



Changing concept of values among Indian youth: Attitudes and Influencers

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Introduction

Youth in every nation is considered to be the major segment of any country. When trained properly they could be bloomed and nourished for a better future. But if left un noticed they may erupt like a volcano. India is a young nation compared to other populous countries with its high percentage of youth. This helps the country for the reap in to the economic, social and cultural development of the country. Education and knowledge are the major intervening factors for the development of the country. It increases the participation of the youth and better employment opportunities in the country will curtail brain drain. Education itself should be changed in all its style and pattern. Getting knowledge doesn't seem to be fruitful unless it is put into practice effectively. They should acquire skills and capacities to fulfill their roles in the society. Youth is an agent of development. Enrichment in values is said to one of the major agents of social inclusion, good governance, tolerance and peace.

Changing concept of values among youth in India

Starting from the Vedic period and moving through the Budhistic and Medieval period to the Modern period, the concept and practices of values among youth has changed a lot. Sometimes it seems like it is a process which none could stop. The noble relationship between the guru and the shishya was much purified and glorified in the history of Indian Education. Guru was beyond God and master of education. Apart from education, students learned essential principles of discipline and culture. Gurukul was a comprehensive learning centre, where shishyas taught good habits, morality and values. The modern gurukul, school, is doing the same with a difference in the structure and the pattern. Then what is that we lost? Where is the gap that we couldn't observe with naked eye? Students have changed. Likewise, teachers also. From the era in which teacher was considered as God, we reached where our teachers are shot dead with



the hands of their own students. To cite certain examples, a 30-year-old tuition teacher was stabbed to death by her Class 4 student in Mumbai, Maharashtra on Monday. The incident happened in Govandi area as reported in India Today, on September 17, 2019. A 15-year-old Standard IX student from Chennai's St Mary's Anglo-Indian High School stabbed his teacher to death as the teacher put certain remarks on the student.

The present system of values has changed a lot in its imbibing and practicing among the youth. Aping the western culture is a common phenomenon. Blindly following celebrities in sartorial skills and life style activities have become the part of life of our younger generation. The youth believe in fairness and six pack as a trademark for their success. The one who is slim and beautiful is accepted and recognized by everyone and everywhere. Who set these criteria of recognition? In which holy book it is given? We have only one answer to this question. It is the corporate world for their material benefit set these unwritten rules of better life style. Youth is afraid of body shaming. All the advertisements, movies, short films and drama are again and again giving the message of fairness and luxury as a mantra for success in all spheres of life. Change in life style is inevitable. The generation is attracted towards the technological changes and the vibes that is grasping them. We cannot withhold or control them. It is a process which will occur and which have to occur. But keeping the values aside and practicing the modern life is not going to pay them back any good in life. The present attitude of youngsters is really disturbing parents and all the stake holders of society. The way of showing respect has been changed from standing up to removing the ear phones. Consuming alcohol, drug use, antisocial behaviour, late night partying, dating and dressing indecently are attributed to the modern life by the younger generation which could not be accepted by the country like India adhered in cultural and traditional values.

Aggressive nature of youth is increasing and carried over to adulthood. The adults are moving to the extent of killing their own parents for grabbing property or for their material benefit. A 50-year-old man was allegedly killed by his drunk son over a small dispute in the Kandivali East area Mumbai as reported by Mumbai News, July 1, 2019. Two brothers were sentenced to life imprisonment by a local court for murdering their father over a land dispute as reported by Cities, June, 2016. Aman killed his 80-year-old father and chopped the body into



pieces, which he kept inside the house in six to seven buckets. The deceased 80-year-old man has been identified as S Maruthi Kishan, who was a retired railway employee. His son Kishan, who was unemployed, has gone absconding after committing the murder, India Today, August, 2019. The increasing number of old age homes in our country is an observable example for the depreciating commitment and affection of our children to their parents. The case is not only towards parents, while we look into the marital relationship there is shocking modifications and shifting in the purity of relationship in marriage according to the suitability and convenience of the people. The bond of commitment in marriage is given a pious position in Indian culture and is shattered through extra marital relationship and domestic violence. Involving in another relationship and harassing the partner is dishonoring the purity of matrimonial bond. The vocabulary has changed from 'dowry' to 'gift'. But the pathetic situation of a married women on account of physical and mental torture has not changed. Even the educated youth are taking dowry and demanding more later. The best way to satisfy the demand is to put the partner in mental trauma through harassment as the feelings of a daughter is the only weakness of parents. To quote certain latest incidents, a series of deaths occurred in Kerala in a week. At least three deaths have been reported from Kerala in two days over alleged dowry harassment, Times of India, June, 2021.

When we were under a single roof with parents, grandparents, cousins and niece, we learnt how to keep patience, how to tolerate, the value of respect and humbleness. Things have changed now and with the grace of God many of us achieved a lot both economically and socially. We gradually shifted from joint family to nuclear family. Parents were eager and thriving to give all the luxuries to their kids which they couldn't enjoy in their childhood. People use to have a sharing mentality between the neighborhood. When the luxury increased our ego made us to keep aloof from the neighbors. Socialization starts to get ceased from here. We had a culture of rendering all kind of help on the occasion of functions in the neighborhood. This kind of cooperation came to a standstill when all the works have been vested in the hands of event management. The culture of taking stories from the grandparents or having a discussion between the kids and elders cannot be seen in most of the houses. Our discussion is confined to gadgets now. Parental behaviour and attitude will make remarkable changes in the behaviour of children. Concern of parents on the child may not be revealed to them unless you spend time with them.



Have open discussion with your children. Let them know your income and expenses. Keep a divergent attitude with your kids, so that they may come to you at any time if they face dilemmic situations in their life. Their enrichment of moral and ethical values is equally important as their academic achievement. Parents should take effort to inculcate values among their children by serving themselves as role models. The indirect control of parents on children is very essential in the present scenario. Now a days providing autonomy to children has become fashionable. But the result is that consequently the youth are being diverted by external force and engage themselves in night club, rocking, unwanted discussions and so many undesirable affairs.

When we make a retrospection, we cannot find the subjects like value education, peace education and environment education in the curriculum. But the case is different now. We are inducing all kind of education to the youth. Everything is taught in theory but whether put in practice or not is a matter of concern. Getting education is materialistic and worldly rather than socialistic and spiritual. Our youth is under the impression that Indian culture is impractical and superstitious. Peer group influence is to be kept under check by the teachers inside and outside the classroom. Teachers should always keep an eye on cliques formed in the classroom. Gangues and chunks developed in the classroom may have their own reasons for knitting them together in the group. If un noticed and not given proper guidance, these gangs may move to certain antisocial or socially deviant behaviours. Younger generation of today's world are in need of quick money. They compare themselves with other students in their socio-economic status and engage themselves in such activities to get money through any means. Mass media has a great influence on the behaviour and attitude of youth. Values and social norms are deeply influenced by mass media. Social media provides a fascinating world for the younger generation. It doesn't restrict any one in access to anything. The type of freedom enjoyed by them is a means to get in to everything without proper judgement. Imitation of what we view in social media is a common practice by the youngsters. Depreciation of value is an after effect of blind imitation of social media activities.

Importance and reality of value education

Why there is need for value education? In the earlier days, a subject like value education was not there in the syllabus of school curriculum. We cannot say that values were not enshrined



by our generation at that time. They were seriously upholding the values of morality, cooperation, ethics, respect, trustworthiness etc. in all its purity. Most of the values were imbibed by the generation from their parents, grandparents, peers, relatives and friends. Society directly and indirectly taught them culture and traditions. Interacting with the people in the society especially in the evenings was a common scene in our neighborhood. We never kept ego in giving and taking grocery from our neighborhood if needed. But today, situation has changed a lot. Shift from the joint family to nuclear family made the relationship too formal and sometimes for the name sake. We isolated our kids from everything and everyone and confined them to the world of internet. With great privilege, our parents use to tell that their kids use internet and know everything in relation to using of computers. Of course, it is the need of the hour, but making them aloof and immersing them in the world of internet will not do anything good. The flat system taught us not to look in to the neighborhood. We even do not know who is our next-door neighbour. Earlier it was “sharing is caring”, but now “sharing is daring”. Having food together with friends in the class was an enjoyable practice. Children use to make enough time to play with their friends. This system has changed to mobile games and you tube videos. Parents never use to blame teachers for punishing the kids in earlier days. But now, a few parents are blindly supporting the students and insulting teachers in front of the children. This in turn may develop a feeling of negative attitude and pity feeling against teachers by the children. They will never respect such teachers. Working parents are struggling to find time for their children. In order to cope up with their busy schedule and for their satisfaction, they will give everything for their children without thinking whether they need it or not. This is the way most of the parents are showing their love and affection. The demands of children may increase as they reach their youth. These demands could not be fulfilled by the parents and so our younger generation are moving to unwanted means and antisocial behaviour to get money.

At this juncture, considering the situation of the present scenario, we have developed value education to impart values among youth. The major objective of value education was to impart various qualities of honesty, strength and humility with regard to social, moral and spiritual behaviours. Being a good socially responsible individual is highly important in shaping the character and behaviour of the individual. Value education helps the person to be fit in the society without any negative attitude. Value education has been incorporated in the school



curriculum with an intention to create a better world with peace and security. It is a fact that our youth is facing various types of intolerance- religious intolerance, frustration intolerance etc. Communalism and extreme thoughts are adding fuel in the fire. The reason is that young mind could be brain washed so easily. The youth when caught for antisocial behaviours, after making a thorough analysis of the underlying cause, it is revealed in most of the cases that it is the poor survival or upbringing which leads them to such kind of activities. It is these conditions taken as an advantage to pay a hefty amount to them or their families in return. Through value education we are able to teach the youth, the definition and types of values, the major social evils and how to tackle them. The theoretical aspect may be well read and score better marks in the examination. This possible gap in imparting value education should not be neglected. Space should be given to the youth by the teachers and all the stake holders of the society for various activities to imbibe values. Instead of educating them about values, we should help the younger generation to acquire values. Engaging in various social activities should be given proper motivation. Being socially active is now considered as the duty of social activist. That mindset should be changed. It is the collective effort of each and every individual which create a peaceful society.

Parents should find themselves as a part of this effort instead of giving the whole responsibility on teachers. Parents are the first teachers who could better understand their children and render best upbringing by devoting time for their children. You should make time for looking up from your mobiles and laptops and observe your child, their growth and development. then only you could go hand in hand with the thoughts and behavioural modifications of your children. Otherwise, you will be later debarred in the name of generation gap by your won children. A delayed regret at that time will never come to help you. Teachers on the other hand should depict themselves as carriers of values in behaviour and through their activities inside and outside the classroom. teachers could make maximum impact on students through their words and personality. Students imbibe virtues and vices knowingly and unknowingly from these role models. Teachers should possess greater values and impart quality education. The love and respect for the profession should be the first step from the part of teachers A teacher has an immense potential of bringing about a sea change in the society by demonstrating essential values of head and heart.



Changes are inevitable among the youth. But it is essential to guide them in a proper way. Wholehearted support of teachers and parents are inevitable for this. Youth is having a shield of negative attitude towards advices and suggestions of elders. Indirect methods of inculcation of values should be practiced from the childhood itself. The essence of our culture and tradition should be practiced from home itself. Let our youth observe and practice.

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