

Research Article

Value As The Core Tenet For Quality Media Education - Need, Challenges And Future: With Special Reference To Dev Sanskriti University's Value Based Education

Sukhnandan Singh^{1*}

¹Professor, Dept. of Journalism & Mass communication, Dev Sanskriti University, Haridwar, India

*Corresponding author. Email: sukhnandan.singh@dsvv.ac.in

<https://doi.org/10.36018/dsij.v15i.136>

Abstract. Today looking at the all prevailing and wide role of media in the society, its lack of quality content, negative coverage and resulting negative impact on the society is a matter of great concern. Most of the journalists and mass communicators are the product of some Journalism and Mass communication or media schools/colleges/institutions. The state of media education in these institutions is a matter of grave concern. They are far away from the objective of giving products that can play their role as a force of positive change in the society. To forge journalists with a sense of professional commitment, social responsibility and a minimum sense of value sensitivity, is the need of the hour and also a big challenge to implement. How can the center of higher learning be the breeding ground for such products is a million dollar question? Researcher has firm opinion that values are the core requirement of quality media education. Education without value is like body without soul. There is need to revive the values. The present paper is a humble effort in this direction, based on personal observations, long concern with value education and the experiment on value based education going on at Dev sanskriti University, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.

Keywords. India, Media Education, Quality Concern, Value Education, Need & Challenges, Dev Sanskriti University.



Introduction

Media is today a big industry and one of the fastest growing sectors. “With about 450 Channels, 400 FM channels, 1000 newspapers, 1000 magazines, and ever-growing new media – Media is a fastest growing sector in India. As such there is fast growing need of educated and skilled workers in different media sectors. To cater to this ever growing demand, a number of media schools, colleges and universities have come into existence and many are mushrooming now and then. No doubt media education is today one of the most growing disciplines in the academic scenario of India” [1].

But the quality of education in these institutions is a matter of grave concern. Only a few of them are quality conscious and most of the institutions are doing mere business and preparing armchair professionals without commitment to the society. “The mushrooming mass communication institutes are churning thousands of inefficient thereof unemployed graduates and postgraduates every year. Campus placement is not guaranteed anywhere in journalism course. This is not because there no demand but the reality is that most of the times the media owners or the industry people are not finding competent freshers, who can be picked up directly after passing out” [2]

Quality media education: the need of the hour

Quality media education is the need of the hour. To cater to the ever-growing media industry, there is dire need of professionally competent talents with minimum sense of general awareness, language skill, technical knowhow and professional commitment. A sense of social responsibility and value concern is the additional and perhaps the most important factor and unfortunately in present context the most neglected one.

Value as the central ingredient

In fact human values are the central ingredients of quality education. Professional competence devoid of social responsibility, minimum human sensibility and positive outlook of life cannot produce the professionals that can do justice with their profession. It is even more important in the profession like media,

which has its role to play as the fourth pillar of the democracy, watchdog of society and a tool of positive change and social transformation.

Mahatma Gandhiji’s famous quotation is worth mentioning here, “Wealth without work; pleasure without conscience; knowledge without character; commerce without morality; science without humanity; religion without sacrifice; and politics without principle will lead to sinful acts disturbing peace and happiness” [3]. So is it true regarding education without value. The disturbing impact of such valueless education is evident.

It would be proper to discuss the values first.

Human Values

“Value is a behavioral concept related to an individual or a group that implies what is desirable or valuable. Values determine human behavior and therefore influence the quality of life...Though in a strict sense the word ‘value’ does not merely means virtues or morality, Values, morals and ethics are intrinsically and mutually connected and often in the common parlance one is loosely substituted for other. When related to social norms or standards they become expressions of higher aspirations and creative power of the universal life. So we have to comprehend both, absolute value (an end in itself) and instrumental value (means to attain higher goal)” [4].

In the process of investigating human values, Dr. Gawande found that “Human value is like an axle of a wheel and other types of value are around it. Seven human values he found to be - (1) Truthfulness (2) Constructively (3) Sacrifice (4) Sincerity (5) Self-control (6) Altruism (7) Scientific vision” [5].

In the Indian tradition dharma, artha, kama, moksha denotes the values of life. Artha and kama are the physical and psychological values. Whereas dharma is moral value and moksha the supreme value. Dharma is the central one, a means and the end in itself. Dharma assures the judicious and righteous use of artha and kama, that ultimately leads to liberation i.e. Moksha [6]. In Western tradition study of values is



dealt under an independent discipline called 'axiology'. The western values consider Beauty, Truth and Goodness as the ultimate values [7].

Value as psychological object. Although we cannot see or touch them, they are every bit as real as any physical object. People may dedicate their entire lives or even give up their lives to pursue their values. As so many loyal patriots have done fighting for value of freedom, equality and human rights...We have values that determine our decision and guide our lives. Those who value their individuality take responsibility, are self-reliant and act with self-respect. Those who value truthfulness cannot tell a lie. Those who value family or friendship sacrifice their personal interest for the good of others. Those who value goodness cannot bring themselves to do something they know is wrong...In fact values determine the intensity and flow of our psychological energies and can be considered as the highest psychological form for accomplishment...In terms of accomplishment; thoughts are mental forms of energy which do not necessarily lead to action. Ideas carry the energy of mental understanding. Opinions carry the force of mental conviction. Attitudes carry the vital force of our emotional endorsement. Values carry the power of psychological commitment and determination. Values issues from a deeper or higher center of motivation in our personalities and therefore carry far greater power than our opinions or attitudes. In fact values are spiritual skills- a divine gift that comes to us from the infinite source of things [8]. When we examine the lives of great people, we often see how personal values guided them, propelling them to the top of social and professional fields.

Thus value is a belief, a mission, or a philosophy that is meaningful. It can have a moral or a spiritual base. Whether we are consciously aware of them or not, every individual has a core set of personal values.

Importance of Values

i) Good values are the spontaneous manifestations of a sound character and values form the central pole around which our actions, desires and ambitions are organized.

- ii) Values guide our behavior and give meaning to our existence.
- iii) Values assist us to take right decisions and make choices.
- iv) Values give direction and firmness to life and help us to be morally sound.
- v) Values set goals for achievements and they motivate, define and color all our activities in cognitive, affective and conative domains [9].

Thus values provide an internal reference for what is good, beneficial, important, useful, beautiful, desirable, constructive, etc.

So it is the values that give an individual the spark that distinguishes him from the crowd, the common herd of humanity. They are the rock strong foundation of an idealistic mode of life. Personal values manifest in the outer world as harmony, peace and prosperity [10]. Our glorious past was based on this rich traditional base and strong value system.

Traditional Value base & its Degradation

Glorious phase of Indian history is full of such value loaded characters. Through their noble conduct and ideal deeds they were live demo of lofty values. No doubt this regard for values has been the fertile ground for the production of galaxy of great persons and spiritual giants. Chilana studied Indian culture and observed that Indian culture is based on the values, viz, kind heartedness, self-control, universal brotherhood, honesty, respect to others and faith. Due to deterioration of these values, new values like indiscipline and destructive mentality came into existence [5]. Degradation of values took serious turn during the medieval period - the dark phase of our history. But its revival also takes place simultaneously with wave of Bhakti movement and later on with cultural and spiritual renaissance during 19th and 20th century.

But the growth of science and technology and western influence has led to a new wave of value degradation. Dharmaveer Bharty in the late twenty comments - The values on which our civilization was based are proving to be false and there is an overall chaos [11]. The process of modernization, westernization and Materialism is eroding the core of human values. The



atmosphere of conflict and turmoil, the rate of crime and delinquency, murder, alcoholism, drug addiction etc. has increased [12].

With the progress of science and materialism, dry logic and insensible brain played havoc on the age old value system based on faith. As a result materialistic thinking and sensual life style has become the dominant way of life [13]. Dry logic propagating materialism and diminishing faith on spiritual reality is the major cause of this crisis [14]. Monetary gain at any cost and the lust for unlimited sensual pleasure seems to be the fashion and culture of the day. Intellectuals are seen giving it legitimacy and media seems adding fuel to the fire. As such the country is facing a profound value crisis. The Indian mind is seized with a conflict between the ideal and the practical. What is ideal is not considered practical — and vice versa. India's future depends upon its ability to establish a unity of the ideal and the practical [15].

No doubt, Indian society is facing a serious crisis of values. Hardly any day goes without some news indicative of this crisis. It is due to the crisis of values that, the temples of education have become mere business centers. The family, considered to be the first school is on the verge of disintegration. A handful of persons are living a life of luxury, while a vast majority of population is struggling for the basic human needs for their survival. In fact people are becoming more and more money-minded and materialistic. They are busy in collecting money by any means. The lust for money and power has corrupted the man. Excessive competition in society is also leading to degradation of moral values.

It is also true regarding Indian media. Journey of Indian press from mission to business is the story of its degradation and devaluation. Media education is also no exception. "The vehicle of media education seems to be halted with punctured wheels while the road to go is a long one. The focus on national development through media seems to be lost in the environment of market-oriented, product-centric era of media education" [16].

Infusing values in education system – the need and the challenge

The trend is to be reversed and revived by infusing values in our educational system and in the higher centers of learning. Revival of human values is the need of hour. It must be admitted that this crisis of values can only be overcome by combined efforts of all. Everyone has to commit himself towards a minimum ethical standard in his life. Unfortunately, there is a big gap between preaching and practicing of what one believes or what one says. One's actions must reflect the values that one intends to inculcate in children (students). Problems cannot be overcome by pointing fingers at others. A noble and pure character is the only lasting solution to this crisis of value [17]. In the words of Swami Vivekananda chastity, truthfulness and genuine sympathy are the three indispensable components of a true character [18]. Education imparting life-building, man-making and character-making assimilation of ideas [19] is the need of hour.

It has to be implemented at three levels. 1st - minimum outline, in the form of curriculum. More important than it is 2nd - the teachers, the Acharyas who will transmit this education to the students and of course the 3rd level – the support system/Institutional environment provided by the visionary leadership of higher authorities committed for value education.. Value education is not a mere question of class room teaching and mere preaching and giving instructions. It is to be lived and given through live demo. It is to be transmitted through conduct, through personal example. Along with teachers the system has to be transparent and qualify high standard of integrity and democratic values. Preparing such teachers/Acharyas of integrity and high standards of character and the system conducive for its growth is the prime challenge with value education.

With reference to media and academic institutions – this becomes even more important. Today looking at the all prevailing and wide role of media in the society, its lack of quality content, negative coverage and resulting negative impact on the society is a matter of great concern. Most of the journalists and



mass communicators are the product of some Journalism and Mass communication or media schools/colleges/institutions. The state of media education in these institutions is a matter of grave concern. They are far away from the objective of giving products that can play their role as a force of positive change in the society.

To forge journalists with a sense of professional commitment, social responsibility and a minimum sense of value sensitivity, is the need of the hour and also a big challenge to implement. How can the center of higher learning be the breeding ground for such products is a million dollar question? Based on the experiment of value based education going on at Dev Sanakriti University, Haridwar and its encouraging results, a workable broad roadmap is given below.

A roadmap to infuse values in media education or higher centers of learning

The broader outline of instilling value in higher centers of learning can be thought and worked out under the following points –

1. Mission and vision statement – Values should be the central ingredient of the mission and vision statement of the institution/University. It should further reflect in the curriculum, teaching and other activities of the Institute/Department.
2. Include values as an integral part of curriculum – Some curriculum in the form of Life management/Art of living or Personality refinement or Character building etc. can be designed. It be given some credit, marks and evaluation system and play its crucial role in determining the merit of students.
3. Invocation Ceremony (Gyan Deeksha) – Students gets a deeper orientation at the very beginning about the disciplined life they are to live during their stay at the institution. With the popular faith of their native place/region they should take the vow to live a disciplined life and after completion of study serve the society.
4. Self-Development or Life management classes – Life style management, Time & stress management, Goal of life, goal setting, personal refinement, intellectual development, creative excellence, emotional growth, relationship management, team building and leadership, spiritual excellence etc. topics can be covered under it, so that overall development of the students is ensured.
5. Physical culture, Self-reliance and dignity of labor – For physical fitness sports, yoga exercises etc. can be made somehow part of student life. Let the dignity of labor get in some way ingrained in their mind. Teach them importance of self-reliance by imparting some practical skills (language, technical, vocational etc.).
6. Yoga & meditation classes – Daily or weekly dose of Yoga can be given to students to ensure physical, mental and spiritual development. Supplemented by meditation by some authorized teacher, it will give students deeper insight over the life and equip them in a better way to face the future battle of life.
7. Disciplined life style – It works best in residential universities/colleges, where student's life undergoes a series of discipline from morning till night. But even in open institutes, it can be applied to the best of possible level. Top leadership has to create the atmosphere and teachers have the responsibility to lead the way through personal example.
8. Positive environment and inspiring ambience – Clean, green and serene ambience of a university/institution in itself acts as a catalyst for value education. Minimum code/standard of conduct, dressing and behavior will add to its positive environment. Collective meditation and other noble activities can give value addition in it. Inspiring quotations on the walls and campus can do wonder in this regards.
9. Spiritual study circle – Students groups can be made under the guidance of enlightened teacher to form spiritual study circles, where



daily/weekly meeting of the groups, sitting together, reading and discussing the inspirational/ motivating books can be experimented. This experiment nurtures noble thoughts in the students.

10. Cultural values promoting Unity in diversity – University/institution should promote national values and commitment. At the same time promote globalized outlook. The cultural programs, other extracurricular activities like – debate, discussion, quizzes, festivals, seminars etc. can be conducted on such themes.
11. Vision of holistic education – The focus should be on the integral development and grooming of the students. Along with the physical, intellectual, emotional, professional and spiritual development of students, it should equip them with a minimum sense of responsibility to the welfare of the common mass and society.
12. Social Internship – At the completion of study, students should be sent in the society under social internship for at least one month. Students interaction with the masses and classes at various levels and sharing of their best of knowledge will benefit society and ultimately groom the student fit to serve society in future along with his carrier.
13. Education free from profit motive – Institutes may charge the fee that is justifiable and affordable, but, it should have space for the poor, marginalized and deserving students. It should be made compulsory to have a quota for such students. Special credit should be given to this practice during the accreditation process of the academic institutions.
14. Teachers’ value orientation – Teachers’ proper orientation is vital here. Values should be given higher priorities in the process of selection and promotion of teachers. Regular orientation programs of teachers be made mandatory and held at reputed center of excellence in Value education. The teachers of noble character and integrity should be given special credit.

15. Promoting research on this neglected area - This neglected area of core competency and value education should be given priority and proper funds should be allocated for quality research work over it. Such practices should be valued and promoted by National governing bodies like UGC, NAAC etc.

With this orientation students are sure to get basic value inputs such that they qualify the minimum ethical standards and do justice with their profession as a responsible citizen. Departmental/institutional efforts reflecting this change can be promoted at Dept. /University level through newspaper, magazines, radio programs, TV documentaries etc.

There may be compulsions at the media houses driven by market forces, but, what are the forces blocking the centers of higher learning in daring such experiments in their department/institution. It is the role of the teachers to awaken the power of righteous thinking (Viveka) in the students, which they can apply in their personal, professional and social life, which will further result in the awakening of the collective consciousness of the masses.

When most of the academicians and professionals have no faith in the value system, and monetary gain and petty selfish motives are the prime driving forces, it is a great challenge to implement values in education especially at the centers of higher education or media institutions. But beginning has to be made at certain level. Someone has to take the bold initiative in this noble direction. Dev sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar is one such center of higher education, where experiment on value based education is going on with the above said parameters. Based on the feedback of the professionals and the media houses employing the students, overall result is encouraging. The centers of higher education can replicate this value based education model at their institute in their own way.



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