

## SHAPING VALUE BASED PERSONALITY FOR THE GENERATION TO COME

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### ABSTRACT

There is little doubt that now-a-days life is getting complicated day by day. Problems outnumber the solutions. Obviously, the world is on the lookout for such people who can lead the world from chaos to illumination. This is possible only by a person who has values closer to the heart. The present educational system is not able to address the problems related to global social justice adequately, mainly due to lack of value based personalities. While the manners in which these problems are perceived, articulated and prioritized vary a lot, most civil societies are engaged in trying to solve them in their own way. In the present context, there are some important stake holders like society, government, education system, industry etc. For the well being of the society, these systems need to work together. They play a major role in the overall growth of a global social justice and an individual's personality.

Higher education in the present era is decided by economic motivation without any due consideration to values that separate man from animals. Modern education has been striving to create a more skilled work force in the name of economic development and seems to have forgotten its real goal of developing a sound and holistic personality of the person. It is faltering in its role of ensuring all round development of body, mind and soul. The offshoot of such a system manifests in urbanization, industrialization, mechanization, consumerism, insensitivity, insecurity, distrust, lack of fellow feeling, lack of honor for human values etc, giving rise to discontent, maladjustment, conflict, confrontation etc that lead to drug abuse, malpractices, terrorism, suicide, murder and such crimes, both at the local and individual level as well as at the global and society level. The overall degradation of values in society at large has left a negative impact on the mindset of youngsters. Indian educationists like Dr. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Mudaliar, Mr. Ramamurthy and a host have been emphasizing on the inculcation of human values through the educational system for bright future leadership. The value based personalities who can be cited as role models for developing future leadership are Lord Buddha, Mahavir, Christ, Guru Nanak, Gandhi, Martin Luther, and Einstein to name a few. This list is long and new names are being added every day.

**KEYWORDS:** Value Education, Generation, Personality, Leadership.

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## CONCEPT

Value education is derived from two Latin words: 'Velere' and 'Educatio'. The word 'Velere' means to be worth, to be strong and the word 'educatio' refers to the development of character. Thus value has been defined as a belief upon which man acts by preference. Human beings are expected to live by certain values. They guide their behavior and add meaning to their existence. A value based personality takes a decision based on the value system. He is not swayed by petty consideration based on selfish ends, interests and parochial outlook. Earlier in the Vedic era, there were the teachers and the taught personifying the value system and consequently India was viewed as the global guru.

Values are such principles that can lead to the advancement of mankind. Recently

The Hindustan Times reported, 'A young couple in a combat style killed 14 people and seriously wounded more than a dozen at a social service at San Bernardino in America.' [1] These kinds of incidents are on rise and that too in an advanced country like America that is known for science and technology. The scholars such as Roy Chaudhary (1989) [2], Reddy and Reddy (1992) [3] and Bhat (1996) [4] have explained the concept of value education as being relevant to the objective of the development of an individual, character –building and upholding of human dignity and self respect.

The term value education has gained currency in the recent time but the educationists to the core have been working on this since long. For example, when Swami Shri Sri Ramsharanji Maharaj founded Gandhi Vidya Mandir at Sardar Shahr way back in 1950, he verbalized the vision and the mission of the institute as, 'The education here should be such that a person becomes a great human being and a true citizen'. [5]

For developing value based personalities in the time to come, the educationists have been realizing the magnitude of value education for long. 'Education should permeate every scholastic, co-curricular and extra-curricular activity in the educational system. What is required is a paradigm shift in the national thinking at the highest level so that value education moves to the centre stage. It should enable the educational process to produce persons of character, who will build a global civilization based on love, non-violence, peace and harmony.' [6]

Mankind cannot reach the pinnacle of glory merely by science and technology. The reason is obvious. They don't have the discerning eyes to differentiate between good and bad. Only value education can make a primitive man a global leader. Value education implies inculcating a sense of humanism, a deep sense of concern for the well-being of others and the mankind. It moulds social, moral, aesthetic, and spiritual aspects of a person. Generally these aspects of a leaders' personality are often underestimated. It teaches us to preserve whatever is good and useful in what we have inherited from politics, management, society, culture, environment and other sources.

It motivates the leaders to accept and respect the attitude and behavior of those who differ from him. It does not imply value imposition or indoctrination. It has the potential to mould a diseased mind into a very sharp, brilliant, innocent, and sensitive mind of a leader.

## VALUE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF INDIA & ITS ROLE

India enjoyed the reputation of being the global guru in the ancient time. The mighty reason for this status was the fact that education was based on Indian ethos and values. Regardless of the fact

whether the pupil was a prince or a pauper, he was generally at par in the eyes of the guru. The pupil has to undergo the same rigorous training like collecting firewood from the jungle or serving the guru in the daily chores. Education was an effective means for inculcation and cultivation of values, moral, and character building. There was generally no compromise on education.

To develop value based personality Indian educational system attached proper significance to value education. 'Indian education since time immemorial has been mainly concerned with shaping human beings into men and women of character, imbued with human values. In recent times, a reference may be made to Gandhi's concept of Basic Education, where stress was laid on nurturing the learner into a self-dependent, good citizen, capable of living together in peace and harmony with other people. This being a macro term for Human Values, which could further be subdivided into various behavioral values'.[7]

But now the situation has taken a U turn in India. Consequently India has been dethroned from being the global guru. 'It has long been felt by perspicacious observers of the educational scene in India that the educational system has lost its moorings. While educational institutions should groom children into men and women of character, who follow values in their daily life and steer mankind towards a global civilization, what they actually churn out is a motley crowd of intellectual giants who are also moral pygmies. There is an overwhelming emphasis on improving the power to memorize facts, without developing the faculties of understanding, compassion, love, aesthetics and creativity'.[8]

### **SOURCE OF VALUE BASED PERSONALITY IN INDIAN CONTEXT**

Our ancestors rated values very high. In fact they regarded and based them as the goals of life and they highlighted them as Purusaartha, i.e., what

is desired in a man. Their number ran at four viz. Dharma, (value of virtue), Artha (wealth), Kama (Pleasure), and Moksha (Liberation). This scientific explanation of values makes it amply clear that our forefathers took into account the biological as well as cognitive needs. The biological needs are related to food, sleep, fear, sex etc. by virtue of which human behavior is said to be similar to animal behavior. But the values such as Dharma and Moksha give a sublime meaning to life. Thus, Dharma is regarded as a comprehensive value underlying every aspect of life and it is placed in the category of intrinsic values of life. The highest perfection of these three values—Artha, Kama, and Dharma was conceived as the value of Moksha, a state of liberation from life in which the individual achieves liberation from Raga (attachment and desire), and Dwesh (jealousy), loses all his yearnings and thus having overcome his ignorance, arrives at a state of perfect knowledge. This state of mind is conceived as the highest objective of human life and this is why it was called the ultimate value.

### **PRESENT INDIAN SOCIETY**

Now the million dollar question arises: Does the Indian society continue to accept these values? The response is a big no. It can be argued that the Indian society is heading towards materialism blatantly in the name of modernization. The Report of the Standing Parliamentary Committee on Human Resource Development took stock of the present situation vis-a-vis the ancient system in the following words, 'In ancient times in gurukuls, emphasis used to be primarily on building the character of student. Today right from the schools up to the professional college, emphasis is on acquiring techniques and not values.'[9] It further says, 'We seem to have forgotten that skills acquired on the computers tend to become outdated after some time but values remain forever. In other words, the present day education is nothing but an

information transmission process. Our educational system aims at only information based knowledge, and the holistic views of turning the student into a perfect human being and useful member of society have been completely set aside'.[9]

## **EROSION IN VALUE SYSTEM & INDIAN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP**

The ashram system that was the backbone of the Indian society has thinned away. Education was assigned the ultimate aim of searching for the eternal virtues of this world after fulfilling one's corporal duties and functions since it was held that only such knowledge could secure a man's salvation. Various forms and powers of nature were regarded and treated as deities. For example, Dhau, Prithavi, Varuna, Indra, the Sun and Usha were respectively the god of the sky, the goddess of land, the god of sky, the god of rain, the manifest form of god Vishnu, the goddess of the dawn, etc. Devotees would please their gods and goddesses through ritual performance of yajans. With the passage of time, these polytheistic beliefs tended to merge into a monotheistic concept of a single God and resultantly, the concept of the unique Brahma came into being. Ancestors observed the regularity and continuity in the movements of the planets and the alternation of the seasons, the Vedic sages conceived of a universal code of conduct and regulation that ensured smooth and regular functioning of the whole universe. To such a system they termed 'rit' (tradition, practice, custom, order etc). In due course of time, they started to use the term Dharma in lieu of 'rit'. It is worth analyzing the term Dharma as a concept because when viewed in the context of the Sanskrit root dhri from which it is derived it means adopting, that is, by the adoption of which an individual can lead a systematic, well ordered and disciplined life in this world and can achieve his desired goals of life. In pursuance of this concept, Dharma could turn out to be the best

means to attain the ultimate goal of life, i.e., the *Moksha*.

Truth (*Satya*), Righteous conduct (*Dharm*), Peace (*Shanti*), Love (*Prem*) and Non-violence (*Ahimsa*) are the core universal values, which can be identified as the foundation stones on which the value-based personality for future leadership can be built. These five are indeed universal values and respectively represent the five domains of human personality, intellectual, physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual. They are also correspondingly co-related with the five major objectives of education, namely, knowledge, skill, balance, vision and identity.

## **YESTER ERA & PRESENT INDIAN SOCIETY**

In the present system of society, the first and primary stage of life does not necessarily begin with *Brahamcharya* (celibacy) as was the case with the ancient Indian society. Rather some so called high status public schools publicly promote materialism in the name of grooming the child to face the future successfully. They are exposing the child to the blatant market forces openly. They inculcate such values that life is a war (struggle) and that everything is fair in love and war. What a misconception! If life is a war and if there is no room for peace, then how can such a life be called worth living? However, the present education system is promoting cut throat competition and breeding contempt for our ancient wisdom and knowledge. The so called educated prefer the western values. The modern education has been striving for creating a more skilled force in the name of economic development and has lost sight of the noble goals of life such as *Dharma* and *Moksha* altogether. If, education, which is meant for the development of all round personality of a person, can go to debase a person to such a low level of reducing him to a beast, then it can hardly be education in the real sense. In ancient Indian society, marriage was regarded as a sacred bond whose aim was to perpetuate the human race, to fulfill the ritual

observance of religion and to pay off the obligation of one's parents. Marriage and domestic life were steps towards the practice of values of *Artha* and *Kama* (procreation). Marriage was itself regarded as *samskara*, a ritual or an observance of virtue. There was an expectation of mutual understanding, respect and sacrifice between the spouses. The society empowered the girls to make their own choice about their life partner. The status of the wife was undoubtedly very high as no ritual was socially acceptable without the company of the wife. But now the sanctity of marriage institution is at stake. The society which would hear the word divorce under the rarest of the rare circumstances, is witnessing such words now and then on very flimsy and frivolous grounds. Today our contemporaries remain involved in pursuit of materialistic pleasures and satisfaction from the moment we rock in the cradle to the last moment when we are taken to the crematorium. Life no longer imparts any training for lofty ideals, detachment, for rest, for a withdrawal from the life of the senses. We lead a life engrossed in sensuality and mundane pleasures. As a result, in terms of values, we have limited ourselves to the values of *Artha* and *Kama*. For the practical purpose *Dharma* and *Moksha* have sunk into oblivion and it also appears that as of today we don't regret that because we are not aware of them like any animal. This does not auger well for any of the stake holders: couple, parents, children, relatives and others.

The NCERT and Gandhi Peace Foundation jointly sponsored studies in Gandhian values at the school stage (1979). In the document 'Reorientation of Curriculum Based On Gandhian Values', Truth, Non-violence, Freedom, Democracy, Sarva Dharma Sambhava, Equality, Self-realization, Purity of ends and means, Self discipline and cleanliness were considered as the basis of new social order. The document suggests that SUPW and Community Activities Participation should be a regular feature of the

school program with specific activities inside and outside the school.[10]

## **MEASURES REQUIRED FOR SHAPING VALUE BASED PERSONALITY**

### **STRESS ON CHARACTER**

A man of sound character views the whole world as his own family. He is not petty minded. He is in real sense broad minded. Only such a person is eligible to provide global leadership and the list is long with names such as Lord Buddha, Mahavir, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther, Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Einstein, Mother Teresa etc. 'Lofty ideals of character and integrity are being declared but the actions in different facets of public life reek with double standards, factionalism.

If youth unrest is to be resolved in future, a sense of humility and decency should be there.[11] Earlier such lessons used to be taught in the educational institutions that if money is lost, nothing is lost, if health is lost, something is lost, but if character is lost, everything is lost. Now-a-days the whole focus is on money making exercise.

### **REVAMPING EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

The educational system has become faulty. Value based personality can be shaped by revamping the system to prepare future leaders. 'The modern science and technology can be useful if they are utilized. At present man does not possess the wisdom to use this scientific and technological power properly. A number of crises have appeared due to the human selfishness, shortsightedness, and hunger for power.'[12] If mankind has to survive in future, there must be such efforts that negative things are checked and this can be best done through value education. Positive measures are required to make the future of mankind brighter. Today the education itself is devoid of lofty ideals required to lead the

mankind to the golden road of peace and progress.

### **SUITABLE RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS**

Now-a-days there is too much emphasis on materialistic education. Resultantly the students who are in the formative stages of their lives do not realize the importance of being generous and selfless. Such persons are unfit to be the true global leaders.

It is why Mudaliar Commission (1952-53), known as the Secondary Education Commission, constituted to look at the problems of Secondary Education in the country, recommended, 'introduction of religious and moral instruction' [13] and emphasized 'its role in, the growth and building of character of the learners, which ultimately reflect on society'. [13]

### **SOUND POLITICAL SYSTEM**

After the Second World War, the world was divided into two blocks: America and USSR. The UNO has come into being but at times it becomes useless. Petty politics and corruption right from micro to macro level have eaten into the vitals of the world. They are posing a major threat to the balanced and desirable development of a world. The status of India on the Corruption Index tells the whole story. India is one of the most corrupt countries of the world. Democracy is the ideal of our entire political organization. Every citizen has been granted equality, liberty and the fundamental rights as a democratic citizen but practically the powerful are more equal and less powerful are less equal. This dictum has got the grain of truth that power corrupts a man and absolute power corrupts a man absolutely.

The global institution such as Global Ombudsman, Global as well as National Public Grievance Redressal System should be put in place and strengthened. 'The growing concern over the erosion of essential values and an increasing cynicism in society has brought to

focus the need for readjustments in the curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for the cultivation of social and moral values. In our culturally plural society, education should foster universal and eternal values, oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. Such value education should help eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism.' [14]

### **CHECK ON COMMERCIALIZATION & INDUSTRIALIZATION**

In the wake of rapid industrialization values have lost luster to industrialists. There are growing complexities of professional structure, increase in individualism, selfishness, parochialism, and conflict of interest among different sections of society. In the Indian context, the Chavan Committee realized the problem and categorically stated, 'Values are the principles which are consistent and universal, and which direct our action and activities. Although there has been great advancement in science and technology, there has been a gradual erosion of our present society.' [15] 'Our young generation under the growing influence of negative aspects of western culture is stranded on the cross-roads, not able to decide which direction to take.' [16]

### **FOCUS ON SPIRITUALISM AND CO-EXISTENCE**

As a result of quick economic growth, influence of western culture, over mechanization, urbanization and craving for materialistic life, there has been a loss of values and of value system and in the country as a whole, materialistic needs and never ending lust to earn more and more by putting in less and less effort, therefore, have to be balanced by a value-based life and by attitude that earning money is for leading respectable life and for helping others who are disadvantaged. Where and when should this value orientation take place in the life of any person?

'Just as moral values affect the relations between man and man, so do spiritual values in his relation with himself. The individual is not only a body: he is also a soul. He does not live by bread alone; he wants inner peace and happiness. If he loses all spiritual values, he loses the possibility of being at peace with himself. It is necessary to have some faith in things beyond flesh, some identification with a purpose greater than oneself in order to achieve this mental equilibrium.'[17]

### **PRIORITY ON SOCIAL SERVICE**

It is concerned with the progress and development of the body by gaining its sustenance, its material comfort and ease. This education is common to animal and man. Materialism has been diagnosed as the malaise of the present education system. 'The prevailing materialistic ethos and the consequent conflicts, maladies and paradoxes are directly a result of this great deficiency in our present education system.'[18] Teaching of moral and spiritual values in educational institutions was desirable and, 'the inculcation of good manners, social service and true patriotism should be unceasingly stressed upon at all stages'.[19]

The National Policy on Education also expressed grave concern over the erosion of basic values and growing tendency of class conflict. The NPE said, 'In our country there are pluralistic cultures, so education should foster universal and eternal values oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. Such value education should help eliminate obscurantism, fanaticism, violence, superstition, fatalism and that value education should have a profound positive content oriented towards universal perceptions'.[20]

### **ROLE MODELS**

The present era is such that there are no role models left for emulation. Day by day the dearth of role model is rapidly growing. Pandit Shriram Acharya said on value education, 'Man is far

superior to other creatures. So, naturally it is expected of him that he should be a role model for others.'[21] 'The type of the school is an important factor that influences the values of students to a great extent and that teachers differ in their values because of the type of the schools and as such it influences the teachers' values also.'[22]

The society will have to read the writing on the wall and accordingly present the role models before the present generation to emulate so that value based personality can be cultivated for future. Then there is the crisis of the ideology of progress, 'None of these is new. These have persisted all along, but their nature and import have such dimensions today that were never experienced before in such a measure. There are also the times of erosion of human values, declining mutual trust, decreasing religious amity and declining social harmony strangely enough.'[23] Gandhiji had summarized the situation rather prophetically, 'Nature has enough to meet every body's needs but not anybody's greed'. There could be no statement that is so powerful and comprehensive to present the significance of the need to preserve man-nature relationship. It could be preserved only when society adheres to eternal human values, and ponders seriously on the spiritual objectives and goals of life. Sri Prakash Committee specifically recommended, 'inclusion of lives and teachings of great religious leaders and their philosophies, use of mass media, preparation of books to bring out the basic ideas of all religions and the essence of lives of great religious leaders.'[24]

### **BROAD VISION**

The nature of the present global society has undergone and is undergoing a sea change. In this new age, priorities have changed. Instead of the universality of a spiritual outlook, materialism and earthy outlook have been adopted. Global vision is the need of the hour.

The society is aspiring to be free from any kind of discrimination based on gender, caste, birth, religion, place of birth, and language. 'The world, however, is busy discussing nuclear warfare, violence, terrorism and fundamentalism. The spread of hatred, violence, destruction and devastation continues unabated in times when human beings have the wherewithal, knowledge and technology to make life better for everyone.' [25] Then the question is being asked, 'Is it not really strange that with adequate natural resources and sufficient human knowledge and know-how being possessed by human beings, millions and millions are hungry, undernourished and living in subhuman conditions?' [26] These guiding principles which organize our behavior constitute the values of contemporary societies. In the context of the world scenario there is contradiction at various levels. The powerful nations twist the arms of the weak nations on the so called ground of justice, equality, and fraternity but their ulterior motive is to grab power somehow on some pretexts. It is obvious that the society will have to have the global vision in the wider interest of mankind.

### **WORLD CITIZENSHIP**

Education has a well defined role of ensuring all round development of every person's body, mind, and soul but now it appears that it is faltering in its role.

The Mudaliar Commission on Secondary Education also realized the importance of the cultivation of holistic personality emphasizing, 'The supreme end of the educational process should be character building and molding holistic personality of students in such a way that they would be able to realize their full potential and contribute to the wellbeing of the community. The qualities like discipline, tolerance, patriotism cooperation, world citizenship and morality are expected to be inculcated in children through education.' [23] The Kothari Commission expressed the view that our education system

should 'inculcate social, moral and spiritual values by all means'. [27]

### **JUDICIOUS USE OF ICT**

With the advancement in information technology, the audio-visual media has dominated the information/ knowledge system of the world. The social fabric is being torn apart owing to the growing influence of the ICT. 'It is a considered view that stringent efforts are required on the part of the govt. to monitor the programs being aired/telecast through its media. Similar steps need to be taken so as to have a mechanism of quality control of programs under the private agencies, too.' [28]

### **CONGENIAL GLOBAL ATMOSPHERE**

Admittedly it is a fact that the red tapism and bureaucracy are the major road blocks in the road to progress and prosperity of mankind. Educationists, philosophers and thinkers have enunciated the ingredients of a transformed educational system that would fulfill the deepest urges and aspirations of humanity. Many of them even created experimental models, some of which survive till today.

In the absence of a mechanism that would cater to innovation and experimentation, they flounder in a morass of bureaucratic procedures. 'The system encourages either Government-run institutions which suffer from huge operational deficiencies or private empires put together by entrepreneurs with commercial motives.' [28] A Committee on Emotional Integration submitted its report, in 1961, the following recommendation of which deserves to be noticed, 'Although it is not possible to provide religious education as a part of curriculum for schools in a secular state, education will be incomplete if students are not helped to appreciate the spiritual values which the various religions represent to the people. Talks open to all on the teachings of various religions by able



and competent persons may be arranged in schools.’[29]

### **COMPASSIONATE SOCIETY**

In the name of being progressive and modern men, it has been misconstrued to be apathetic to the concerns of the fellow human beings. ‘Education is not limited to the imparting of information or the training in skills. It has to give the educated a proper sense of values. Scientists and technologists are also citizens and so have a social responsibility to the community in which they live.’[30] The society cannot afford to be callous and apathetic to the inculcation of values.

### **PEACE AND HARMONY**

Peace and harmony are a must for the survival of any democracy as well as mankind. The person having harmonious relationship with others can cultivate the value based personality for future relationship. ‘If a democracy like ours is to survive, a democracy which harbors so many faiths, races, and communities, education must cultivate in our youth an openness of mind and largeness of heart which would make capable of entertaining and blending into a harmonious pattern differences in ideas and behavior.’[31] Today the world is facing the problem of terrorism. The recent attack on Paris further highlights the fact that the present world is in dire need of peace and harmony by all means. Value education has to enable us to be in harmony within and in harmony with others.

### **CONCLUSION**

In one way or the other everybody is tension ridden. The present world wants such people who are their saviors. Such people have to be the epitome of a sound value system. The time has come when such persons are there to alleviate the sufferings of the mankind. At present the negative things are dominating. Life is not worth leading at times. As such the personalities embodying compassion, mercy, generosity,

honesty, integrity, sacrificing nature, truth, universal values etc. are the need of hour to lead the world from problem to solution. They are the hope of tomorrow. They are deservedly the global leaders. By following the age old value system, once again there can be value based personalities who can come to the rescue of the world.

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