

VALUE-BASED TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

Aim. “The ultimate aim became the realisation of the political ideas of democracy, equality, and social justice” (Orlenius, 2001; Svngby, 1994, p. 57). The current study aimed to explore the concept of value education at Poornaprajna institutions that have adopted value education in their curriculum.

Methods. The study was designed in a qualitative exploratory research approach. The researcher had adopted the interviews for a case study as a microscopic social study through observation and also studied the archival records in Poornaprajna institutions. The informal group interviews were administered as part of a qualitative research approach, which aimed to collect data from twenty eight English teachers and students of Poornaprajna institutions.

Result. The validity and trustworthiness of the study were established by adopting Miles and Huberman’s formula, which amounted to 0.91. The exploration and findings revealed the need and implication of value education in the present scenario. Furthermore, the data analysis revealed that value education is a process that begins at home and continues in society, and further, it continues in formal educational institutions.

Conclusion. The study envisions that the educational institutions must integrate the curriculum with value education so that students’ cultural worlds, meanings they attribute to behaviour, events which essentially lead to the developmental process of the society. The National Education Policy 2019, aims to universalise education in India by 2025; it also aims at inter- and multidisciplinary approaches in Indian education. The present study juxtaposes an interdisciplinary approach to English and value education.

Key words: value education, moral, dharma (duty), human behaviour

INTRODUCTION

“Value education fundamentally begins at home and continues in society and in the formal education institutions” (Basu, 2012, p. 42).

A time must come when the Indian brain will shake off the obscurity that has fallen upon it; stop to think or hold suppositions at second and third hand and



affirm its entitlement to pass judgment and ask in an ideal opportunity into the importance of its own sacred texts (Aurobindo, 1919, p. 262)

“The destiny of India is being shaped in our classrooms” (Kothari Commission Report, 1964, p. 8). Therefore, teachers have a prominent role in this regard. Teachers must assimilate values and imbibe these values among students. It has assumed greater significance as our education today is far removed from reality and its cultural roots. The humanising aspect of our ancient education is conspicuous by its absence today. “Teaching is a moral activity in which teachers have to consider the ethical complexity of teaching and the moral impact they have on their students” (Carr et al., 2011, p.95). Limited researchers on value education have focused on Dharma (duty), on which The Indian principles rest (Mishra & Gergen, 1993). The current research is an attempt to bring out the effect of value education and Dharma of the teachers in imbibing the values among students through teaching English language and literature.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON VALUE EDUCATION AND MORAL BEHAVIOUR

Moral behaviour is “Being honest, hard-working, obeying legitimate authority, kind, patriotic and responsible” (Jones, 2009, p. 39). He argues in his research paper that the moral behaviour of most of the people in the country, from the lowest to the highest level, has been on the wane, especially during the last fifty years. People say it is a global phenomenon and a flimsy excuse for our failure on various fronts. The mountains of misery and deep valleys of wretchedness all around us are the experience of meanness and selfishness everywhere in the country. “Favours the teaching of multiple perspectives on issues and knowledge, and a critical deconstructive orientation towards social values and practices, such as the hegemony or discursive truths/assumptions of any given time or culture is revealed” (Jones, 2009, p. 42). The author states that in enriching the evident reason may be uncontrollable desire, self-aggrandisement, lust, drunkenness, low-pleasure seeking nature, lack of concern for others, and immoral acts are committed by people in positions of power. These acts of chance are perpetrated not for material gains but for the joy of doing it. It may be as William Shearer puts it in his work *Morals and Manners*:

The keenest sorrow and shame may be felt for faults committed. However, again and again, the same fault will be committed. However, again and again, the same fault will be repeated, the same vicious practices indulged in because the vital strength-giving will is absent. (Shearer, 1903, p. 112)

The current study explored the relevance of value education in the curriculum, its importance and approaches to imbibe. Halstead et al. (1996) bring out

two approaches in value education. They say that, in order to save society from disaster, teachers have to apply themselves seriously and provide an alternate model, and such a model is feasible only when they spiritualise education. How can this be achieved? To answer this, a transmission of values through adults in the society and through moral education and direct education they study indicates the country's academic policymakers at the highest level seem to toe the line of their political masters, who in turn have totally misunderstood spirituality and equated it with religion. They may be literate but certainly not educated in the best Indian tradition. No education system is complete without imparting the wisdom of good living. People may receive education in technology, science and humanities without having any insight into what right living is. Universal values that everyone knows, such as truth, non-violence and non-stealing, seem idealistic and impossible to live. However, one cannot live a decent life without practising some of these values, yet living with them only seems to create conflict and suffering.

DHARMA (DUTY)

The concept of Dharma is defined as an ideal of human being life. The epistemological reference of the word Dharma is from the Sanskrit root *dhr*, which means something that sustains or uploads. But, in Greek, it is a semantic equivalent of ethos. Further, Max Muller defines Dharma as a way of life which also regulates people's behaviour and governs them. The Hindu perspective lays on the thought of Dharma (duty) and faith in an inborn request of the universe. The standard of karma additionally arises as a significant good class for various gatherings of individuals (Misra & Gergen, 1993). Further, Dharma is featured as a standard of uniformity among people and non-separation. Accordingly, it has arisen as a phenomenal zenith of prior ideas of standards.

Dharma is what endorses to oneself or great awareness or springs from due pondering for one's own satisfaction and furthermore for the government assistance of all creatures liberated from dread, want, illness, loving positive sentiments and a feeling of fellowship. (Justice Sri K. Ramaswamy in a judgment in the case of ASN Dixitalu vs state of AP, 1996)

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The literature from previous researchers sets the aims for the current research: "The ultimate aim became the realisation of the political ideas of democracy, equality, and social justice" (Orlenius, 2001, p. 88). The present system of education in India, and the world at large, caters to the hand and head but not to reason and heart. The Kothari Commission recommended an integrated education, and the same was endorsed by the National Policy Education in 1986. It is for the development of the whole personality of the child, and it is neglected in our present system, which is modelled on Macaulay's model.

Even the intellectual aspect is shallow, and the learners are stuffed with useless information, just enough to pass examinations and secure degrees, which serve as a passport to the world of employment.

Morality refers to “a more extensive sociological concern with the accomplishment of a socially coordinated character and the development of entertainers as upright specialists, liable for their activities and subject to the assessments of others” (Atkinson & Housley, 2003, p. 197). Corrupt political and social practices, a system of education which does not have its roots in the fertile soil of great Indian heritage and values, which as a beacon, served as a guiding light to the entire world, a set of teachers who think that these values have no relevance to modern life; a system of education with an irrelevant curriculum, which tries to evaluate student performance with an unreliable system of examination and awards useless certificates and degrees, as well as an army of students who are interested in anything but thinking of making a living out of it – all these have rendered our educational firmament very bleak, and we realise that all is not well with the system.

There is a need to modify our teaching methodology and use the mother tongue where it helps. In the light of the enormity of the problem and the standard of attainment in English by our teachers, we have no option except to reconcile to the use of L1 in teaching English. (Prahaladaiah & Thomas, 2018, p. 319)

Values like cooperation, regard for basic freedoms, resistance, equity, mindful citizenship, variety, worship towards popular government and tranquil compromise (National Curriculum Framework, 2005). The present study is significant in bringing out the effect of value education in instilling values among the students. The study also signifies the concept of Dharma (duty), which propagates effective teaching-learning among students and teachers.

RESEARCH AIMS

This present study aimed to explore the concept of value education at Poornaprajna institutions that have adopted value education in their curriculum. It also aims to explore the importance of value bound English Language Teaching according to the present official curriculum policy document (Skolverket, 2011).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND VARIABLES

Subsequently, the following research questions were adopted by the researcher to find out the relevance of value education in the 21st century India. How do English teachers acquire values and instil those among the students through teaching the English language and literature? How do Poornaprajna institutions imbibe and perceive their practice of values education? What are the approaches in their practice to impart values education? What is a need for value-

-based teaching language for students and teachers (Thornberg & Oguz, 2013)? The variables of the current study are the dependent variable, teaching English language and literature, and the independent variable, teachers' knowledge of values.

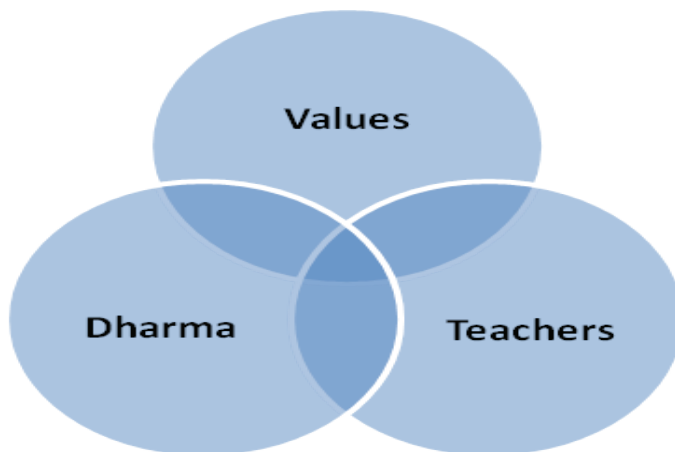


Fig. 1. Variables and their relationship.

Source: Prahaladaiah, 2021

METHODOLOGY

The current study was designed in a qualitative exploratory research approach. The researcher had adopted the interviews for a case study as a microscopic social study through observation and also studied the archival records in Poornaprajna institutions. The informal group interviews were administered as a part of a qualitative research approach, and aimed to collect information from twenty-eight English teachers and students of Poornaprajna institutions. The current study also explored the relevance of value education in the curriculum, its importance to imbibe values. The participants were selected using case study techniques and through the purposive sampling technique. "Exceptional case testing is acknowledged through the choice of the individuals who have extreme experience or perspectives about the current subject" (Schreiber & Asner-Self, 2011, p. 54). Twenty-eight participants were taken for the case study; nine English teachers and nineteen high school students were the part of the study. The data was collected through informal interviews and the interview questions developed by the researcher. The open-ended questions probed information for the researcher. An expert was roped in to retain the validity and reliability of the research. The responses from the interview were analysed for internal consistency.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The data analysis revealed the relevance of value-based English language and literature, which is a principle theme of the study. The study also revealed the other themes, Dharma and moral behaviour. The qualitative data analysis was adopted through coding of data, and the coding was done by dividing the sample group into further smaller units. The data from interviews were recorded and transcribed for further analysis. The reliability in qualitative data analysis by the study codes, which was developed by the researcher, was compared. The reliability analysis formula was developed by Miles and Huberman in 1994 and was adopted in the current study (reliability = mutual agreement / agreement + disagreement). The reliability score of the current study is 0.91.

Poornapragna institutions, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), are the private institutions network in India. The case study, microscopic social observation and archival records revealed that the Poornaprajna institutions have consisted of 25 schools with 20,000 students by 2020. The schools have been doing this job reasonably well, but compared to the huge number of schools and millions of students studying in the country, these schools form a microscopic minority. The institutions have assembly; the children have imbibed devotion, morals, life skills, and patriotism. In addition to the prescribed syllabus, Poornaprajna institutions adopt a curriculum with value education. The institutions believe that the direct teaching of values will not be effective because they do not have effective role models to support. Most teachers are not well-versed in the vast treasure of our spiritual wisdom. Values have to be integrated with the curricular subjects and learning activities. Values can be presented to learners through subjects like science, mathematics, history, languages etc. Our folklore, music, dance and drama provide a wide canvas for this purpose. Teaching should be done through activities that are enjoyable to the learners. Narrating stories to children when they are young is one of the most effective ways of introducing children to culture. The informal interviews with participants revealed that the value education is an essential component of learning and must start at an early age to contribute to life preparation. Two participants stated: "For me, value education and value education must prepare students to prepare for future and English is an important medium to imbibe/instil values through text." Further, they stated that, "English language and literature text evolves with life experience, perspectives, and attitude." A participant among the teachers opined that moral education and values must begin at an early age, especially at their home. The participant also argued that the personality of an individual is shaped at an early age. The majority of participants argued that imbibing values is a continuous process, and values must be taught initially by parents at home. One of the participants stated: "My parents do not encourage value education. Moreover, they perceive negative opinion on learning values and also believe that teaching value is the duty of the teachers."

The participant in the interview, a teacher, stated that: "Teachers are the role models for students, if a teacher is regular and punctual for his class, then

a teacher can expect the same from his students." He also stated teachers must be honest to expect honesty among their students.

Furthermore, he argued that "schools must include value education as a part of the curriculum." The teachers and students collectively opined at the majority level, and they strongly agreed on the importance of value education at schools. They also mutually agreed that Poornaprajna schools are effectively imbibing values among the students. Further, there were nominally fewer participants who disagreed on imbibing values at an early stage of school life is essential. The findings of the current study portrayed that teachers and parents play a significant role in imbibing value in children at an early age. The values are taught at home by parents, and reinforced at school by the teachers. It was also found that the school with a vision to teach values would excel successfully at teaching value education. The participants strongly agreed that the value education must be a core subject within the existing subjects. The teachers and students strongly agreed that values must be taught through English literature and language, by enacting dramas, role plays, elocutions, skits, debates, group discussions.

VALUE EDUCATION AND POORNAPRAJNA INSTITUTIONS

Poornaprajna institutions have been made aware of the system of values that should ensure happy and contented living. The 21st century is a century of excellence. "Excel or Exit" is the motto. Schools believe that excellence in any field can be achieved only when teachers master communicative skills, respect, and practice some of our great traditional values, which make life worth living for us and others. They also believe it is only possible when they create a plan and execute it to perfection." Our country has no future unless our present is rooted in the past," said Rajiv Gandhi in 1986. The schools of Poornaprajna institutions, especially English teachers believe that:

Life is tight rope walking, in which composure and balance is necessary. Language and literature provide this balance. Literature has a soothing and mellowing effect on us. It is the embodiment of Dharma or righteous living. It is the conquest of fear and an antidote to failure and death.

CONCLUSION

Consequence based competency refers to one's ability to use English in real-life situations. Affective based competency refers to one's confidence in using language (Prahaldaiyah, 2018). In order to save our society from disaster, the only way left for us is to spiritualise education. Spirituality is misunderstood and equated with religion. Values cannot be directly taught. They have to be integrated with the teaching of various subjects. One of the rich sources for teaching values is through teaching languages, and especially through literature. Literature is the embodiment of Dharma or righteous living. It is the

conquest of fear, the antidote to failure and death. The study implies that the value education is an integral aspect of the syllabus and curriculum of English language and literature. English curriculum without the value education means it is heading towards the death knell. To conclude the study, it envisions the educational institutions must integrate the curriculum with value education so that students' cultural worlds, meanings they attribute to behaviour, events which essentially lead to developmental processes of the society. The National Education Policy 2019 aims to universalise education by 2025 and also aims at inter- and multidisciplinary approaches in Indian education. The present study juxtaposes an interdisciplinary approach to English and value education.

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