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QUALITY ENHANCEMENT THROUGH VALUE EDUCATION

Delphin Prema Dhanaseeli * and P. Vanitha

Post Graduate and Research Center of History Jayaraj Annapackiam College for Women (Autonomous), Periyakulam-625601, India E-mail: prema.jac@gmail.com

Abstract

Every nation which has a keen interest in enhancing its standards gives importance to the values as they govern its progress. There is no peace on any front including social, economic and political as there is a serious value crisis all over the world. There is disintegration, economic inflation and political conflict within every nation. The main purpose of education is to impart strength and ability in every citizen to fulfill his or her responsibilities in every sphere of life. But this is fast declining as the numbers of problems facing our educational institutions are on the increasing mode. People begin to lose their faith as their governments and educational institutions failed to solve the problems of human life. Hence we are in need of a dynamic educational policy which emphasizes not only skill education but also value system. It is necessary to focus on the readjustment in the curriculum to use education as a tool to cultivate moral, social, universal and ethical values. Value Education can orient people towards unity and integration and will eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstitions, caste conflicts and fatalism. Importance of inculcating democratic, moral and spiritual values, fostering a healthy attitude towards hard work, creating awareness of the society, environment and nature, committing to principles of secularism and social justice and promoting international understanding will be discussed.

Keywords: Values, Education, Quality, Environment.

1. Introduction

The educational sector in India is growing in a higher rate and the number of students joining in higher educational institutions is on the increase. Hence we are in need of quality candidates who can take our nation to higher

levels. The massive violation of human rights caused by religious or caste intolerance tear people apart within countries. Humanity is truly at the cross roads. Both capitalism and socialism miserably failed in solving the problems of the masses and the oppressed of the society. Youth of the present century has to face numerous dangerous phenomena including population explosion, abortion, gay rights, cybercrimes, poverty, pollution, incidence of unique diseases, terrorism and global warming¹. Youth in the present age have to face problems like unemployment, suicide, alcoholism, non-violence and sex-related offences. Many of our youth are prepared to embrace materialistic culture moving away from traditional values². It is one of the aims of education to preserve the treasure of the ethics and values of the humanity.

2. Values

Human values are common, positive and desirable behaviour of humans that characterize qualities such as honesty, integrity, tolerance, responsibility, compassion, altruism, justice and respect. They play a major role in shaping the destiny of a country³. They espouse cooperation and living with peace and help to solve problems of international, national, local or familial nature⁴. Values reflect our personal attitudes, judgment, decisions, choices, behaviour, relationships, dreams and visions⁵. Human values are fundamental to human existence and cultivate an environment of trust, transparency, responsibility, caring, respect, cooperation, quality and excellence. They shape good character, morality and ethics and strongly bind people in spite of their differences leading to a congenial atmosphere. Human values have their roots in a single premise which is the inherent dignity of every human being.

In the present world, founded upon science and technology, education alone can determine the level of prosperity, well being and security of individuals and societies. The success of education rests on the spirit of national consciousness and the growth of knowledge based on human values⁶. The aim of education is to develop an integrated citizen who can deal with life as a whole. It has to prepare students to become ethically responsible citizens who can be critical thinkers,

skilled professionals or active contributors to society. Values can be derived from self, life, environment, society, culture, and experience. They are indispensable and encountered by man in all thoughts, relations and activities. Values are learnt as part of early character development. Hence ethical and moral values have to be taught in schools and colleges. Allocating a space for incorporating values in curriculum design will definitely be a move not only towards quality assurance but also quality enhancement. This will definitely result in quality products going out of our educational institutions who will take our nation to greater heights.

3. Democratic Values

These values include liberty, equality, fraternity, and justice. A democratic society has to maintain a balance between order and freedom. In any nation, there has to be individual freedom and the laws should not be repressive. Education has to inculcate these democratic values among the students. Liberty includes personal, political and economic freedom, while equality empowers the right to political, legal, social and economic quality by which the individuals enjoy the right to the same treatment irrespective of race, sex, religion, caste, colour, heritage or economic status. Justice provides people fair treatment without showing favour for anybody. The students have to be trained to show love and devotion for their country with patriotic spirit. The main role of education is to advocate equality through student initiatives and leadership qualities9. Justice in social, economic and political realms, Liberty of thought, expression, faith and worship, Equality of status and opportunities and Fraternity assuring the dignity of the citizen and the unity and integrity of the nation have to be inculcated in our students to achieve a democratic society10. As a result the society will be free from social injustice, suppression of the poor, violence, terrorism, communal conflicts, caste clashes, religious intolerance and dowry deaths11.

4. Moral Values

Moral values govern an individual's behaviour and choice and help him distinguish between good and evil. They act as the guiding principles to achieve satisfaction, peace and joy. The students will be able to distinguish between right

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and wrong as well as good and evil. Today's youth are going to be the decision makers in future politics, government and organizations where their moral values will dominate and bring fruits. If moral values are not inculcated, our educational campuses will be with violence, drugs, strikes and indiscipline¹². Value education helps to increase the ability of scientists and technologists to confront moral issues raised by the technological activities¹³.

5. Spiritual Values

Education will not be complete if refinement of the heart and discipline of the soul are not practiced along with training of the intellect. Faith in God can lead them towards success. Spiritual values help to have character, sensitivity, integrity, and conscience 12. Spiritual values like compassion, respect for others, love and tolerance have to be inculcated through education 14. Unity of humankind and development of the nation can be promoted through students acquiring truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence. Religion also prescribes principles and values to be emulated for better living 5. Many of the present youth are drifting away from the church. Life without values will become chaotic and disastrous. Real spiritual values breed tolerance among the individuals in a multi religious society. Persons with spiritual values will pray and have faith in God which will lead to positive environment and society.

6. Diligence

Life is not a bed of roses and nothing in this world comes easily. Hard work is an ethic and value and it produces character in people. Intelligent work along with relentless effort will definitely result in success. Education must inform the students to remember that hard work complimented with an intense desire is the only way of reaching success. India requires quality personnel to increase the growth rate of its economy¹⁵.

7. Social Values

Social values being an important part of our culture, account for the stability of social order. Values like fundamental rights, patriotism, respecting human dignity, rationality, sacrifice, and individuality provide guidelines for social conduct. Shared values form the basis for social unity.

8. Environment and Nature

The importance of recognizing the inherent value of the natural The importance of recognizing environment has to be instructed so that the students will have the common goal of protection, conservation and restoration of the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations. They have to involve in the prevention reduction and elimination of the use, generation and release of pollutants that are unreasonable threat to the integrity of the environment. They have to engage in the protection of biological, ecological and genetic diversity along with the conservation of natural resources including plants, animals and microbes, As future citizens, the students must acquire capacity of developing policies, legislation, regulation and standards to protect the environment and human health along with sound environmental decision-making.

9. Secularism

This empowers freedom of religion and the lack of authority of religious leaders over political decisions. It helps in the strict separation of the state from religious institutions. People of different religions and beliefs are considered equal before the law when secularism is in practice. Secularism helps to champion human rights above discriminatory religious demands. It provides a frame work for a democratic society and it ensures equality in politics, education, law and public services. Students have to be informed about the benefits of having this value. Access to quality education and opportunity for all has to be

10. Social justice

It is the equal distribution of resources and opportunities in which outside factors are irrelevant. All members of a society must have equal benefits and opportunities. It is every individual's responsibility to uphold and protect social justice and social equality. Social justice issues have to be recognized and globally acknowledged. The obsolete conceptions of social hindrances that inhibit social growth have to be broken. People have to develop a sense of social sensitivity and connectedness. Education has to enhance among the students, the social

conceptions and implications of justice and help developing socially spirited and responsible individual. Open access society only can impart quality in every field of life15.

11. International Understanding

Our educational institutions have to study and learn the pattern followed in foreign institutions¹⁵. The UN millennium declaration of 2000 declares that certain fundamental values are essential to international relations such as freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect, for nature, and shared responsibility. International understanding is a feeling that the citizen is not only a member of his State, but a member of the world. There are several problems of global concern including poverty, pollution, unemployment, terrorism and water conflicts which have to be solved through mutual understanding. International peace and goodwill alone can prevent the outbreak of a third world war. The students have to be encouraged to promote brotherhood and fellowship among nations. Adopting the verse of the Bible "whatever you want others to do, you do to others" can bring understanding to achieve peace. The young minds have to be educated to form strong attitudes against conflict and war.

12. Conclusion

Quality enhancement in education requires continuous efforts and commitment. Educating the students along with values helps to rejuvenate the society which experiences erosion and degradation of values. This will pave the way to bring order, security and progress of the youth with society. Values enable the people to lead a peaceful and harmonious life. They make life meaningful and give them a sense of direction.

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