

Value Education For Sustainable Socio-Economic Development

^{*}Dr. Jai Anand Shukul, [#]Dr. Prakash Mishra

Assistant Professor, BBA Department, St. Aloysius college, India. ^{*}prakash_mishra_2002@yahoo.co.in

Abstract Progress in the modern world is driven by knowledge, and knowledge producing societies. The quality of human capital of a country is an essential element of its growth and development. This brings to focus the quality of the educational apparatus of the country which is responsible for producing quality human capital. The tilt of contemporary education system towards material aspects of life is a matter of concern, as material advancement cannot be sustained at the cost of social, cultural or environmental decadence. Thus nation building would essentially require value education so as to build the character of its citizens that supports a peaceful and healthy social existence, a healthy political leadership un-spoilt by corruption and greed, better quality international relations seeking protection of the world habitat and peaceful coexistence of nations, and healthy business practices that emanate from value based corporate culture acknowledging the interest of the various stakeholders constituencies. India is seeking to benefit from its demographic advantage of being a young nation, however without the endowment of healthy values, the youth power of the country faces the danger of becoming counterproductive. Strong social values are a sine qua non for India's diverse society. Religious and cultural tolerance, sentiments against oppression of women, concern for environment protection and conservation, empathy towards the deprived sections of the society, are among the scores of virtues that can be developed only through value education. India is a cauldron of world's religions, yet it is a secular society having tolerance for all religions, thanks to the underlying social values. An empirical study conducted on a sample of parents and students at Jabalpur, M.P, revealed the strong inclination and appreciation for value education in the India society. Thus, value education is an important pillar of a civil society and a strong democracy. How we deal with it now shall decide our fortunes in the years to come.

Keywords: Value Education/ Sustainable Development/ Religious & Cultural tolerance/ Strong democracy

I. INTRODUCTION

The 21st Century is the century of knowledge. In the modern world knowledge underscores the movement and distribution of resources across the world. The fact that a country's capacity to create or harness knowledge decides the extent of its fortunes, brings to sharp focus the criticality of the quality of its human capital, and in turn, the quality of its educational apparatus. Education deals with the creation of knowledge and skills, and sports multifarious social, economic and strategic goals. Broadly, education has to promote sustained social and economic growth along with the enrichment of culture. Economic advancement at the cost of social decadence is not sustainable. Value education works towards building the character of a nation. It not only brings peace and harmony to the social fabric of a country, but also, influences its relations with the other country's of the world. India enjoys a unique position as the youngest nation, the largest democracy offering right to education to its youngsters, and also a country sporting one of the largest education systems in the world. With such unique position,

India is poised to reach new frontiers of civilization achievements. However, on the other hand there are also widespread concerns regarding the quality of education in the country, not to mention the growing problem of educated unemployed leading to instances of social strife.

The Value Education Systems

The value systems in the society determine the paths people follow in their day-to-day life, the decisions they make, the choices they exercise and their approach to solving their life problems. The complex social fabric of India needs strong value education to ensure cohesiveness without which it will not be able to act as one nation. Many of India's nagging problems can be solved through promoting value education.

The forces of globalization and information explosion have ushered profound changes in the Indian economy and society. India is now a more aggressive and participative member of the world community. One of the most remarkable advantages which India enjoys over the other world countries is its demographic profile wherein 65% of its population is under the age of 35 years, further, 25% of

its population is below the age of 25 years. This large youth segment is being looked at as a potential strength of the country. However, on the flip side the same youth become a liability if they are not economically productive and socially responsible citizens. India's future as a prosperous nation depends on a number of enabling factors. Empowering its youth socially and economically to become worthy citizens is of prime importance. However, the path ahead is difficult and laden with numerous difficulties, of which the most important is the re-establishment of values in the younger generation through quality and value education.

Sustainable Development:

Today, a common man sees education as a tool for economic empowerment. For students also it has a limited purpose. They aim at getting good marks in the examinations so that they may fetch good jobs. This orientation towards materialism has caused continuous drying out of values from the youth of the country which is manifest in the low sensitivities of the younger generation in regard to important issues such as environment, corruption in public life, poor quality education, crime against women, decadence in political leadership, commercialization of religion etc. Over the last few decades socio-cultural changes like transition from joint family to nuclear family system, excessive competition, parental expectations, undesirable impact of mass media and consumerism etc. are putting immense pressure on children, families and schools in regard to maintaining age old values. Both, the Educational Commission and National Policy on Education have expressed deep concerns over the fall in social, moral and spiritual values and have advocated new strategies in reinstating value education in schools

Value education determines the means and paths people or the society follows in dealing with its material realities. Education of the material kind is not sufficient by itself to sustain a healthy society, and in all likely-hood, would defeat the ultimate goal of universal peace and human welfare. Material progress cannot be sustained on a foundation of selfishness, greed, dishonesty and unfair treatment to others, as it would soon result in a dog-eat-dog situation in the society. Similarly, as a country, India will not be able to sustain its material growth if it is unable to imbibe at least the core values to its coming generations, not to mention that the religious and cultural diversity of the country necessitates a firmly entrenched value system for harmony and cohesiveness.

Education, as it has been traditionally understood a process of inculcating values to equip a person leading a socially agreeable and satisfying life. It is associated with character development of an individual. Values are the heart and soul of education and they pertain to all walks of human existence. There are ethical and moral values, ideological (religious / political) values, social values etc. They outline

our broad preferences concerning our responses to our life's experiences - what we deem 'right' or 'wrong'. Therefore, values affect our attitude and behaviour. They are the rationale of why people do what they do, and are applied to our thinking and evaluation of our goals (choices) and the means of achieving them. Values are not confined to the ambits of cultures or societies, but are universal in nature as they are used for identifying the good and the evil, the desirable and the undesirable. They should not be treated as ideal concepts but as 'empowering tools' to help meet contemporary challenges. Knowledge without values could turn into an uncontrolled beast against the existence for the society. Without value systems human behaviour would create imbalances in the environment that could even go on to threaten human existence.

II. RELIGIOUS & CULTURAL TOLERANCE

There is a growing concern for decadence in values in the modern societies where people have grown selfish and individualists having the 'me-first' attitude. The younger generation is less tolerant of differing views and is motivated more by material considerations than codes of ethics and honesty. Civility and decency are now considered old fashioned whereas brazen attitudes are in vogue. If we look at the world around us today we see that science and technology have started losing their true temper – that of welfare of the human kind; Public offices are known for their lack of empathy with the problems of common man and their lack of dedication to their duties. Further, public servants seem to have poor self-esteem that makes them shamefully corrupt. Political leadership is influenced by greed and personal gains. Value based leadership has been described by (Dean, 2008, p.61) as leading by example, doing the right thing for the right reasons and not compromising on Principles. The corruption in public life is a direct outcome of erosion in value leadership where personal integrity and is a must. Value based leadership has an important role to play in developing sound international relations.

In the globalizing world business competitiveness is based on quality, cost and innovation and no longer on the high skill, high value based advantages of developed countries. Globalization also dictates that the nations that succeed will be those that bring out the best in people and their potential. Research has revealed that values are critical for organizational performance and success. They help in creating a work culture of cohesiveness, trust and teamwork where employees can excel. Corporate cultures driven by strong value systems that account for stake holder interests, adaptation to circumstances and orientation to social good have outperformed the others. Organization Cultures are prime movers of competitive advantage and brand differentiation in private sector, and of cost effectiveness and quality of service in public organizations. Alignment of employee values with those of the organization not only

results in high performance, but also to serve as an important factor in retaining talent and building strong brands.

Strong democracy: --

In the political arena India has seen an unprecedented decadence in value leadership over the last few decades which have stuck at the roots of our democratic institutions. Over the past decade there has been a regular flow of scams of all kinds involving politicians, their kiths and kins, and also public servants irrespective of the political ideologies of the parties in power whether at the state or the centre. People unabashedly celebrate ill gotten wealth as it has come to be accepted as a perk for high positions. Election campaigns are mostly events of mudslinging on opponents rather than discussions of rational thoughts and plans for doing public good. The young breed of Indian politicians need to be buttressed in terms of their integrity, honour, compassion, moral courage and nationalism etc. as they hold the key to the unlocking the future potential of India. At the end of the day, it is still heartening that the spark against corrupt practices in public life is still alive, thanks to public movements such as that of Anna Hazare for the institution of Lok Pal.

Business and commerce are exploiting the natural resources undeterred by the threat of environmental disasters. The ecological disaster at Kedarnath and the devastating floods at Uttarakhand a couple of years back reflect public apathy towards environmental concerns. Forests have been cut, rivers are polluted with chemicals, ocean life is threatened by relentless fishing, many species of birds, animals and insects are on the verge of extinction. New Delhi, the Capital of India is no longer environmentally fit for living. Yet, there are many who mock endeavours such as 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' or movements to clean the rivers. Regrettably, despite their awareness of the evils of growing pollution, people do not abstain from activities that aggravate the situation. UNESCO Report titled 'Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future', alluding to our growing insensitivities to our environment have stated that "The crisis of sustainability, the fit between humanity and its habitat, is manifest in varying ways and degrees everywhere on Earth. It is not only a permanent feature on public agenda; for all practical purposes it is the agenda..... sustainability is about the terms and conditions of human survival and yet we still educate at all levels as if no such crisis existed."

Religion is getting commercialized and is becoming a tool for self aggrandization, amassing of wealth, and immunity from law. Scams are galore involving religious gurus having wide following. Yet public still flocks at their gates or turns a blind eye to their deeds. The youth is not satisfied with earnings gotten from honest means and are looking at easy money.

One of the welcome change in the Indian society is the fast increasing participation of women in all spheres of nation building. However, on the other hand there is also an increasing graph of crime against women. The Nirbhaya case has been a shame to our country. There are many such instances occurring across the country, many of which do not come up to the public eye. In many cases involving crime against women the insensitivity of the police has been appalling. Respect for women and gender equality are elements of our social values. While the Constitution of India lays the Principles of equality and social justice to ensure dignity of all individuals, it is a shame that women are not able to become a part of main stream society for the want of safe working environment outside their homes.

Indian society is full of religious, ethnic and cultural variety. New social classes based on castes and vote bank politics have been added by politicians for their ulterior motives. These growing social factions are increasingly getting less tolerant of each other resulting in social tensions of various kinds. Anti social and anti national organizations such as Naxals, Maoists etc. use terror and violence as their voice against the same society they come from. The diversity and beauty of the Indian social fabric can remain intact only on the strength of values relating to peaceful co-existence. Further, growing instance of crime by educated youth is also a cause of alarm as it is a reflection of growing greed and consumption oriented behaviour. The instances mentioned above should lead us to the realization that societies with weakening values are likely to create destructive conditions for their own existence. In India too, the pursuance of development of mind for material gains, without the accompanying discipline of values is leading to imbalances that threaten sustainable development. Value education is the only way out of such imbalances and anomalies, and that is why serious thought has to be given to how values have to be restored to one of the most populous countries, having almost half its population of educational age group.

One of the important goals of education in the 21st Century is the creation of world citizens who are aware of and are able to balance the promises and risks associated with the modern globalizing world. For instance, modern generation will have to learn to strike a balance between the short-term and the long term measures of development, between competition and cooperation, between self identity and the pluralism of the world. Our value systems will have to accommodate such balances on account of the changing world order.

An empirical study on the relevance of value education was conducted in Jabalpur city by way of soliciting responses against a questionnaire administered to a set of randomly selected people from different locations in the city such as popular eating places, shopping malls, colleges etc. A sample of 200 people was collected and analysed for their views on different dimensions of value education. The

sample comprised equal proportions of students of class 10 and above, and people who were parents themselves. The Analysis of data lead to the following broad conclusions:

Desirability of value education: all respondents unanimously were of the opinion that that values were the major building blocks of a peaceful and progressive society; and that value education was necessary for building a healthy society and a strong Nation. .

Inculcating value education: More than $\frac{3}{4}$ th of all respondents felt that the principal source of inculcating value education was home and parental interest. 60% of all respondents felt that grandparents or joint family has significant influence on development of values in the younger generation. More than 90% of all respondents were of the opinion that value education should be a part of school curriculum, however only 40% parents and 15% students advocated incorporation of related subjects in college or higher education. A sizable section of the respondents (43% of the parents and 28% of the students) were not sure whether games and sports were instrumental in inculcating desirable values in an individual.

Contributions of values in the society: The majority respondents felt that values influenced an individual's behaviour in his / her personal as well as social life, and that value education was directly responsible for character formation of the younger generation. The prominent elements of 'character' identified by majority respondents included **honesty, regards for elders, nationalism and helping the poor and the needy in the society.** Majority respondents also agreed that major national issues such as corruption, religious and social intolerance, economic development, national integration, suppression of the poor, crime against women et cetera can be effectively tackled through Value education

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Value education sets the foundation for life-long learning, promoting excellence as well as social cohesion. It has been argued that schools are the micro-cosm of the world. Therefore the disorders and strife of the real world also comes to school in many ways. Schools are therefore an important place for tackling values related issues. Values are an important element in a child's conceptualization of his world. They are inculcated through the family and the school where the formative years of an individual are spent. It would not be wrong to think that most of our value structure is put in place during the early years of life and that is why value education is stressed more at the schooling stage. No doubt, value education is both parental and public responsibility, but schools, being more organized institutions, should take the lead in setting new foundations for value education that is rooted in contemporary contexts such as environmental conservation, religious tolerance and gender equality. The constitution of India which is a pillar of universal democratic values can

serve to provide useful guidelines as to the core values to be nurtured in the schools. Democratic values expressed in terms of rights and duties are essentially universal values of human existence such as mutual respect, tolerance and social justice that make a socially responsible citizen. The diversity of Indian society is possible because of its democratic values.

It is however noteworthy here that one of the important sources of value education i.e. the religious discourses, the satsangs or the Pravachans of venerated gurus and saints or TV channels of similar nature, are generally attended only by a smattering of youngsters. The reasons for the same need to be investigated. Parents shall have to understand and take the responsibility of nourishing their children with some value education to create a healthy Indian society that is disciplined and aware of their responsibilities. Such a society will have the strength and thinking to build India of the 21st Century.

REFERENCES

- [1] Arisi, R.O (2013); "Culture And Moral Values for Sustainable National Development: The Role of Social Studies Education"; International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vol.5 No. 1, PP 247-254, ISSN: 2248-9010 (Online).
- [2] Barrett Richard (2010); " The Importance of Values in Building a High Performance Culture"; (www. Valuescentre.com)
- [3] Goswami Dr. Pitambar, Satra Auniati; "Value Education For Nation Building";(<http://www.auniati.org/RGIYD-lecture.pdf>)
- [4] Jindal, Jyoti (Sept. 2013);" Value Based Education-Need of The Day"; International Journal of Emerging Research in Management and Technology; ISSN:2278-9359, vol.2, Issue 9.
- [5] NCERT REPORT; "Education For Values in Schools – A Framework", NCERT, New Delhi.
- [6] Ubani, Anthoni (Sept. 2014); "Value Based Leadership in Nation Building"; (http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/value-based-leadership-in-nation-building_/188606); accessed 1/11/2016.
- [7] UNESCO REPORT; " Teaching and Learning For a Sustainable Future"; (http://www/UNESCO.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme_d/mod22.html)