



## Ethics and moral values in higher education

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### Abstract

Man is like a rough diamond and requires filling and polishing before all his faculties can function. Education is polishing and filling of human personality, so that it reaches its fullest development. It enables one to lead a better physical, intellectual and spiritual life.

According to Socrates – “*Education is bringing out of the ideas of universal validity which are latent in the mind of every man.*”

Concept of Ethics, Moral values and Education: Ethics is a branch of philosophy. That deals with the morality; the word ethic has been derived from the Greek word ‘ethos’ which means character. Aristotle was one of the first great philosophers to define the ethics. To him, ethics was more than a moral, religious or legal concept.

Morality refers to personal or cultural value code of conduct or social values. In morality people have strong beliefs about what’s right and wrong.

Higher education is leadership education. The Ethics and moral values practised in universities heavily influence the future leaders. Many institutions of higher education show excellence not only in academic subjects, as green campuses, with manifold ethics curricula and in their community engagement, but also in the value orientation of the Board and teaching staff as well as student. But additionally, in many universities and school around the world, fundamental values and virtues are violated; cheating, plagiarism, unethical research, nepotism in staff recruitment, corruption in exam, simply the lack of ethics curricula gives then the signal to the future leaders that “this is how the world functions” and only with unethical behaviour can one achieve professional success.

In conclusion, it is important to state that the moral value of ethics in life explores what is our origin as human beings. It takes into consideration the fact “the unexamined life is not worth living;” to quote the ancient sage, Socrates. In the quest for the establishment of the value of life for education, higher learning institutions integrate ethics and ecology in their programs. The context of a new vision for education which calls for mind-set shift from reading and writing to skills acquisition with relevance for daily life and society becomes imperative. Ethics education is opportunity for a new value orientation. such education ensures the training of both the teacher and the student, develops new technologies and conclusively allows a new vision, a new policy, a new market new resources and a new system.

**Keywords:** education, human personality, intellectual, spiritual life

### Introduction

Education is a unique quality of mankind. Education is a very important for the development of the whole man and an important weapon for accelerating the well-being and prosperity of the world in all direction. Education is a lifelong process which continues from womb to tomb. Education is a tool for total development of human, if any one aspect of human personality is ignored, it can result very adversely. Without imparting ethics and moral values in education, human development will be incomplete.

### Concept of value based education

Value Based Education (VBE) imparts social, moral, integrity character, spirituality and many more. It builds the quality of humility, strength and honesty in a person. Value based education is the only means which can give to our young the right direction. There is need for value based education system in India.

The Radha Krishna Commission; the Kothari Commission;

National policy on education; Ramamurti Committee; Central Advisory Board of Education Committee on policy; Planning Commission core group on value orientation of Education, all have gone into the role that education plays and can play in designing and developing the national characters. The values inculcated among young generation would remain with them permanently.

Swami Vivekananda one said “if education is identical with information, libraries are the greatest sages of the world and encyclopedias are “RISHIS”.

### Concept of Ethics, Moral values and Education

**1. What is ethics:** Ethics is a branch of Philosophy that deals with the morality, the word ethics has been derived from the Greek word ‘ethos’ which means character. Aristotle was one the first great Philosophers to define the ethics.

#### Ethics covers the following dilemmas

- How to live a good life?
- Our rights and responsibilities.

- The language of right and wrong.
- Moral decisions – what is good and bad?

Our concept of ethics have been derived from religions, philosophies and culture.

According to Albert Schweitzer: “Ethics is the activity of man directed to secure the inner perfection of his own personality.”

2. **What are moral values:** Moral values are set of some precious values which helps us in becoming a good human being these values involve a lot of factors like morality, respecting others, helping others, loving others etc.
  - **According to jerry springer:** “we are all born as empty vessels which can be shaped by moral *values*.”
3. **What is Education:** The root of word Education is derived from Latin words, ‘Educare’, ‘Educere’ and ‘Educatum’. The Word ‘Educare’ means to bring up and to nourish. The word ‘Educere’ means to lead out. The word ‘Educatum’ means to train. So we can say that education is to bring up, to developing and shaping up the individual talent and his inner potentialities.
  - **According to Aristotle:** “Education is an ornament in prosperity and a refuge in adversity

### Higher education in India

Higher education is a leadership education. Indian higher education system is the third largest in the world, next to the United States and China. The higher education system in India has grown in a remarkable way, particularly in the post-independence period, to become one of the largest system of its kind in the world. However the system has many issues of concern at present, like financing and management including access, equity and relevance, re-orientation of programmes by laying emphasis on health consciousness, values and ethics and quality of higher education together with the assessment of institutions and their accreditation. These issues are important for the country, as it is now engaged in the use of higher education as a powerful tool to build a knowledge based information society of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Causes of ethical deterioration in Indian higher education system

1. **Corruption:** The major cause of ethical deterioration in education system is rapidly spreading corruption. Corruption in education can include bribes and illegal fees for admission and examination; academic fraud, with holding teacher salaries, preferential promotion and placement, teacher absenteeism and illegal practices in the textbook procurement, meal provision and infrastructure.
2. **Privatization of educational Institutes:** Privatization of educational institutes is another major cause for the declining ethical values in education system. The private institutes are unable to produce a complete ‘human capital’ with ethical standards.
3. **Teacher’s absenteeism:** Teachers are the role models of students and in most rural communities, they are the most educated and respected personality. Teacher absenteeism is one of the most serious. Causes of ethical declining of education.

4. **Lack of value education in Curriculum:** Value education is included in the primary education curriculum but at adult stage, which are the most sensitive stages to build the character of the youth, the curriculum finds no space to value education.
5. **Educator’s pedagogy does not engage properly teaching methodologies:** Evaluation stresses on routine remembrance. Curriculum design is done by the university and little collection of topics and subjects out of the syllabus. The accumulation or presentation of data is not enough to decide the criteria for quality education.
6. **Guru and Shishya Bounding going away:** There are many more things to discuss, student should learn to respect Guru (teacher), A Guru should selflessly teach his shishya (student), these days the bounding between Guru-Shishya is going away, and there is no respect of Guru.

### Strengthening the Ethical culture of Higher education

1. **Individual and Interpersonal Level** – Promote character education (for student and teachers) as a task of individual and interpersonal. Self-responsibility in order to become or remain globally responsible leaders.
2. **Intra-Institutional Level:** The following dimensions are part of it –
  1. Develop and integrate special ethics curricula in all faculties and reflect on aspects of values in all courses.
  2. Balance technological innovation with social and organisational innovation.
  3. Integrate in staff recruitment values driven behaviour in addition to professional knowledge.
  4. Develop a policy on research ethics with a research ethics committee.
3. **Inter-institutional Level:** Include ethics in higher education in the accreditations and monitoring policies and training programmes of accreditation institutions and council such the international council for open and distance education.
4. **Communication Level:** Strengthen the communication strategy of the institutions for higher education so that integrity, credibility, responsibility and honesty are included.
5. **Spiritual Level:** Enable spiritual praxis of different faith communities on the campus of institution of higher education as a foundation for ethical integrity.
6. **Action Level:** Strengthen values driven behaviour not only by words, but also through individual level and collaborative action such as community service.

### Conclusion

Nelson Mandela said “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” The declining of ethical values in higher education system will give rise to unskilled professional and undisciplined students. This trend needs to be addressed if India has to survive as a nation and acquire its due place in the world. The only way to arrest this deterioration is to provide value orientation in Indian educational system. In India, it is necessary to increase

philosophical thinking, to equip the student with ethical values, study, research and moral development.

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