**Research Paper**

**Sociology**

# Changing Ethical Values among Teenagers

| Nagamma Bhairappa | Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Gulbarga University, Kalaburagi: 585 106 |
| --- | --- |
| Dr. Vijayalaxmi Biradar | Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Government Degree College & PG Centre, Kalaburagi: 585 105 Karnataka |

**ABSTRACT**

*Ethical values create positive personality of human beings. Parents' guidance, education, impact of peers/ friends, etc plays significant role in ethical values among teenagers. Presently, mass media, internet, changing family structure, materialistic attitudes, professional education, etc are playing negative role on the ethical values among youth and indirectly influencing society adversely. In this respect, the present paper analyzed the causes for degradation of ethical values among teenagers and effects of degradation of ethical values are also stated. Further, suggestions are given to increase ethical and moral values among present youth.*

**KEYWORDS :**

## Introduction:

Ethical values are the principles that determine an individual's behavior, actions, morality and attitudes. Values influence every aspect of individual life, from speaking, wearing, discipline, etc. The ways of reactions to different events, incidents and contexts is also depending on the ethical values. They are considered as important and desirable attributes of one's character which are held in high esteem by the society in which a person lives. In essence, values determine our moral behavior. Moral behavior is the act that is valued by an observer as right or good (Wayne, Langley, 2011). As Amingo (2003) argues "moral health is manifested in individuals when a person becomes capable of understanding the principles of moral conduct and is committed to behaving morally in his dealings with others".

As described by Gill (2015), in the Indian context values can be categorized corresponding to the three sectors of man's life as:

## 1. Intellectual-Speculative Values:

The Indian tradition holds no value more impressive than the emphasis laid by it on the pursuit of knowledge. The Indian mind is perpetually oriented towards the attainment of the ultimate goal of life, which is said to be moksha or liberation and knowledge is universally agreed to by the Indian mind to be the main means of the attainment of that goal (Vadekar, 1965).

## 2. Social-Cultural Values:

The supreme social-cultural traditional values of Indian life have been the values of mutual tolerance, of accommodation and assimilation. These values imbibe values of secularism, humility, benevolence, compassion, courteousness, trustworthiness and respect for others.

## 3. Moral-Spiritual Values:

India has a long and chequered religious history, in the course of which have emerged diverse faiths, persuasions and cults, which however have lived together, on the whole, in comparative kinship and accommodation with each other. Religion has had a strong impact on our moral and ethical values. Moral values refer to the social aspect of moral character while the spiritual values refer to the personal or the intrinsic aspect of it. The moral-spiritual values hence refer to the character values in the social and personal aspect. The Indian tradition emphasizes that our highest spiritual values (character values for social life) must ultimately merge into our highest spiritual values (character values for intrinsic personal life) invested with a sense of religious holiness and sanctity (Vadekar, 1965). This then represents the highest watermark of the development of our social life. 'Swadharma' or fulfillment of One's duty with the embodiment of moral goodness and spiritual holiness is considered as the supreme traditional Indian moral-spiritual value (Vadekar, 1965). Honesty, responsibility, integrity and self discipline are some of the values associated with 'Swadharma'.

When it is observed, the teenagers and adolescents have changing their identities compared to elders. Though, elderly in the family are cultured, ethical and moral, still the younger in the same family are not following such principles which emphasize ethical values. Hence, it is essential to analyze the causes for decrease in such ethical values among the teenagers and adolescents.

## Causes for Decrease in Ethical Values:

Parental behaviour affects the child's personality, character and also responsible of developing moral values. Today educated and non educated parents gives more concerned with their children's academic achievement than cultural, traditional and moral values. Working parents fails to inculcate discipline their children, endow their children with less emotional attention, make few demands on their children for better behavior and allowed them to regulate their own activities; are the ones who end up raising the moral flawed children.

Now days the control of parents has been decreasing from the children this autonomous life has become fashion among today's youth. Consequently the youth are being diverted by external force and engage themselves in night club, rocking, unwanted discussions and so many undesirable affairs. This sort of isolation, lack of love and affection from family has been endangering and spoiling their lives resulting unrest and agitation (Anita, 2015).

Peer groups play a vital role in developing the concept of morality. They pass more time with them, discuss with them frankly and seek their support, guidance and advice; so they readily prefer to accept views of peer group rather it conflict with parents views.

Earlier education was imparted in Gurukul by Gurus or philosophers. These teachers were used to teach knowledge inclusive of sympathy, self-less service, morality, ethics, kindness, honesty, etc. Apart from these social values and ethics, the students or disciples were used to learn skills necessary to their occupations like Archery. With the replacement of Gurukuls by Schools, only occupation or profession centred education were dominated, where education providing sound moral background has been decreased. At the end of twentieth century, due to impact of globalization, still the quality of education is degraded.

Today's education system is designed in such a way that a human being will achieve materialistic success and superficial achievements but he will lack virtues like kindness, honesty, compassion, righteousness, peace, love, non-violence etc. Human beings have become individualistic and self-centered. This infuses in them jealously, Hatred and rivalry. Stability of society is threatened by the breakdown of ethics.

The basic aim of education should be to produce men of knowledge and culture. Values such as Patriotism, anti-untouchability, dignity of individuals, endurance, social service, justice, national integration find no place in today's world of corruption, violence, intolerance and money-making (Barahate, 2014).

Presently, teenagers and adolescents are influenced by media and internet. The media and internet, though cultivating moral values also, still many of the programmes and web sites are more harmful to youth. Due to the impact of media, there is change in family structure and there is shift from joint and principle oriented families to nuclear and self-centred nuclear families. As such, the present day youth lack ethical values, which are cultivated by elderly people in joint families. As the present youth grow in nuclear families and if both parents are working, then they grows single and there is more impact of media and internet on them. As a result, present youth are ensnared by youthful lusts, pride, arrogance, disrespect, disobedience and indiscipline. Though, they are getting education, it is limited to certain occupations or professions rather than ethics and morality oriented. Hence, there is decrease in ethical values in society.

**Effects of Decrease in Ethical Values:**
Due to the influence of degradation of social and moral values and there is increase respect to more commercial, materialistic and economical values. As a result, the moral values such as mutual respect, respect towards elders such as parents and teachers, morality, ethics, etc have been decreased and to gain wealth and power, selfishness, greediness towards money and pleasure, etc were increased. The creative mind of youth diverted towards unsocial activities such as smoking in public place, misbehaving in class, drug addiction, lack of respect to parents and elders, misconduct in the household and juvenile delinquency to name of few. Invention of new modes of scam and frauds are being emerged which denotes that youth are tending to get more interested into easy way of gaining wealth, power and fame etc. giving least consideration to human values. Consequently, there is increase in violence and crimes in society. As per the statistics furnished by Varghese and Michael Raj (2014), the total crimes in India over the past 10 years ie., between 2003 to 2012 increased by 39.10% against the 11.55% of increase of population. From 1988 to 2012 i.e., in the last 25 years the crime rates in India increase by 65.73% against the population growth of 52.80%. With reference to the data is it is understood that there is a considerable increase in the number of people involved in crimes and antisocial behaviour. Crimes incident rate per population of 1 Lakh in 1960 was 134.5 where as it increased to 172.2 in 1970 and 195.9 in 1980. Though a minor decline in rate was observed in 1990 and 2000 with figures pointing 184.7 and 169.9 respectively, in 2010 the rates again increased to 184.5. In the last five years i.e., from 2008 to 2012, crime rates in the country shows an average of 184.89 per 1 Lakh persons.

As discussed above, moral and ethical degradation due to impact of parents' attitudes, change in family structure, defective education system, isolation, effects of media and internet, etc. there is decrease in ethical values and morality among present youth. Such changes in ethical values are cultivated among youth and teenagers especially between the age of 16 to 18 years. Hence, there is need for change in social culture, values, ethical values and education system.

**Conclusion:**
The degradation in ethical values reveals the future end of humanitarian society. As such, it is essentially needed to revive ethically and morally strengthened society. For this purpose, it is the responsibility of the parents and elders to observe their adolescent children and impart ethical values among them so that they can become good citizen. Similarly, it is on the part of educationists and teachers to understand the psychology of present youth and impart moral values among them and also learn discipline and good behavior in society. It is on the part of the Government to restrict mass media and internet, so that these can telecast or disclose only ethics oriented content. Further, the educational boards and universities should frame curriculum in colleges to uphold the ethical values. Joint family system is suggested so that the elders can guide the present youth in doing the right in their lives.

**References:**
1. Aminigo, IM (2003): Model Essays in Moral Education. Buguma: Hanging Gardens Publishers, 2003.
2. Anita (2015): Degradation of Moral Values among Indian Youth: An Emerging Issue. **Asian Journal of Educational Research and Technology**. Vol.5. No. 1. January 2015. P. 80-83.
3. Barahate, Yogini S (2014): Role of a Teacher in imparting Value-Education. **IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science**. 2014. P. 13-15.
4. Gill, Mukti (2015): Empowering the Youth with Life Skills Through Value Integrated Education. **Impact: International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature**. Vol. 3. No. 2. February 2015. P. 33-42.
5. Vadekar, DD (1965): The Indian Traditional Values and their Indications for education In India in the Modern Age of Science and Technology. **IN:** Seminar on Modern Science and Technology and their harmonizing with
6. Indian Values and Traditions in the context of a National System of Education for India, Poona, 18-20 May, 1965.
7. Varghese, Bipin P and Michael Raj, S John (2014): Crime Rates in India: Role of Morality and Moral Reasoning. **International Research Journal of Social Science**. Vol. 3. No. 1. January 2014. P. 45-50.
8. Wayne, I and Langley, P (2011): Exploring moral reasoning in a cognitive architecture. **IN:** Proceedings of the Thirty-Third Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Boston, 2011.