their children because they are themselves busy chasing material success. Often grandparents are in homes for the aged. Heroes and heroines are frequently not those who perform acts of valor or those who are pure and selfless as in the Puranas or epics or Holy texts. Young people today emulate glamorous film stars and admire successful moneymakers. Swami Vivekananda (1971) is relevant even in these modern days when he says, Today, when material ideas are at the height of their glory and power, today when man is likely to forget his divine nature, through his (growing) dependence on matter, and is likely to be reduced to a mere money-making machine, an adjustment is necessary

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