

# VALUE EDUCATION

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## Abstract

*Values and attitudes we live by affect how we relate to other people and to all our activities in the environment, and so are a major influence on our prospects for achieving a sustainable future. Although they cannot be separated from cognitive understanding, values and attitudes relate to the affective (or emotional) dimension of human behaviour. While values and attitudes are similar in this regard, they differ in several important ways. Values are generally long-term standards or principles that are used to judge the worth of an idea or action. They provide the criteria by which we decide whether something is good or bad, right or wrong. Attitudes predispose us to respond in particular ways to people and events. They are not so deeply felt as values and quite often change as a result of experience. This module provides an opportunity to consider the importance of human values and attitudes in shaping the future.*

**Keywords:** Education, Values, Environment

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## INTRODUCTION

**“Education without value, as useful as it is,  
seems rather to make man more clever devil”**

The values and attitudes we live by affect how we relate to other people and to all our activities in the environment, and so are a major influence on our prospects for achieving a sustainable future. Although they cannot be separated from cognitive understanding, values and attitudes relate to the affective (or emotional) dimension of human behaviour. While values and attitudes are similar in this regard, they differ in several important ways. Values are generally long-term standards or principles that are used to judge the worth of an idea or action. They provide the criteria by which we decide whether something is good or bad, right or wrong. Attitudes predispose us to respond in particular ways to people and events. They are not so deeply felt as values and quite often change as a result of experience. This module provides an opportunity to consider the importance of human values and attitudes in shaping the future. It also provides ideas and examples for two categories of strategies for exploring values in the classroom – values clarification and values analysis.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF VALUE EDUCATION

The important aim of education during Vedic period was formation and building of character. In Buddhist period, though the main aim of education was emancipation and character formation, dignity of

labour had also important place in the curriculum. During medieval period, the aims of education were to develop individual's morality and to produce men of character along with vocationalized education.

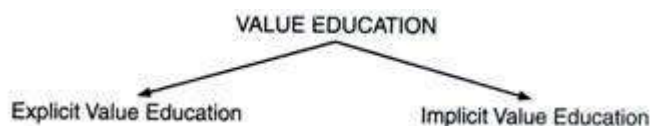
During British period, the aim of education was to impart instructions in useful subjects and to enlighten them in intellectual, moral, economic fields and secular moral education. In pre-independence and after independence period, several commissions and committees recommended character education and moral education. 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 the value system at the individual level 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 inculcation of an attitude that earning money is for leading a respectable life and for helping others who are disadvantaged. Where and when this value orientation should take place in the life of any person? It should begin from home, be buttressed by the community and be entrenched positively by one's school.

## DEFINITION AND THE CONCEPT OF VALUE EDUCATION

Values' education is a term used to name several things, and there is much academic controversy surrounding it. Some regard it as all aspects of the process by which teachers (and other adults) transmit values to pupils. Others see it as an activity that can take place in any organization during which people are assisted by others, who may be older, in a position of authority or are more experienced, to make explicit those values underlying their own behavior, to assess the effectiveness of these values and associated behavior for their own and others' long term well-being and to reflect on and acquire other values and behavior which they recognize as being more effective for long term well-being of self and others.

This means that values education can take place at home, as well as in schools, colleges, universities, offender institutions and voluntary youth organizations. There are two main approaches to values education. Some see it as inculcating or transmitting a set of values which often come from societal or religious rules or cultural ethics.

Others see it as a type of Socratic dialogue where people are gradually brought to their own realization of what is good behavior for themselves and their community. Value education also leads to success. It has values of hard work, how nobody is useless and loving studies.



**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.

**Implicit values** education on the other hand covers those aspects of the educational experience resulting in value influence learning, which can be related to the concept of hidden curriculum. This discussion on implicit and explicit raises the philosophical problem of whether or not an unintentional action can be called education.

## OBJECTIVES OF VALUE EDUCATION

Educational objectives refer to explicit formulations of the ways in which students are expected to be changed by the educative process. That is, the ways in which they will change in their thinking, their feelings and their actions. Objectives whether of value education or of any other curricular area depend on a variety of factors, psychological, sociological, epistemological.

## OBJECTIVES OF VALUE EDUCATION IN THE MODERN CONTEXT

Objectives, especially in value education, have a temporal dimension. Traditionally the objectives of value education were based on religion and philosophy. There was no secular value education and very little scope for the development of moral thinking and the capacity for independent moral decision. In the modern world these are varieties of social demands made on the people. A civilized individual must possess certain minimum social skills. He has to establish decent relationship with people with whom he may come across for a short while or for a long duration. He may have to transact business in his private or public capacity. He has to function as a citizen of his state, or his Value education should therefore, it is pointed out, prepare an individual to meet these demands. That these cannot be accomplished in the form of a few do's and don'ts of the traditional form is quite evident. Country and of the world, all at the same time are playing appropriate roles in each of these contexts.

## **VALUE BASED ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

**Let us see how environmental education is made value-oriented:**

### **1. Human Values:**

Preparation of text-books and resource materials about environmental education can play an important role in building positive attitudes about environment. The basic human value 'man in nature' rather than 'nature for man' needs to be infused through the same.

### **2. Social Values:**

Love, compassion, tolerance and justice which are the basic teachings of most of our religions need to be woven into environmental education. These are the values to be nurtured so that all forms of life and the biodiversity on this earth are protected.

### **3. Cultural and Religious Values:**

These are the values enshrined in Vedas like 'Dehi me dadami te' i.e. "you give me and I give you" (Yajurveda) emphasize that man should not exploit nature without nurturing her. Our cultural customs and rituals in many ways teach us to perform such functions as would protect and nurture nature and respect every aspect of nature, treating them as sacred, are it rivers, earth, mountains or forests.

### **4. Ethical Values:**

Environmental education should encompass the ethical values of earth-centric rather than human-centric world-view. The educational system should promote the earth-citizenship thinking. Instead of considering human being as supreme we have to think of the welfare of the earth.

### **5. Global Values:**

The concept that the human civilization is a part of the planet as a whole and similarly nature and various natural phenomena over the earth are interconnected and inter-linked with special bonds of harmony. If we disturb this harmony anywhere there will be an ecological imbalance leading to catastrophic results.

### **6. Spiritual Values:**

Principles of self-restraint, self-discipline, contentment, reduction of wants, freedom from greed and austerity are some of the finest elements intricately woven into the traditional and religious fabric of our country. All these values promote conservationism and transform our consumeristic approach.

## **VALUE EDUCATION STRATEGIES**

Many of the social, economic and environmental issues that must be explored when teaching about sustainable futures can be controversial. This is because these issues reflect contrasting values and often cause disputes and controversy in the community. This can sometimes place teachers in a difficult situation. However, to choose to ignore such issues just because they are controversial would be unprofessional. As David Orr has written "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 the 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".

## **PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHING ABOUT VALUES-LADEN ISSUES**

The challenge for teachers is to develop principles for dealing with values-laden issues in a professional and ethical way. Such principles would acknowledge that avoiding values and controversy when teaching about sustainability is neither desirable nor possible. They would also provide guidance for adopting a positive and optimistic approach to teaching controversial issues with an emphasis on the use of critical thinking skills. Identify the principles that you follow when teaching about value-laden issues, and compare them with the rankings given to these principles by other teachers.

## **APPLYING VALUE EDUCATION PRINCIPLES**

Several techniques for teaching about value-laden issues have been developed. Two important ones are value clarification and value analysis. This activity provides practice in these techniques and ideas for using them in your teaching.

### **Value Clarification**

Values guide our decisions as to what is good, true and right. Thus, they depend as much on our feelings as on our thoughts. Values clarification is a technique for encouraging students to relate their thoughts and their feelings and thus enrich their awareness of their own values. A Values Grid is a strategy which helps students clarify the degree of commitment they feel to different issues.

### **Values Analysis**

Where values clarification guides reflection on personal moral dilemmas, values analysis is commonly used with social issues that involve many people and viewpoints. Thus, values analysis is a way of helping students examine other people's values as well as their own. It requires the use of logical thinking skills to analyze different viewpoints about an issue. A case study of a proposal to develop a copper mine on a small island in the South Pacific is used to illustrate how values analysis enables students to review the positions held by various stakeholders in a controversial issue.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF VALUES THROUGH EDUCATION**

To make the value aspect of our education programmes more prominent, the following ideas may be incorporated in the educational programmes.

- ✓ Developing self-respect, awareness of self-growth, one's Uniqueness, Self-confidence.
- ✓ Promoting selflessness, cooperative spirit, spirit of sharing.
- ✓ Cultivating respect for property, one's own and that of other.
- ✓ Understanding the contribution of home towards the physical, emotional, cultural and spiritual development of young people.
- ✓ Imparting clear direction on cleanliness, punctuality, use of refined language, courtesy, proper manner, respect for elders.
- ✓ Seeking to realize one's potentialities and talents, disciplined learning in academics, sports, cultivating the scientific temper.
- ✓ Independent thinking, not blindly following others.

## **CONCLUSION**

The world is a conglomeration of a large variety of human beings with wide ranging differences in language, culture, beliefs and ethnicities. The most urgent need of the present day society in the world is to have the spirit of co-existence. This is definitely based on tolerance and mutual respect among individuals irrespective of their ethnic, cultural, and religious or language background. From the point of view of diversity, India is a mini world in itself. The atmosphere that can generate a sense of tolerance or spirit of co-existence in the Indian society can be a model to the entire human society in the world. More and more researches on Value Education will help us to achieve that.

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