

II

Approaches and Strategies

There is general acceptance that education must provide the thrust for nurturing values. It is, however, not clear how this is to be achieved in schools. Some organisations or schools prefer to keep values as a separate subject while others consider values to be integrated with regular school activities. The focus also varies. While some emphasise on yoga, meditation and education about religions, others focus on democratic and national values. Views also differ on the objectives of value education and how it should be delivered.

In majority of schools, values do not get deliberate focus in the school system. The focus is on providing knowledge, although knowledge itself is not detached from values. Children are expected to memorise huge amounts of information much of which may be forgotten after examinations are over. The child is seen not as a whole person but as an 'intellect' that consumes information, and at the most, builds knowledge. Rigidity of procedure, mechanical adherence to schedule, syllabi and examination are the hall marks. The centre of attention is the textbook, the teacher and the syllabus.

The spirit of values lies implicit or hidden in the textbooks. The learning process is dominated by 'do as you are told to do'. The child receives information but not education. Deliberate attempts to infuse the entire atmosphere of the school with desired values are not made. Values may or may not be transmitted. Even if these are, these only get across incidentally.

On the other hand, in some schools, separate time slot is allocated on all the days of the week to give values a special focus. The underlying assumption is that value education is one of the components of the entire school curriculum, and it deserves special attention. There is a separate curriculum, grade wise textbooks, teacher's workbooks with lesson plans for teaching of values through stories, biographies, poetry, songs, drama, meditation, prayers, group activities, value clarifications, etc. Formal evaluation is part of this approach. Value education or character education programmes designed by some organisations in India and the west follow a direct approach. Some of these intervention programmes appearing in the literature have shown positive results about their impact on students' behaviour.

The Whole School Approach

In the whole school approach, value education is woven into the totality of educational programme in schools where value education does not form a mere appendage of all other subjects but would stand out as an over-arching concern of basic importance.

The books that students read, the school activities that are favoured or not favoured, the methods of teaching that are used by teachers, the role supervisors, teachers and pupils are expected to play in the maintenance of the rules and regulations of school, the manner in which particular events are celebrated and are chosen to exemplify their significance, the methods of evaluation, promotion, the way teachers are treated, the amount of freedom or initiative they enjoy, the kind of people serving on the school board and the way administrative staff functions is monitored, etc., reflect and symbolize values.

The school atmosphere is surcharged with positive values to imbibe and internalize. Every teacher is a teacher of values. Teachers are properly oriented to create such environment for children where those values become vibrant. Their role is to put the child on the right path not by imposing but by watching, suggesting, helping. Each unit of study in the textbook for different subjects is related to value concerns through exercises, examples and question/discussion, etc. as far as possible. Values permeate the formal curriculum as well as hidden curriculum and the pedagogical approach.

This approach requires conscious attempt and proper planning. Teacher-student interaction requires a great deal of openness. It requires certain pedagogical skills as teachers are required to integrate the relevant values in their lessons in different subjects or in other activities outside the classroom. The total school management and the administrative staff are geared towards promoting values. In such an approach, some ways of knowing the impact of value education in terms of appreciation/awareness, solving value dilemmas, exhibiting value based behaviour, etc. is considered important.

The underlying assumption in the whole school approach is integration. It is the integration of all the aspects of development of students. It is the integration of individual's concern with the society with his/her physical and ecological environment and the diversity within the culture. It is the integration and harmony within self and others around. It is the integration of formal curriculum, hidden curriculum, pedagogical strategies and evaluation system in the school. Integrated approach is considered to be effective because school environment creates variety of contexts through totality of educational experiences for students to explore, think, reflect and internalize positive dispositions and values.

Pedagogy of Values

Pedagogy refers to the art and science of teaching, the way teachers accompany learners in the process of their growth and development. It is not just about teaching the subject content but the entire gamut of relationships, processes and strategies which are designed to enhance learning.

The pedagogy of values has to be different from the conventional pedagogy based on the banking model of education which places greater emphasis on the contents instead of the learner. The banking model of education focuses on the teacher as the principle source of a student's knowledge. Students are empty vessels into which knowledge must be poured. At the end of the year, an examination is set out to see how much of knowledge the student has retained. This kind of model provides major attention to the teacher who stands at the front and students are the audience, who sit in respect, in silence, facing the teacher. Interaction between the teacher and the students is minimal. The pedagogy for values, on the other hand, is grounded on the philosophy that children construct their own theories of how the world works, though their minds are less developed than those of educated adults.

Teaching for values is not like teaching any other school subject. It is about teaching the learner how to think about something, to reflect, critically evaluate, appreciate one's own values and those of others, develop better communication, better decision-making so that the concepts ultimately find their way into behaviours and actions. It is not confined to the cognitive level but covers the affective and behavioural levels. For example, understanding of any concept like cooperation is not enough. Ultimately, the task is to ensure that cooperation becomes one's internal disposition. Attitudes, values and skills cannot be developed by forcing students to memorise words, and also not by impositions. Experiences and opportunities must be given to internalise such attitudes and values, which can be sustained in the long run.

The learner can only then take a conscious decision of practising values, consciously and responsibly. For example, there can be many ways to instill the understanding of compassion by studying the lives of people who are famous for their compassion. It can be imbibed by experience, the environment of love and kindness at home and school. It can also be nurtured by exposing students to the sufferings of others and by learning to serve the needy and disadvantaged.

The pedagogical demand for such a kind of learning is thus to move away from the traditional banking model to an experiential or participatory model. This model assumes that it is not what you teach but how you teach, that is important, and that is the essence of education for values. In the absence of this, value education could become just another duty, proclaimed to be done by schools, whereas it has to be the adoption of different ways of interacting, relating and being with students and using ways of teaching and learning to provide concrete learning experiences.

Some General Strategies

As pointed out above, attitudes and values are best imbibed through experiential and participatory modes of learning. Some experiential and reflective strategies which can be used and appropriately integrated with curricular areas and

activities in schools are discussed here. Some are more suitable for elementary stage and others are for secondary and senior secondary stages. In view of the complexity of the process of value development and the broad range of values to be nurtured, appropriate strategies for different stage/s need to be identified by schools.

Silent sitting has been considered an important strategy which helps in the habit of sitting quietly, strengthening the inner being or self, consolidating information received and retaining what is essential. It helps in concentration and assimilation, clear thinking, memory, health, vigour and also helps to be in tune with oneself. Some experiments have shown that silent sitting helps in improving self confidence, ability to get along with others, reducing negative emotions and experiencing calmness and inspiration. This can be used in all classes or subjects. Before starting the actual teaching, two minutes could be spared before beginning of the lesson in every subject. It serves as a warm-up exercise especially for younger children.

Learning through **visual experiences** such as symbols, drawings, posters, charts, cartoons, graphs, photographs and pictures, and auditory and kinesthetic experiences is more meaningful for younger students. Compared to verbal mode, these are less abstract and more powerful for communication of attitudes and values and forming imagery at the early primary years of schooling.

Role plays are used as a methodology for inculcating values where the emphasis is not on the acting capabilities but on the projection of ideas/values and analysis of the same. The analysis brings out why a person should or should not accept the value in question and act on all occasions upholding the same. The process of acting out helps in better understanding and reinforcing the importance of values.

Role plays can be conducted according to the age groups. The whole process of teaching through role plays revolve around (a) acting out the story, (b) depicting certain values, (c) miming, (d) reporting involving the processes of seeing, judging, acting, and internalizing. The presentation of the role play is just one part. The art of conducting role plays and using them, particularly for younger students, require orientation and practice. The real and crucial part is reflection through which attitude change and growth in values take place by reflecting.

Stories have always been considered to be the best way to get across an important value-based message. In recent years, we have learned that mind has a preference for stories. Knowledge is contextualized, it is situated and enmeshed in webs of meaning. Educators have not, as a rule, used story telling, meaningful narratives rooted in ordinary life setting to promote understanding and insight to human behaviour to influence practice. But the new understanding of how the mind works and how brain stores propositions and episodes in a different way, has overscored the traditional ways of communicating knowledge. Persuasive and authentic tales/anecdotes rooted in real world setting communicated in ways that are comprehensible and appealing to students can be especially useful for understanding values.

The stories and anecdotes present accounts of the personal view that people take of life, people, things, and events. These could be around a personal life experience or somebody else's experience, either obtained first hand or by word of mouth or drawn from literature. These experiences serve the purpose of providing inspiration to people especially to boost their spirits in times of stress and conflict and may give new direction to the life of a person.

Stories and examples of the lives of men of eminence can include the emphasis that greatness achieved is not sudden but through patience, perseverance and practice. The emphasis has to be on drawing lessons directly and/or indirectly appropriate to the age of the students. The active participation of students should be elicited which would give them occasion to reflect on various aspects of the lives of great men and the values they embodied.

The study of religious stories highlighting the essentials of all religions would be rewarding as a step towards harmony among religions, as basic teachings of all great religions of the world are the same. A lot of ingenuity, however, is required to present the themes relating to unity of faith. In the literature of every religion, stories and parables figure highlighting ethical values. The narration of such stories by parents and teachers can be most effective, particularly in the junior classes. At the post elementary stage, it is essential that students are given time to study the lives of great religious and spiritual leaders of all important faiths.

Every country has a treasure house of legends and folktales and stories of the exemplary lives of great men and women which become a potent source to communicate values. Story telling is a powerful technique as it leaves a perennial impression on the minds of children. Educators should be trained to grow as a story-tellers. The enthusiasm, sensitivity to the feelings and emotions the story aims to portray, the liveliness in communicating the message, voice modulation and annotation of words are all important.

Anecdotes like stories present a variety of perspectives on certain life situations, different ways one could experience and understand things that are important in one's life. Anecdotes are accounts of real life experiences which portray genuine human feelings and expressions. It could be an event, which created a lasting impression on a person's mind, touched the core of heart and may have brought about a shift in the course of life.

Anecdotes help in communicating the matter in a user friendly manner, understanding the matter by making the abstract concrete and easily comprehensible; motivating and inspiring people to reflect, think deeply about the situations. These also help in identifying with those living by the values; providing contextual understanding of the varied situations; learning about different perspectives and choices and skills in dealing with conflicts, crisis situations, events and day-to-day situations; evoking emotions and feelings.

The anecdotes depicting conflicts, dilemmas, human acts and approaches to dealing with different life situations drawn from home, school, classroom contexts portraying values important for students can be integrated with curricular areas.

Group singing is important as values in the lyrics of the song remain in the consciousness for a long time. Group signifies the unity towards a common purpose or goal, cooperation, discipline, self-restraint and the spirit to accommodate. Selection of song is important. These could be chosen to reflect good thoughts and feelings of sacrifice, universal love, love of nature, motherland, respect for one's heritage and other's culture. Some of the subjects could be taught through the medium of songs at primary stage.

Group activities provide opportunities for learning of many values concurrently. Development of fundamental values of love, tolerance, cooperation, peaceful co-existence, respect for others is important. By working in groups, students learn the value of each other's sincere efforts, joy of doing one's best for the good of the whole group. Role plays, games, group discussions, group projects, etc. are part of group activities which could be used in teaching of subjects as well. The manner in which such activities are meaningfully organised is important.

Questioning is one of the commonly used techniques in traditional classroom teaching to test knowledge and grasp of materials learnt by students. Its intended purpose is basically to raise curiosity of students and elicit involvement for active learning. Questioning is an art and skill which can also be used for assessment, development of creativity and imagination, value clarification, etc. Thus the type of thinking it provokes depends on the type of questions asked.

Most of the questions which teachers ask in the class are those for which the students already know the answer. Over 90 per cent of the questions asked call for information given in the textbooks. These questions are highly structured. Open-ended questions are rarely used. Closed type of questions that are commonly asked provide only one correct answer to the question. Open-ended questions provide opportunities to students to explore new ways of looking at or thinking about problems.

There are different types of questions such as hypothetical questions which involve problem solving abilities. Consequential questions elicit more divergent ideas. In redefinition questions, the child goes beyond the obvious and learns to look at things from a new perspective. In futuristic questions, child assumes a situation or problem and tries to solve that problem. The child is required to project his / her thinking into the future. In analogy type of questions, the child has to compare two objects, events or persons, and try to find out new relationships between two objects, ideas, events or person. Context of questioning is an important criterion in formulating questions. The context refers to the setting in which question is being asked with respect to the subject area or unit of teaching and the location of questions like in the beginning, end or throughout the lesson.

Selection of appropriate format of questions is also important. Format may be verbal, non-verbal, symbolic, pictorial, depending on the subject area and the context. Relevance, appropriate wording, clarity in expression, etc. are important to communicate the intended purpose.

The idea of **Discussion** is not unfamiliar. There is no subject in the curriculum in which discussion among students, either across the whole class or in smaller groups, cannot be initiated. Yet, we find that generally there is resistance due to lack of time.

Discussion can serve as a means for other students to deliberate on certain social, political and moral issues where values as such are not the focus of discussion in their own right but are underlying the topic. For example, in modern times, people are faced with perplexing situations, dilemmas and issues related to social justice, human rights and freedom, environment, ecology, population control, peace and disarmament. These can be used for discussion in teaching social science. Not only this, all occasions and episodes in daily life, like when children revolt, show wild impulses, get vexed, become sulky and depressed, can be utilized to discuss and enable children to arrive at right directions. It is important to realize that discussions can help students become aware of the variety of ideas and view points, be tolerant to different views, can help them clarify their own views through the effort of having to get across to others, resolve a dilemma or clarify their values. Sometimes it may enable students to arrive at an agreement. Sometimes it makes students aware that there are certain issues which cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction.

It is important that any kind of organised discussion should be followed by reflective exercises like: What did we learn from the discussion? Educator's role in organising discussions is that of a facilitator. Identification of value issues suitable for different age groups with potentials for discussion is important.

Value clarification is used for problematic situations with conflicting alternatives or equally competing values. This strategy allows one to choose one out of the two, reflect on what is chosen and what is valued by the person. It aims at helping students look closely at their ideas, behaviour, attitudes thereby clarifying themselves what they really value. Imposing one's own ideas or moralizing what the teacher thinks is right or wrong, is deliberately avoided.

Reflective Practice

A key implication for value education is allowing time for reflection. Too much of the work in schools is busy work, frenetic work, which may or may not be productive. Even if it is productive, it is rarely balanced with peace, calmness and time for oneself.

If students are given time and space for thinking back on their experiences, they can then begin to see what is important to them, where mistakes are being made, where things can be improved and so on. How is it possible to do this in an already over packed school schedules? This is for the school to decide and prioritize. In any case the significant point to remember is that any kind of activity must be followed by reflection on the particular experience. Reflection is not enough on its own. What matters is the effect it will have on self. It is

often said that action without reflection is just busyness. The real benefit of reflection is to be able to see things in new light. The ability to effect change in one's attitude is perhaps the greatest strength of reflective practice.

The Stage Specific Focus

The early childhood and primary stage of education is the ideal time for laying the foundation of child's personality. These years comprise the formative period of their lives. At this stage children are very active. Their capacity to listen is limited but they are very curious, they tend to ask many questions, their attention and memory span are short and sense of time to complete an activity is limited. They are sensitive to praise and blame, and are generally self-centred, and not conscious of social status or gender in selecting playmates. They love stories, games, take delight in repetition, rhythm, songs, colours, etc. They need freedom to question, and explore their environment. Repetition and dramatisation help them remember and act upon instructions.

They need to develop feelings of confidence, sharing and 'other orientation' as against 'self-centredness'. Experience of working in groups also provides opportunities for learning from each other and to express feelings of delight, dislike and anger in acceptable ways. Focus on following rules and regulations, respect for personal and public property, and developing a sense of responsibility in day-to-day acts are important. At this stage instead of too many do's and don'ts focus must be on providing success experience, receiving reinforcements for positive behaviour, interaction with adults exemplifying values to admire and identify with practising right actions, behaviours, manners and learning to appreciate good in oneself and others, etc.

As children grow older and reach the elementary school stage, they begin to grasp abstract thoughts. They develop the capacity to reason and think rationally in a limited way. They learn to grasp the reasons why some behaviours are right and others are wrong. Their ability to do more complicated, intellectual tasks improves and problem solving abilities begin to develop. They begin to see causal relationships among adults, their attitudes and their own behaviour. One of the prominent concerns at this stage is developing interpersonal skills of communication with others, particularly children, and consolidating their status in the peer group. This is the stage when strong competition can intensify as children are motivated to experience success and excel in different areas of their interest. Since school brings together children from multiple settings - religious, cultural, regional backgrounds - this stage is appropriate for developing interest in others, different from oneself, for developing positive attitudes and appreciation of cultural diversity. Children at this stage also need to take interest in environment, events, customs and social phenomenon which affect their attitude towards society. So they need to be sensitized to the basics of becoming responsible citizens equipped with secular and democratic attitudes.

This is also the stage for developing skills for handling information and using it to distinguish between right and wrong, good and evil, to think creatively, to develop self-reflection and self-discipline and so on. As conflicts with others are frequent during social interactions and engagement in competition for excellence, developing conflict resolution skills and aversion to various forms of violence are crucial at this stage. They need to develop discernment to respond with maturity to information and situations that prompt corruption, violence, and hatred, particularly the misleading advertisements and whatever that are violent and unhealthy in the media. However, children around this stage are still in the process of developing confidence in their self image in line with the rules and norms that are prevalent in society. They are not likely to question assumptions and norms learnt in family and local society. It is important to draw their attention to ethical and moral ways in line with the concept of interdependence in the society across different social groups living together and developing values of restraint, sacrifice and compassion.

At the secondary and senior secondary stage, children grow in understanding in every sphere. They gradually become aware of their identity and are on the threshold of becoming independent persons though not fully developed in maturity. Their thinking capabilities are fully developed but they tend to be idealistic, lacking in reality orientation and perception. As a result, confusion occurs which leads to conflict with peers, parents and teachers. Intervention by adults appears a threat to their independence and sometimes triggers their anxiety and defiance while at other times prompts them to pose as overconfident. The aggression, frustration and critical self-assertion are indicative of lack of success experience and self-esteem. They need to explore areas where their interest lie to experience success. The success experience enables them to accept their self and examine critically their individualistic thinking. Too much criticism causes them to become rebellious, questioning norms. They tend to be critical of having to tender explanations to adults and pose confidence in themselves, even though they might not really feel confident.

During this stage, their skills for rational thinking, communication, self-discipline need to be strengthened. They need training to resolve, through dialogue and negotiation, the conflicts that they encounter in their day-to-day interactions with parents, peers and teachers. They need to develop awareness about the importance of inter-relationships and interdependence in the personal, as well as global and ecological contexts. This is the time to enable them to not only be just recipients but also take on the responsibility to become productive and efficient members of society. This is the time to emphasize the value of cooperation and rights of others, and to accept all human beings irrespective of cultural diversity. Since thinking is fully developed, the approach to be adopted at this stage involves reasoning about what constitutes ethical and moral behaviours through dialogues and discussions with adults and peers. This is likely to bring reflections and internalization of moral reasoning, so that even in the absence of moral authority they could behave like ethically mature individuals.