

The Necessity of Value Education in the Contemporary Era

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Abstract

If education lacks values in the contemporary era, it may produce merely “machines” rather than truly humane individuals. True education should not only make an individual intellectually capable but also develop sensitivity and humanity. Just as a tree cannot survive without roots, human life cannot flourish meaningfully without values. Education is essential for making human life beautiful, cultured, and meaningful; however, education becomes complete only when it is integrated with values. Value education is not merely the transmission of information or knowledge; rather, it forms the foundation of the holistic development, character formation, and moral growth of a child. In the present era, while humanity has achieved unprecedented progress in science and technology, there has also been an increasing erosion of moral values, psychological stress, and social disintegration. In such circumstances, material or professional success alone is not sufficient. It has become essential to preserve and cultivate moral values such as humanity, compassion, truth, non-violence, and social responsibility. The true purpose of education is not merely to make an individual literate but to develop a sensitive and responsible citizen. Therefore, nurturing value education at the levels of school, family, and society has become one of the most important needs of the present age.

Keywords: Value Education, Contemporary Era, Need, Importance

Introduction

With the creation of the universe, the Supreme Being created numerous animate and inanimate beings and objects. The world, adorned with beauty and diversity, has always fascinated and amazed human beings. Human beings have always remained limited in their ability to fully understand the mysteries of the universe. According to traditional Indian beliefs, after passing through eighty-four lakh forms of life, a living being attains human birth. Thus, human life is considered extremely precious. Human beings are regarded as the finest creation on Earth. Due to their language, sensitivity, intelligence, and ability to perform various activities, human beings

have established themselves as distinct from other living beings. Through their conduct, thoughts, and dedication to action, human beings have contributed to the creation of an organized and harmonious society. A single drop of water may have little significance, but when numerous drops come together, they can fill a lake. Similarly, the existence and development of society do not depend on the actions of a single individual; rather, a better society is created through mutual cooperation, support, and collective efforts. The foundation of such a society rests upon human values.

Value-oriented education can lead society towards progress and a better path. Values function like a compass that continually guides individuals towards the right direction. Life values contribute to the inner development of an individual. Values are invisible yet inseparable components of human life. Without values, human beings may lose the qualities that distinguish them as human beings. Value education plays the role of a foundation stone in the holistic development of a child. Just as a strong foundation enables a building to remain stable for many years, the cultivation of values and good (moral and cultural impressions) from childhood can help a child grow into a responsible and constructive member of society. In ancient times, considerable emphasis was placed on value education. Education received from the family, society, and traditional centers of learning contributed not only to the acquisition of knowledge but also to the development of character and values. Teachers and gurus imparted knowledge, skills, and to their students and contributed significantly to their overall development.

In the present era, technological advancement and material comforts are increasing rapidly; however, a decline in human values can also be observed. In this changing age, the erosion of human values has affected human behaviour and communication. Modern individuals may appear technologically and materially advanced, yet their inner lives may sometimes be characterized by loneliness, emptiness, and dissatisfaction. Although significant achievements have been made in terms of development, various challenges affecting human well-being continue to emerge. In such circumstances, the necessity and importance of value education have become increasingly significant.

What is Value Education?

Value education refers to an educational process that cultivates qualities such as morality, honesty, tolerance, discipline, and responsibility in an individual. It is not merely bookish knowledge but a process of character formation. In the contemporary era, value education is not merely an academic subject; it is an essential component of the art of living. At a time when

technology and materialism are rapidly expanding, the cultivation of ethical and human values has become increasingly necessary.

Relationship Between Values and Human Life

Values are closely associated with an individual's understanding and perception. They enable a person to distinguish between what is appropriate and inappropriate and to recognize and appreciate desirable qualities in human beings. Values play a decisive role in shaping an individual's understanding of right and wrong and consequently influence human behaviour. Life values emerge from the fundamental and experiences of an individual and gradually influence behavioral and life-oriented perspectives. As a result, the individual becomes an integral part of society, and their conduct and interactions contribute to the meaningful fulfilment of life. Albert Einstein emphasized the importance of values in education. According to him, it is essential for an individual to develop an understanding of values and a genuine appreciation for them, along with a clear understanding of what is beautiful and morally good. Without such development, specialized knowledge alone cannot make a person truly humane.

Values awaken sensitivity, compassion, love, courage, and character in human beings. They teach the dignity of labour and encompass various dimensions of human life. Through values, individuals learn to recognize injustice and develop the courage to stand against it. In this way, values reveal the inner character of a human being. The relationship between values and human beings enriches an individual's inner self and broadens their outlook. Consequently, an individual does not remain confined to the interests of the family, nation, or society alone but develops into a universal human being with a broader sense of humanity. Human life is connected with various dimensions, including compassion, love, empathy, sensitivity, humanity, and affection, as well as truth, non-violence, self-respect, altruism, and service. The manifestation of these qualities truly makes a person humane and dignifies their character. These values make life simple, pure, and meaningful, like a clear-flowing stream.

Recommendations Regarding Value Education

Before independence, religious education was provided in certain ashrams, madrasas, and other educational institutions. After independence, in a secular India, various initiatives related to moral education were introduced. Different education commissions emphasized the need for education that promotes moral and human values.

The National Policy on Education (1986) emphasized the importance of value education within the educational environment. The National Education Policy (2020) also gives significant

importance to ethics and human and constitutional values such as empathy, courtesy, respect for others, cleanliness, democratic spirit, spirit of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, equality, and justice. The expansion of knowledge has led to the emergence of various fields of study. Population education, environmental education, computer education, sexuality education, and value education may be regarded as areas that emerged in response to changing educational and social needs. Social transformation has created the need for specific cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. Value education has an important role in addressing these needs.

At present, value education is provided through various educational institutions and initiatives. As concerns regarding the erosion of values have increased, several recommendations have been made regarding value education. The University Education Commission (1948–49), chaired by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the Secondary Education Commission (1952–53), chaired by Dr. A. Lakshman Swami Mudaliar, and the Education Commission (1964–66), commonly known as the Kothari Commission, emphasized various aspects of value-oriented education in their reports.

The National Policy on Education (1986) also emphasized character education, spiritual values, social and moral values, and the conscious cultivation of values through education. Similarly, the National Education Policy (2020) emphasizes the development of values among students as an important component of education. Thus, the above discussion clearly indicates the urgent need for value education in the contemporary educational system. Strengthening the educational process and integrating value education into the existing system can contribute significantly to the development and cultivation of human values.

Related Works: The Necessity of Value Education in the Contemporary Era

Recent literature indicates that value education has become increasingly important because contemporary education must address not only intellectual development but also ethical awareness, social responsibility, character formation, and responsible citizenship.

1. Lakshmi (2009)

Lakshmi examined value education from an Indian perspective and emphasized its importance during periods of rapid social and economic change. The study argued that technical and professional education should not be limited to developing knowledge and skills; it should also cultivate moral strength, responsibility, commitment, and ethical conduct. The author particularly highlighted the importance of value education for producing professionals who can combine technical competence with moral responsibility.

2. Rijal, Sauri, and Kosasih (2023)

Rijal et al. discussed the **curriculum framework as the foundation of value education**. Their work proposed integrating values, morals, and ethics into different areas of the curriculum, including natural sciences, social sciences, religious education, and extracurricular activities. The study demonstrates that value education can be embedded throughout the educational process rather than being treated as an isolated subject.

3. Ngwacho (2024)

Ngwacho investigated the incorporation of value-based education into competency-based curricula. The study associated value education with character formation, global citizenship, social justice, sustainable development, cooperation, and harmonious coexistence. It suggests that value-based education can help learners respond constructively to contemporary social and global challenges.

4. Alfusanah et al. (2024)

Alfusanah and colleagues examined the **urgency of value education in the Society 5.0 era**. Their study emphasized that rapid technological development creates a need to balance technological competencies with ethical awareness and social responsibility. Values such as tolerance, respect, justice, honesty, empathy, and responsibility were identified as important components of education in a digitally transformed society.

5. Islam, Majhi, and Rakshe (2026)

Islam et al. examined the relevance of value-based education in the twenty-first century, particularly in relation to technological change, globalization, cultural diversity, the Sustainable Development Goals, and **NEP 2020**. Their study connects value education with character development, empathy, integrity, responsible citizenship, ethical technology use, constitutional values, and environmental awareness. The authors argue that contemporary education needs to extend beyond intellectual development toward holistic human development.

Importance of Value Education in the Contemporary Era

The importance of value education in the modern era can be understood through the following aspects:

1. Personal Development

Value education awakens an individual's conscience and helps them recognize their strengths and limitations. When a person develops ethical awareness and acts according to sound values, their

sense of self-confidence and responsibility can be strengthened. Qualities such as punctuality, discipline, and regularity contribute to an organized and responsible lifestyle.

2. Character Formation

The true purpose of education is not merely to obtain a degree or secure employment but also to become a good human being. Value education cultivates qualities such as honesty, discipline, patience, and perseverance, thereby strengthening an individual's character.

3. Mental and Intellectual Clarity

In the information age, sound values are essential for making appropriate choices. Values help individuals determine what information to accept, what to reject, and which behaviours to follow. Qualities such as forgiveness, contentment, patience, and positive thinking can contribute to emotional balance and inner peace.

In today's competitive environment, individuals may experience considerable psychological pressure. When a person possesses values such as contentment, forgiveness, patience, and positive thinking, they may be better equipped to respond calmly to challenging situations. Value education can therefore contribute to the development of inner strength and emotional maturity.

4. Social and National Importance

Society consists of individuals; therefore, individual values have a direct influence on social life. Values such as trust, honesty, cooperation, and mutual respect strengthen relationships within families and communities.

Problems such as corruption, violence, and discrimination cannot be addressed only through laws and regulations; they also require citizens who possess a strong sense of morality and social responsibility. Value education encourages individuals to develop a broader perspective of humanity and promotes ideals such as love, compassion, cooperation, and service.

5. Integration of Modern Education and Values

Technical skills alone are not sufficient for a meaningful and responsible life. Along with hard skills, soft skills, ethical awareness, and social responsibility are equally important. Whether in the workplace or at home, value education encourages individuals to fulfil their responsibilities sincerely.

Care for nature is also an important ethical value. Environmental sensitivity and responsible behaviour are necessary for addressing contemporary environmental challenges such as climate change and global warming.

6. Responsible Use of Technology

In the digital age, the misuse of social media and the internet has become a significant concern. Individuals with strong ethical values can understand that technology should be used constructively for development and social benefit rather than for causing harm to others.

Value education can promote responsible digital behaviour and encourage individuals to understand the ethical consequences of their online actions.

7. Responsible Citizenship

The development of a nation requires responsible citizens. Value education can cultivate a sense of social responsibility, respect for law, environmental awareness, and commitment to the welfare of society.

It can also encourage individuals to oppose social evils and contribute positively to the development of their communities and nation.

Necessary Measures for Providing Value Education in Schools

Use of Morning Prayer Assemblies

Daily school assemblies can be used to present short stories, thoughts, inspiring incidents, and messages based on values such as truth, compassion, honesty, and kindness.

Teachers as Role Models

Teachers should demonstrate punctuality, discipline, honesty, respect, and appropriate conduct in their own behaviour so that students can learn values through observation and experience.

Integration with Subject Teaching

While teaching subjects such as Gujarati, social science, languages, and literature, teachers can discuss the ethical values reflected in lessons, stories, characters, and situations.

Activities and Role Play

Activities such as role play, group discussions, drawing, collaborative projects, and other participatory activities can help cultivate empathy, cooperation, communication, and social awareness among students.

Social Service

Activities such as tree plantation, cleanliness campaigns, and visits to old-age homes or institutions serving disadvantaged groups can promote a spirit of service, social responsibility, and environmental awareness.

Sports and Games

Participation in sports can help students develop sportsmanship, teamwork, cooperation, discipline, and a sense of collective responsibility.

Participation of Parents

Parent–Teacher Association (PTA) meetings and regular communication between parents and teachers can help create a consistent environment in which children receive positive guidance and values both at home and at school.

Major Pillars of Value Education

- Teachers and parents should demonstrate ideal behaviour through their own actions.
- Stories and life incidents of great personalities can be used to develop values naturally among children.
- Students should be provided with appropriate knowledge about religious and spiritual texts while respecting India's pluralistic and constitutional framework.
- Experiential learning through social service, tree plantation, and community projects should be encouraged.
- Students should be encouraged to speak the truth in all appropriate situations.
- Non-violence should be reflected in speech, thoughts, and behaviour.
- Students should develop respect and equal regard for all living beings.
- A spirit of helping people in need should be cultivated.

Just as a tree cannot survive without roots, education without values cannot provide lasting stability to society. Value education therefore contributes to the development of the art of living and helps individuals lead meaningful, responsible, and harmonious lives.

Conclusion

Value education is not merely a temporary requirement of the present; it is an investment in building a better future. If education focuses only on intellectual development while neglecting character formation, it may not fulfil its broader social purpose. In today's modern and technology-driven era, intellectual and professional knowledge alone is insufficient. The true purpose of education is not merely to provide degrees but also to cultivate qualities such as morality, honesty, compassion, empathy, and social responsibility. Value education contributes to character formation and helps individuals become responsible members of society and responsible citizens. The moral provided by the family, the school environment, and the conduct of teachers are fundamental pillars of value education.

If values are neglected in education, various forms of moral and social degradation may become more difficult to address. Therefore, the need of the present time is to integrate value education

into the educational system not merely as a separate subject but as an integral part of the way of living and learning. Such an approach can contribute to the development of a healthy, cultured, responsible, harmonious, and balanced society.

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