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Values and their relevance in today's fast changing world for all age groups, especially growing children

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Abstract
Values elevate and unite us as a human being and are source of our own dignity and that of others. If we try to search for the root cause of unhappiness in today's world it is owing to our inability to act according to our values or lack of awareness about our own value system. Any society or community can be transformed through values. In today's fast changing world it is imperative to stay grounded with the help of our deep-rooted value system. Children imitate what they see in their surrounding be it in school or at home in general. Rather than preaching we must practice and set good examples for them to emulate. Let's put an end to the obsession of I, me, and myself and promote the feeling of oneness, a feeling of- Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam. The present article tries to presents suggestions to inculcate values among growing children.

Keywords: Values, education, holistic development

1. Introduction
We all are social animals. We need each other, we cannot survive in isolation. How we respond or get along with others define our personality. To shape such amicable personality we need education deep-rooted in values, which prepare the students with skills which are integral for living in harmony with others. The current education system is promoting unending competitive spirit obsessed with individualistic idea of excellence among students.

With the changing dynamics and new sets of challenges across the globe it is imperative to hold ground with the help of a strong value system. Things are not easy for the millennials: Inequality is deepening, climatic conditions are at alarming state, technology has intruded our lives like never before, the structure of families is changing, childhood has changed completely and so does the responsibilities of parents, teachers and society as a whole.

The world at present is in dire need of strong value system. We are living in an age of mutual distrust, fear and protectionism. The disparities in wealth and power are increasing both between societies and people. If we look at our lifestyle today it is purely driven by materialistic pursuit with sole purpose of churning out more and more moolah. The parameter for success of any person is not his/her Qualifications or Virtues but it is only being measured through his/her Job and salary status. Everyone is obsessed with lucrative package. The Basic virtues like Honesty, Simple Living and High Thinking are losing their sheen or we can say that they are already lost in oblivion. People are basically disillusioned, leading to conflict in value system.

Majority of millennials are not bothered about the means they just want results at any cost. The entire scenario is very heart-wrenching. India is a country which now a days is at 131 rank of Human sustainable development index because of uneven development. The Education is not fulfilling the objective/s which it should or ought to be. The problem of today's world can only cured by fostering Value Education. If our curriculum and Education is not able to transform our citizens we will see crisis and wars only. The whole civilization or world heritage will destroy in a jiffy. This is high time to wake up from the slumber and work together to strengthen our Education system a new paradigm is required to make this world a place to live.

Meaning of Values
Values are considered to be the moral standards of human behaviours in the society. The word value is etymologically driven from Latin word '*Valere*' which means be strong, be well; be of value, be worth. Values are the essence of our personality and affects our decision making throughout. Values reflect an individual's sense of right and wrong and what 'ought' to be. Values are inculcated in a manner that they can be presumed from people's behaviour, perception, motivation and personality.

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Basically human values are the praxis of society, as quality of life depends on the choices that we make. These choices are directly and indirectly affected by values. A value system can be seen as a permanent perceptual framework on which person's nature or behaviour is based.

Values play pivotal role since inception of the child and it continues till the last breath. It makes it very clear that families, teachers and society has major role to play. The kind of environment that is being provided, the behaviour that is being displayed by everybody around cast its spell on the children around. Since they are keen observer they pick these behavioural patterns and later on it gets complicated due to the circumstances they land up in.

Definition of Values
Values are defined as the collective conceptions of what is considered good, desirable, and proper or bad, undesirable, and improper in a culture. Few definition of values are-
According to R.K. Mukherjee, "Values are socially approved desires and goals that are internalized through the process of conditioning, learning or socialization and that become subjective preferences, standards, and aspirations".
According to I. J. Lehner and N.J. Kube, "Values are an integral part of the personal philosophy of life by which we generally mean the system of values by which we live. The philosophy of life includes our aims, ideals, and manner of thinking and the principles by which we guide our behaviour"
M. Rokeach is of the view that, "Values are specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence."
According to Edward Spranger, "Values are a constellation of viewpoints, prejudice, inner inclinations, likes and dislikes, rational and irrational judgements, and association patterns that determine a person's view of the world".
It can be deduced from the definitions that values help to guide our behaviour. It determines what we consider to be right, bad, good, or unfair. In nature, values are largely permanent. They represent a unified belief that directs behaviours and judgements across things and contexts. They were influenced by social and cultural norms.

Developing Values through Education
Education does not refer to the quantity of knowledge that is

crammed into your mind and then sits there undigested for the rest of your life. We need life-building, man-making, character-building, and idea absorption. We desire education that builds character, increases mental power, broadens the mind, and prepares students to stand on their own two feet. -Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda was firm believer of Vedanta Philosophy which considers 'Unity with the Creator' as the ultimate goal of human life. Swami Vivekananda propagated that basic purpose of education is the total development of human personality. Everyone is born with immense potential with the help of education these inherent capacities are developed. This total development of human personality is all pervasive of intellectual and moral development resulting into the values.

The whole realm of education is centred on the development of the moral aspect of man. Bertrand Russel had aptly said that chief aim of education is "formation of character". Values are described as "eternal beliefs and fundamental values that lead to acceptable behavioural and positive patterns." The University Education Commission (1964- 66) summarizes the Indian concept of education as follows; "Education according to Indian tradition is not merely a means of earning a living; nor is it only a nursery of thought or a school for citizenship. It is the initiation into a life of spirit, a training of human souls in pursuit of truth and the practice of virtue." Values identify a person, give him/her recognition and name. These are the standards and code of conduct according to which one takes decision guided by his/her conscience; the moral sense of right and wrong.

Value system comprises of-
- A set of beliefs about human nature
- Rules laying down what ought and what ought not to be done
- Motives that incline us to choose the right and wrong course.

Values are integral to the existence of humanity as it assist in understanding others with love and sympathy without hatred. Values can be classified as; universal values, human values, individual values, religious values, moral values, civic values, spiritual values, scientific values and national values.

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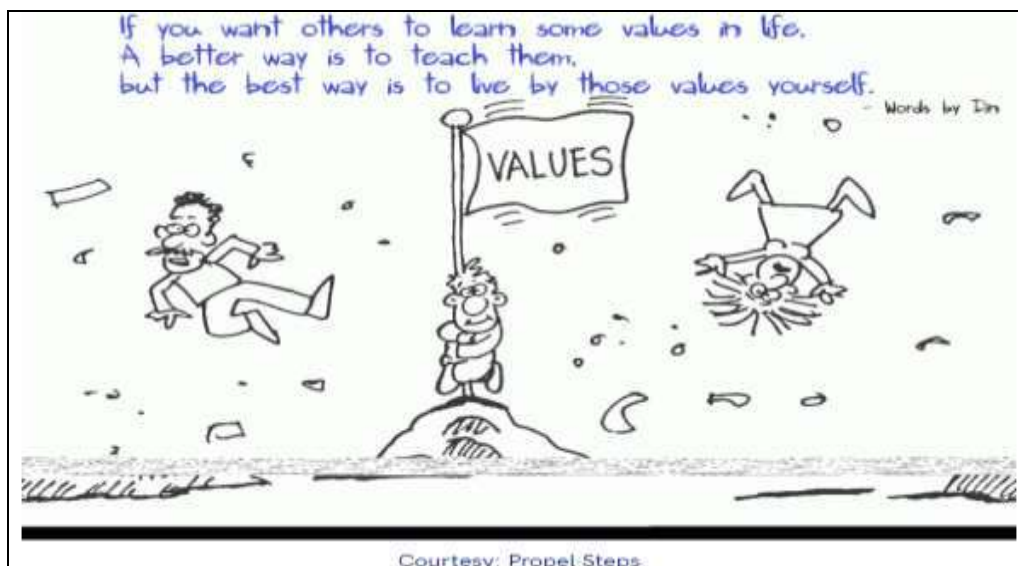
Sri Aurobindo correctly stated that education should help a person to achieve the greatest possible harmony, i.e. between the inner and outer worlds, spiritual and material, in order to fully develop human potentialities and powers. It should unify and unite Indians, modernise society while retaining what is genuinely Indian in our cultural and spiritual heritage.

Nearly every education policy statement has emphasised the importance of education in the development of values. The Education Commission (1966) advocated for the inclusion of social, moral, and spiritual aspects in school curricula. The NPE (1986) also emphasised the importance of education for values in eradicating bigotry, violence, and superstition, as well as preserving social, cultural, and scientific ideals in order to transform India into a secular, democratic, and progressive society proud of its cultural legacy. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (2000) brought to focus the erosion of ethical, social and spiritual values and suggested the integration of values in the curriculum. National Education Policy 2020 has included traditional values including *nishkam karma* and *seva* in school curriculum. Value based education is being considered as an integral part of NEP2020. In this policy document there is a special focus on Truth, Peace, Non-violence, Love, Righteous conduct. Value based education is likely to help the nation fight against all kinds of prevailing fanaticism, ill-will, violence, dishonesty, corruption, exploitation and drug abuse. It is recommended to use an amalgam of both indirect and direct approaches to value education based on NEP 2020 guidelines [DNEP P4.6.8.1] and expert experience. It is proposed that two times each week be dedicated to focusing on the intellectual foundation of values and conducting talks, narrating tales, performing activities, working on projects, and assessing the growth of values in children.

Internalisation of values is only feasible when we are able to establish the value system within, and for that the child's desire for security, dignity, identity, and well-being must be addressed. Family plays an important part in instilling values in children. A child raised in a conflict-ridden/broken household is never going to be at harmony with himself or herself or with community. Sound/balanced relationships and cordial environment is essential to create sound value system in children. For a society can only be at peace when its individual member's need is protected against all kind of violence, indiscrimination, injustice and indifferences. There is a reciprocal relationship between the individual and the society. All the customs and traditions are internalized during the process of growing up in a society. A nation where the individual is fed or triggered with hatred and negative energy, can never progress and will breed hatred only and will be a constant threat for the humanity always. Global foundation of peace can only be established with the nation which endorse peace under all circumstances.

All educational programmes attempt at holistic development of the child, with the focus on promoting the qualities of sharing, cooperation, mutual help, building trust and team work. The values contained in the Indian Constitution point to the principles of fairness and social justice, as well as appreciation for cultural values, human dignity, and so on. The ideal of an inclusive society may be realised via principles such as equal rights, fraternity, and justice, in which every member of society feel included regardless of caste, colour, faith, ethnicity, gender, or society. The culture of inclusiveness is particularly relevant and important in the context of society, nation and world as a whole and for this education for all is to be made compulsory. Values can never be taught in isolation. They cannot be transacted independently from learning that takes place in classroom. In fact, values are suggested to be woven in every activity that takes place in school and also in every subject being taught. For inculcating values the situations will need to be deliberately planned while teaching.

'Vidya Dadati Poornathvam' means- 'Knowledge leads to completion.' True knowledge includes the cultivation of inborn qualities. "Education is the integration of principles and thoughts for developing moral character and preparation to face life's challenges," remarked Dr. S Radhakrishnan. Integrating ethics in activities such as sports, languages, social sciences, the artistic endeavours, and maths and scientific education is critical for understanding and practising values in real life. For value formation, youngsters at each stage require specialised encouragement from parents and family members. Schools must play an important role in developing core life Values for children to engage meaningfully with the society. Value education is the art of moulding the personality of the students so that they aspire to become better individuals, serve the society and work for the welfare of the country. To make value aspect of our education programmes more prominent so, that growing children can imbibe values effortlessly, the following ideas may be incorporated in the educational programmes-

- A continuous attempt must be made during a child's education to form his or her values. Value education must be taught in all classes, not just the lesser ones, in the education of children.
- Displaying such conduct that assist in developing self-respect, awareness of self-growth, one's uniqueness, self-confidence.
- Partnering with parents is essential as children observe and learn from behaviour of parents and other members of family at home.
- Organising activities which promote selflessness, cooperative spirit, spirit of sharing.
- Developing sense of belongingness by cultivating respect for property, one's own and that of other.
- Sensitizing parents so, that they understand the contribution of home towards the physical, emotional, cultural and spiritual development of young people.
- Continuous motivation for cleanliness, punctuality, using appropriate language, courtesy, proper manner, respect for everyone.
- Sensitizing students and helping them to develop gratitude by organising visit to slums, villages, hospitals, orphanages, and old age homes.
- Making students aware of the need of the others.
- Promoting civic sense, awareness of oneself as a member of community, civic duties by taking initiative.
- Making students analyse their strength and weakness, and assisting them in converting their weakness into strength.
- Display cordial behaviour, respecting each and every one irrespective of caste, colour, creed, status, gender, race, age etc.
- Making students realize their potential and latent talents, disciplined learning in academics, sports,

cultivating the scientific temper.
- Promoting independent thinking so, that the students are not turning into blind followers.
- Sensitizing students by making them aware about great personalities and the traits which set them apart from others.
- Conscious efforts should be made to provide knowledge of the Constitution, rights, and dutiesto students.
- Conducting such activities which promote human dignity and justice, patriotism, national integrity, international understanding.
- Legends, folktales, and stories about great men and women who lived exemplary lives.
- Sensitizing students towards conservation of environment.
- Generating a sense of pride in one's cultural heritage.
- Awareness about roots with respect to one's village/city, state, country.
- Conducting activities inside and outside the class to promote equality and justice for all.
- Incorporating prayers from all the religions in school assembly.
- Promote the universal principles of affection, empathy, caring, sharing, and compassion among students in order to foster harmonious and compassionate interactions.
- Improving one's capacity to distinguish and respond maturely to information and events that incite violence, dishonesty, and hatred, notably deceptive marketing and anything violent and harmful in the media.
- Sharing teachings of all the religions. So, that students can develop better understanding of the fact that all the scriptures are preaching about humanity above all.
- Appreciating the art, cultural and traditions of different regions nationally and internationally.

Values assist us in understanding different paradigms from which we operate. Any society or community can be transformed through values. There are certain universal values that every society needs to thrive. These are-
- **Empathy:** It is an ability to recognize, understand, and share the thoughts and emotions of others. Developing empathy is imperative for establishing relationships and behaving compassionately. Empathy assists us in developing rapport with others. Empathy helps to cooperate with others. In this fast-paced world there is a steep decline in empathy.
- **Respect:** To respect someone is to have good opinion about that person. It means accepting the person with all his/her flaws if any. It is one of the core value that is the basis of happy, healthy and content life. It includes respect for self, individual and society, vulnerable population, and nature.
- **Unconditional love and care:** What makes us human is feeling of selfless love and care. These feelings must come within irrespective of caste, color, creed, race or gender. We should take care of others by not hurting anybody's sentiments knowingly or unknowingly. During COVID ample examples of humanity winning over the dreaded situations were seen. People were coming out to help others fearlessly, without worrying about their own lives.
- **Loyalty:** Being loyal to oneself is the strongest trait of the character. Saying no to all the unethical practices, be it cheating in exams or assignments or spreading baseless rumors etc. Staying grounded on what is right and protecting the rights of others.
- **Honesty:** Students must be taught that there is no substitute for honesty. Short-cuts might appear to be tempting but will get you nowhere. One who cheats can never lead a peaceful life because entire energy is wasted in manipulations and hiding the real facts.
- **Cooperation:** Students must be trained to work in collaboration, respecting and accepting others view. As it is well said, united we stand divided we fall. There is an immense strength in unity. One can learn so many values from working together. Feeling of oneness and a sense of belongingness can be developed.
- **Compassion:** It is one of the core values. It means listening with utmost attention and empathy, showing genuine concern about feeling of others. Understand the cause for somebody else's pain or suffering and taking thoughtful action to help them.
- **Forgiveness:** Mindfulness assist to observe thoughts or a mental re-run of the issue to understand it in a better way and to be aware about what one is thinking. It helps in eliminating the resentful thoughts that have arisen leading to anger. Having patience and letting things take time helps in forgiving. The anger and resentment of holding on to grudges displaces us and takes us out of the flow and experience of our true nature.
- **Acceptance:** It is to be open and accepting oneself and others. Acceptance should always be without exceptions. Where every individual is free to be himself/herself. Free from all the biases and unnecessary judgements. Students must be taught from very beginning to live in complete harmony and they must learn to create non-threatening environment. Everyone deserves safe, welcoming and affirming environment.

Values serve as standards or criteria. Values guide the selection or evaluation of actions, policies, people, and events. People decide what is good or bad, justified or illegitimate, worth doing or avoiding, based on possible consequences for their cherished values. Values can be contagious. Honesty (Sathya); ethical behaviour (Dharma); tranquility (Shanti); Love (Prema); and Nonviolence (Ahimsa) are the fundamental human ideals. Love is the source of life for the other Values. It is not just an emotion but very existence. Promotion of these values need to be the priority of every citizen across the globe.

Conclusion
In this fast paced world, character and sound moral values can assist in bringing the change that everyone is looking forward to. Teachers, parents and communities have major role to play. They must practice what they preach. Practical learning must precede bookish learning. A positive environment is to be created for these 'digital natives' that can influence pattern of behavior, action, beliefs and overall value system and make them humane citizen of this global village.
The success of the initiative of inculcating universal values among learners depends on the vision, motivation, skill

attitude and values and behaviour of teachers themselves. In emerging context it is not merely about survival but about healthy and peaceful coexistence epitomised in Vasudev Kutumbakam (a Sanskrit phrase that means that the whole world is one single family). The essential principles that must be practised include upholding the dignity of others and rights as individuals, as well as care for the environment.

"The first principle of value that we need to rediscover is this: that all reality hinges on moral foundations. In other words, that this is a moral universe, and that there are moral laws of the universe just as abiding as the physical laws. (from "Rediscovering Lost Values")"

― Martin Luther King Jr., A Knock at Midnight: Inspiration from the Great Sermons of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

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