



Social value in Indian society and change in Modern Era

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Abstract

Values are abstract and conceptual beliefs which act as guidelines in the lives of people and influence the different ways in which people and events are evaluated. When the term 'Value' is invoked, we think of what is important in our lives like independence, security, freedom, success, kindness, wisdom, pleasure, etc. In simple words, what we value most in our life is what we call as value. The definition of 'values' has multiple faces given by various eminent scholars. value as an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct on end-state existence.

Keywords: Kindness, pleasure, society, socio-cultural, Sociology

Introduction

There is an acute need for values to be inclusion in the areas of religion, education, social services, business and politics in Indian society. The term "Value" refer to a development of your soul, your heart. It is not enough to be more modern, independent, developed, secular, technological hub or advance society if, in this process we have lost soul, our heart.

Objectives

- Describe what values are?
- Distinguish between values and norms.
- Explain how values integrate personalities and cultures.
- Discuss how they change from time to time in the same society.

What are values

Broadly speaking, values are conceptions of the desirable, which influence selective behaviour. Values may be defined as the criteria and moral judgement or certain subjective standards through which individuals or groups distinguish between good or bad, true or false and between ought to be or not to be etc. It shapes individual personality, social morality and guides individuals to be a part of or function within distinctive socio-cultural system. It is customary to talk of "Indian Values" in a way as if all sections of Indian people share the very same values in all historical eras. This is obviously not so. Besides variations in the value systems of the people of different strata and other segments of Indian

society, the values of the dominant elites themselves have undergone tremendous changes over various socio-cultural eras, about which we have ample evidence from textual and other sources

International encyclopadia of social science (1968) ^[1] defines Values as a " set of Principles whereby a conduct is directed and regulated as guide of individual or social groups." Social values are moral beliefs and principles that are accepted by the majority so as to ensure the continuity of a society (Ergil, 1984) ^[2].

The Cultural development of any country is dependend on its geographical factors. Man has been dependent on the physical facts of nature, but he has not been content to live under its limitations, and he has always striven progressively to break through the barriers placed by nature (Bose, 1958) ^[3]. Human Value are tools any of us really need and lack of them are the enemies of community life. Human value can be presented only through its age old container, the human begins. The congenital Knowledge harnessed but an overian lottery is in the hand of God but acquired harnessed mostly in educational institutions is the hope for the society as such knowledge can be planned and dovetailed to the requirement of the society. (Vijaya Lakshmi Mohanty 2012) ^[4]. Sixty seven values are chosen among the numerous described (Dhanalakshmi, 2007) ^[5] These are divided according to three Gunas (Triguna) described in the sacred scriptures viz., Bhagavat Gita, Upanishads, Thirukkural etc.

Today's education system has lost it's luster & relevance

because of the western influence. It has succeeded in developing within us hatred towards our own tradition and culture & in making us look at the western way of life with respect & admiration. (Garg.; Shivranjan; Shatma, 2017) [6]. Human values may be treated as keys to tackle global problems. The effectiveness of a person depends on two factors. One is skills i.e., ability to do something and the other is the values within that guide such actions. In other words, however talented a person may be, his contribution to the society directly depends on the values he has emulated. (Dubey, 2020) [7].

Distinction between values and norms

Values and norms are deeply related to each other; both are concerned with accepted assumptions about what is considered to be right or wrong, or desirable or undesirable. Values constitute the basis of norms. Norms depend upon values and are justified through standards of “true”, “good” and “beautiful”. Relatively speaking, values are more general and abstract than norms. Norms are values relatively more specific: they refer to sets of expected behaviour associated with a particular situation or with a given position in the social order. Widely shared values such as truthfulness, loyalty or respect for elders find expression through (relatively) concrete norms which vary with different situations; strata and professions. Values: Touching the Feet of Elders Norms themselves are sometimes evaluated. Behaviour conforming to two different norms (both of which may be acceptable) may be regarded as better or worse in terms of values which are more fundamental. Norms provide specific rules about what should be done or should not be done by various kinds of actors in particular situations. On the other hand values are abstract standards of desirability, so that they are relatively independent of specific situation. Since values are more general, the same value may be embedded in a wide variety of norms. For instance, the values of respect and obedience to superiors underline various sets of norms related to widely different institutions such as the family, military, schools, and administrative, political or religious organisation. On the other hand, it is not unusual for a particular norm to embody simultaneously a number of separable values. For example, the norms which forbid cheating in an examination are based on several values such as those of honesty, achievement, equality of opportunity and pursuit of knowledge. Apart from the differences in the levels of generality and specificity, another useful basis of distinction exists between values and norms. This is the field of value inquiry which refers to attitudinal directives like choice preference, likes and dislikes while the field of normative inquiry refers to those attitudinal directives which consist of obligations and prescriptions. We can also define values as the preferred mode of orientation to specified categories of human experience. The characteristics of norms can be best explained in comparison with categories of values. Therefore, since values involve preferences whereas norms. Culture and Religion involve prescriptions, there are higher degrees of freedom and more room for deviance in the realm of value orientation.

Change of values in Indian society

Though systems of values are quite stable and tenacious,

they do undergo basic changes in course of time. Values are strongly bound to other aspects of the social system to which they belong; and change in the value system goes hand in hand with changes in the social system as a whole. Whether it is the change in the value system that causes social change, that is, the change of the social system; or it is some other factors which bring about basic social change, including a change in the value systems - is a question on which opinion is sharply divided. Let us have a glimpse of the change in the system of values of the civilisation to which we ourselves belong.

Since socio-cultural systems are wholes, attempts to study particular values in isolation from the dynamics of the system as a whole tend to remain superficial. Sometimes they are even misleading. This is all the more true in the case of traditional sociocultural systems, such as that of India, which have grown over long periods of time; when their structural and cultural elements have developed a high degree of consistency. We shall therefore view the changes in the Indian value system in the perspective of the dynamics of the traditional socio-cultural system as a whole from the Rigvedic times onwards. This would illustrate how the systematic values of a civilisation which has maintained remarkable continuity have undergone numerous changes in the course of time.

The modern value system

The traditional value system of India, which formed the basis of its social structure and institutions for more than fifteen hundred years, began to show signs of rapid change and decline as a result of the impact of modern social forces. These forces were brought about, for the most part, by the British rule. The change did not come merely because the rulers were foreigners. It came about primarily because the British represented a radically different type of society - the modern, industrial-capitalist society in all its economic-technical, political-legal, and cultural-ideological dimensions. Moreover, the industrial-capitalist civilisation is an expanding one. It cannot leave the traditional societies to continue as they have been. Because of its own dynamics, it tends to bring about structural and valuational changes in the traditional societies

The British rule and Indian value system

The impact of the British rule on the Indian society gave birth to an urban middle class which had values that were not only different but even opposed to the traditional values. It became imbued with the values of modern capitalist society such as Culture and Religion individualism, rationality, competitiveness, acquisitiveness, and activeness. This was a far cry from the unified life of the traditional society where the values of co-operation and contentment prevail. In India the concept of individualism never existed, except in the case of the ‘sanyasi’ otherwise family group was the basic unit of society to which every person belonged.

Impact of modern values on Indians

Villages Modern values did not remain confined to the cities. Modern forces brought about a basic transformation in the relationship between urban centres and the villages; and thus the life and values in the countryside also began to

change. It was not that because of the new means of transport and communication, peasant villages were connected with transport and communication, for the first time. In peasant civilisations villages are always related with towns. Unless a stable relationship existed between the villages and the towns the latter could not have survived as they did not produce such essential things as food and cotton. The fact is that a certain kind of relationship always existed between the villages and the towns belonging to the peasant civilisation; but the modern economic, technological, political and cultural factors have brought about a qualitative change in the nature of this relationship, thereby beginning a process of transformation of the village life itself.

In the traditional peasant civilisations, towns thrive on the revenue collected from the villages. Apart from getting such surpluses from the villages, the towns people are not interested in transforming the countryside or in manipulating its life in any way. This picture changes dramatically when towns become centres of commerce and industry. Now the towns people make an all out effort to sell the mass-produced goods in the country side, and to acquire cheap labour and raw material from there. This has important consequences for the traditional way of life in the villages. The village industries decline, and together with mass-produced commodities which are pumped into the villages, modern attitudes and values also invade the rural areas. The production in the villages also is motivated more and more by the desire for earning the maximum profit, rather than primarily fulfilling one's requirements. Together, with this, the values of individualism, competition, and unlimited acquisitiveness also has gathered strength

Modern forces dealt a blow to folk values, as well as to the folkway of life. In traditional, peasant civilisations, the basic values underlying the elite and the folk Values traditions of culture were the same. The difference between the two traditions was primarily that of the degree of refinement, systematisation, and self-consciousness. It was because of the sharing of the basic values and worldview that the traditional elite culture did not damage or weaken the folk cultures, even though they were in constant interaction with each other. The modern elite culture on the other hand is imbued with values which are not only different from folk values but are opposed to them. It is not surprising, therefore, that the influence of modern elite culture poses a threat to the very existence of folk culture and folk values. We find thus that although the values of a social system tends to form a coherent and relatively stable pattern, they do not remain static.

In the modern era, we have very high skills in all the spheres. But due decline in the value system, the entire world is witnessing a steep rise in tensions, insecurity, unhappiness. This is giving birth to countless health problems whether it is physical, emotional, mental or psychological. Superficial efforts stand defeated when it comes to bringing about improvements. They need to be supplemented with inculcation of values. The quote that Albert Einstein said decades ago stands relevant even today, "Try not to become a person of success, but rather try to become of person of value."

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