



## Holistic Approach to Education

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### ABSTRACT

The time has again come to revive and restore our ancient knowledge based on Value Based Education in this modern age without being biased extremist, prejudiced and orthodox. It is only ancient knowledge and Vidya which will change the attitudes of our children making them complete human beings. And, in return they will change the entire human society.

*Keywords: Education; Value Based Education*

### Introduction

"Vidya Dadati Vinyam, Vinayat Yati Patratam; Patratwat Dhanama-pnoti, Dhanat Dharma Tath Sukham"

A society holds together through the quality of its shared values (virtues), which are produced through a shared conversation. (Sachs, 1997) What appears to be missing from many schools and society at large is a shared vocabulary, based on shared positive human values, which can provide a sense of direction and vision about how to create a stable moral society. The purpose of this article is to argue that teaching about positive human values (e.g. respect, honesty, compassion, care, humility and responsibility) improves the quality of education in schools. Such work creates values-based Education.

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The time has again come to revive and restore our ancient knowledge based on Value Based Education in this modern age without being biased extremist, prejudiced and orthodox. It is only ancient knowledge and Vidya which will change the attitudes of our children making them complete human beings. And, in return they will change the entire human society.

"There is a part of a child's soul that has always been unknown but which must be known. With a spirit of sacrifice and enthusiasm we must go in search like those who travel to foreign lands and tear up mountains in their search for hidden gold. This is what the adults must do who seeks the unknown factor that lies hidden in the depths of a child's soul. This is a

labor in which all must share, without distinction of nation, race, or social standing since it means the bringing forth of an indispensable element for the moral progress of mankind." - Maria Montessori

A values-based school seeks to promote an educational philosophy based on valuing self and others, through the consideration of a values vocabulary (principles that guide behaviour) as the basis of good educational practice. This process is called Values Education which can be further described as: a way of conceptualizing education that places the search for meaning and purpose at the heart of the educational process. It recognizes that the recognition, worth and integrity of all involved in the life and work of the school, are central to the creation of a values-based learning community that fosters positive relationships and quality in education. (Alive, 2007)

Education seems doomed to be a field plagued with paradoxes and contradictions. On the one hand, the conviction that education is important and school resources must be improved, is fortunately, on the rise. On the other hand, bewilderment and discontent grow before the –Value Based Education undeniable failure of teaching institutions on too many occasions. It has become increasingly evident that there are more and more things that should be taught, but also that ever more students are unable to learn them or even comprehend the interest that their studies hold. While general, compulsory education should be the great equalizer of the social opportunities for young people, it instead reinforces inequalities; acting as a discriminatory filter.

Education opens up our mind, but –Value Based Education (VBE) gives us purity of heart too; education provides us with skills, but VBE provides us sincerity too; education extends our relationship with the , but VBE links us with our own family members too. Education makes our living better, but VBE makes our life better too; education teaches us to compete with others, but VBE encourages us to be complete too; education makes us a good professional, but VBE makes us a whole human too; education takes us to the top, but VBE takes the whole society to the top. Education gives us capacity of

better learning, but VBE gives us the tool for a deeper understanding too; education gives us Anna but VBE provides us Ananda too; education may bring limitations but VBE is for liberation. After all right education means- "Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye". It means that knowledge is what helps us to attain liberation.

Values are those principles or standards, which help to better the quality of life. Values codify the dos and don'ts of behavior. They form the basics of character formation and personality development. The values that spring from within or the core of the heart, like love, compassion, sympathy, empathy, tolerance, etc. lay the foundation for the external practiced values like honesty, discipline, punctuality and loyalty. The most important to remember is that "values are priceless, while valuables are priced." In today's fast paced competitive world, man seems to have compromised on his values, integrity and character, in a bid to earn, use and possess more and more of material wealth. As a result, we see rampant corruption, unlawful activities, inhuman behavior and immoral consumption, which is slowly breaking the very structure of our society, nation and the world. Therefore, there is an urgent need to re-introduce value based spiritual education dealing specifically with human values", to redesign the fabric of our educational system. A child's mind is like soft clay and can be moulded to any desired shape. Thus, this is the right time and age to impart value education so that the right impressions formed in the child's mind will guide him throughout his life. Such life will definitely be based on moral and just principles.

The process of Values Education must begin with adults (what could be described as the work before the work), before adopting it in the curriculum. From the evidence, it would appear that Values Education cannot be taught in isolation from the teacher's own thoughts, feelings and behaviour. It is therefore important for all who work with children to pay attention to looking after themselves, physically, mentally and spiritually. Such wise selfishness then enables the adult to be a positive role model. Teaching about values affects teachers thinking, and consequently the way that they teach. Teachers are not neutral with regards to values, as values are embedded within their attitudes and exhibited through their behaviour. This implies that, in order for there to be consensus and consistency of staff expectations and behaviour throughout the school, a whole school Values Education policy needs to be introduced

As a social institution, the school is a place where groups of individuals from wide-ranging and different social circles come together. The dominant social culture as well as the economic and political context to which the school belongs, impregnates the human exchanges that occur within it. Thus, the contradictions that we find in the different demands of that social culture characterize the human exchanges within the school, as well. In other words, when discussing schools, we cannot place blame only on the teachers for the problems that arise. In today's fast paced competitive world, man seems to have compromised on his values, integrity and character, in a bid to earn, use and possess more and more of material wealth. As a result, we see rampant corruption, unlawful activities, inhuman behavior and immoral consumption, which is slowly breaking the very structure of our society, nation and the world

in shri ram chandra mission, they meditate on the heart and through meditation regulate the mind.

To begin with, we must understand that, overall, schools do not engender violence but suffer from it and in the worst of cases, they allow it to happen. Doubtless, it is the place chosen by violent adolescents to let out their pent-up rage by intimidating younger students (a result of the introduction of the "ESO"-compulsory secondary education). However we should not ignore the fact that what was originally a lack of discipline and which later turned into violence in the schools, are mere symptoms of serious and complex social ills whose etiology includes family disorders, media pressure, parental disorientation, the desire for immediate satisfaction, and loss of authority. Yet while it is important to study the symptoms, it is even more important to study their causes.

The realization of VBE has become quite strong in last few decades on a global level. The negative forces like selfishness, hatred, terrorism, individualism, violence, intolerance, etc. have now become day-to-day problems in the world. The phenomena such as family breakdown, increasing of negative attitude and spread of health hazards like drugs and HIV/AIDS seem to be escalating worldwide, which have now terrified humanity. These are, of course, very threatening challenges to the peaceful existence of humankind. It seems that our future is dismayed and horrified now not because of anything else other than our own deeds, achievements and productions.

General education can be transferred, but VBE should be transformed. VBE is more teacher-based than text books; it is more awakening, not only informing. It is life-oriented, not exam-oriented. Therefore, we need to create a special environment in institutions to transform VBE in students. First of all, we need trained committed and spiritually motivated teachers for VBE. The pedagogical methods for implementing VBE may be stories, poems, prayers, songs, mantras and bhajans. Similarly, special camps can be organized. Likewise, special Satsangas can be helpful. It is apparent that all the festivals hold several values such as environmental, social, scientific and spiritual. It is therefore imperative to integrate festivals into teaching / learning process so as to make children realize importance and values of the festivals. The whole process should be very peaceful, harmonious and motivational. One should get answers by asking himself or herself. The whole environment should be free from stress, fear and confusion. Extreme materialistic attachment has made our life very narrow; therefore one should be able to open up the mind and heart freely and infinitely. Actually

VBE does not require any set text books; rather than that, the whole institution should be based on VBE. It should be applied through various methods in order that everyone can understand it and follow it automatically and positively.

The right impressions formed in the child's mind will guide him throughout his life. Such life will definitely be based on moral and just principles. School is the common platform for all children coming from various backgrounds. In an interactive and learning environment of the school, where a child spends a maximum of eight hours of waking time, the human values can be easily evoked in him by making him "experience" and "live" the values. Teachers, in turn, present themselves as role models to be emulated. The basic approach to impart value education is "love". This is the most vital aspect to implement value education in three ways: the independent approach, the integrated approach, and the subtle approach. Sahaj Marg the "natural path" is a system of practical training in spirituality.

The goal of sahaj marg is inner perfection, god realization or merger with the ultimate.

The school and the entire educational system, in spite of its meritocratic nature and its function as a reproducer of social hierarchies, is probably the most egalitarian of all social subsystems. As a social institution in which different groups of individuals come into contact with one another, the school exercises a powerful socializing influence. Inevitably, the dominant social culture within the political and economic framework of the school impregnates the human exchanges that occur within it.

The contradictions that we find today in our lives are replicated in the schools. Both teachers and students have assumed contradictory values in the three spheres of social life.

□ A demand for attention, care, affection, and generosity in the family.

□ A tendency to competitiveness, egoism, individualism, gives importance above all to money and productivity in the workplace, the economy and the labor market.

□ The conviction that everyone is equal at least in theory and by right of law, political participation, a commitment to the common good, and the collective responsibilities of democratic societies.

These contradictions take on meaningful nuances in our times. The family is no longer a unifying force, nor is it the homogenous and inalterable sphere of thirty years ago. The economy calls for new forms of behavior, new attitudes and new skills. Politics has become mere marketing with scant citizen participation. Absolute cultural and historical relativism; the ethical pragmatic that "everything goes"; superficial tolerance understood as a lack of commitment and orientation; ferocious competitiveness; egocentric individualism coupled with social conformity; the importance of appearances, fashion, of having over being; the exaltation of all things ephemeral and changing; and the obsession to consume should all be regarded as a logical consequence of the way in which economic relations are conceived. Relations which condition the lives of human beings and which are regulated exclusively by laws. Of course all these aspects of contemporary postmodern culture are

present in everyday exchanges in and out of the school and they unquestionably lead to the acquisition of specific conducts, values, attitudes and ideas.

Through value-based education we can flourish the eternal truth like "Sarba Dharma Sambhab". Equal respect towards all the great world religions and faiths is the dire need of the today's world. This will help eliminate all forms of discriminations prevailing in our society. Value-based education provides a strong foundation for getting rid of century-old discriminations based on language, caste, gender, class, region and religion. The society will then be harmonious.

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