



Role of Values and Ethics in Higher Education in the Era of Globalisation

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ABSTRACT

The paper studies the role of values and ethics in building higher education stronger and effective in the era of globalization. After discussing the conceptual issues related with the role of values and ethics, the study highlights the major challenges being faced by the higher educational institutions across the globe. Among the major challenges, the study found financial/economic, ecological/environmental, socio-cultural, spiritual/identity, Lowest level of trust and highest level of Cynicism, Personal success is associated with the power or wealth, Economic growth exists side by side with social evils like drugs, divorce, abortion, suicides, isolations etc, Decreasing moral standards, pollution, corruption, fraud, discriminations etc as the major challenges being faced by the higher education across the globe. On the basis of the findings the study suggest that efforts must be made to increase the Role and functions of higher education along with Value-based education moral responsibilities need to be enhanced across the globe.

KEYWORDS

Introduction

The last few decades have witnessed a phenomenal development in the acquisition of both information as well as knowledge, of incredible dimensions, so to say all across the world. Unfortunately, however this has been accompanied by two other developments. On the one hand, for many reasons which we need not take up now, large chunks of education have become a thriving business and thus been more or less corporatized. On top of this has been the second development spread over a longer span but reached a critical limit in recent decades. The consequences of these developments are there for all of us to see. Education particularly that at higher levels has made human beings not only greedy but also self-centred. We see the impact of this system of education always, unavoidably from the hour we get up and start the day. The newspaper is full of stories relating to crime at all levels, involving children, women, social groups and communities. Instead of helping others the mind is focused on eliminating all obstacles which appear, rightly or wrongly, between me and my selfish objectives. Corruption has become the order of the day. There is a strong nexus between politics, bureaucracy and the corporate sector, all against the poor citizen and their basic rights and needs. Highly educated men and women with brilliant capabilities are involved in different ways at several levels. Commitment to the eleventh commandment is total. How and why the world had to suffer the severe global recession in 2008 is the most painful example of this phenomenon. The consequent suffering is still not over. Millions have not yet found employment. Enormous number of good people has lost their lifelong savings for old age. Millions of households again are left with no access to health care and education for children even in countries we consider rich. The benevolent Lord of the universe has endowed humanity with everything it needs: precious natural resources, a head full of intellect able to think and discriminate, and above all, a heart full of compassion. All that needs to be done is to use these gifts of God effectively for ourselves and others.

What is wrong with the prevailing system of education and why it must be changed has received attention of our best thinkers. We were warned more than fifty years back by no less a person than Bertrand Russel. He said:

"The human race has survived hitherto owing to ignorance and incompetence. But, given the knowledge and competence combined with folly, there can be no certainty for survival.

Knowledge is power but it is power for evil just as much as it is for good. Unless man increases in wisdom as much as in knowledge, increase in sorrow is certain."

- Bertrand Russel (1960), *Impact of Science on Society*

Development of Multinational School-based Values Education Schemes in India Living Values Education Programme (LVEP)

This project of worldwide proportions inspired by the new religious movement called the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University incorporates twelve values (unity, peace, happiness, hope, humility, simplicity, trust, freedom, co-operation, honesty, courage, love).

Human Values Foundation

The Government of India established The Human Values Foundation in 1995 to make available worldwide, a comprehensive values-themed programme for children from 4 to 12 years entitled "Education in Human Value". The lesson plans of the foundation utilise familiar teaching techniques of discussion, story-telling, quotations, group singing, activities to reinforce learning and times of quiet reflection. After the success of Education in Human Value, a second programme was published-Social and Emotional Education (SEE), primarily for ages from 12 to 14 later this programme was spearheaded on older children identified as likely to benefit from help getting their lives 'back on track'.

Character Education

The term Character education is used to describe the teaching of children in such a manner that will help them develop as personal and social beings. Following are the concepts fall under the character education term include social and emotional learning, moral reasoning/cognitive development, life skills education, health education; violence prevention etc.

Science of Living

Science of Living is a detailed program that complements the current educational approach with spiritual and value based learning. The three main pillars for students growth are mental development, physical development and emotional intelligence and morality to education in schools and colleges.

Examples of Values in Education Across the Globe

Australia

The Government of Australia currently funds Values education in its schools, with its own publications and funding of school forums on values education at all levels of education. It also helps in becoming a better person.

India

The Indian Government currently promotes values education in its schools. The Ministry of Human Resource Development has taken strong step to introduce values among schools and teachers training centers.

Japan

The government of Japan promoted moral education by large in Japanese primary and junior high schools in 1988.

United Kingdom

Since 1988 the British government, although not recognising or calling it values education, has promoted and inspected values in the guise of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSCD) leaving the initiative to individual schools to decide how values education standards should be met.

Meaning of Values, Morals and Ethics

According to the dictionary, values are "things that have an intrinsic worth in usefulness or importance to the possessor," or "principles, standards, or qualities considered worthwhile or desirable." However, it is important to note that, although we may tend to think of a value as something good, virtually all values are morally relative – neutral, really – until they are qualified by asking, "How is it good?" or "Good to whom?" The "good" can sometimes be just a matter of opinion or taste, or driven by culture, religion, habit, circumstance, or environment, etc. Again, almost all values are relative. The exception, of course, is the value of life. Life is a universal, objective value. We might take this point for granted, but we all have the life value, or we would not be alive. Life is also a dual value – we value our own life and the lives of others.

What are Morals?

Moral values are relative values that protect life and are respectful of the dual life value of self and others. The great moral values, such as truth, freedom, charity, etc., have one thing in common. When they are functioning correctly, they are life protecting or life enhancing for all. But they are still relative values.

What is Ethics?

A person who knows the difference between right and wrong and chooses right is moral. A person whose morality is reflected in his willingness to do the right thing – even if it is hard or dangerous – is ethical. Ethics are moral values in action. Being ethical is an imperative because morality protects life and is respectful of others – all others.

Global Challenges Being Faced by Higher Education

It has been found that higher education around the world is facing a number of challenges and potential threats to effective learning and teaching support. In recent years considerable interest has focused on identifying those challenges, identifying opportunities and threats and proposing ways to address them. Following are the major threats and challenges being faced by the higher educational institutions across the globe;

i) Web of Crisis: financial/economic, ecological/environmental, socio-cultural, spiritual/identity; ii) Lowest level of trust and highest level of Cynicism; iii) Personal success is associated with the power or wealth; iv) Economic growth exists side by side with social evils like drugs, divorce, abortion, suicides, isolations etc.; v) Decreasing moral standards, pollution, corruption, fraud, discriminations etc.; vi) Too much emphasis on Research and Development overlooking teaching; vii) Too much emphasis on Science and technology overlooking humanity; viii) Many universities these days more like business corporations

Addressing the Global Challenges and threats to Higher Education

Following are the some of the measures to deal with the rising global challenges and threats to the higher education across the globe; i) Promote role and functions of higher education; ii) Provide human choice for a sustainable, satisfying and soulful society; iii) Power of Knowledge must be recognised to reform the current educational system; iv) Value-based education need to be promoted at all the levels of educational system; v) Moral responsibilities need to be promoted; vi) need to build core values; vii) Need to develop soulful and satisfying person.

Concluding Remarks

In the era of globalisation, higher educational institutions have a major role to play in preparing the younger generation for a propitious future. The process of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization has created a global society where the ancient values have been thrown into the winds. The present paper studies the role of values and ethics in building higher education stronger and effective in the era of globalization. After discussing the conceptual issues related with the role of values and ethics, the study highlights the major challenges being faced by the higher educational institutions across the globe. Among the major challenges, the study found financial/economic, ecological/environmental, socio-cultural, spiritual/identity, Lowest level of trust and highest level of Cynicism, Personal success is associated with the power or wealth, Economic growth exists side by side with social evils like drugs, divorce, abortion, suicides, decreasing moral standards, pollution, corruption, fraud, discriminations etc as the major challenges being faced by the higher education across the globe. On the basis of the findings the study suggest that efforts must be made to increase the Role and functions of higher education along with Value-based education moral responsibilities need to be enhanced across the globe.

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