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Values

Values can be defined as those things that are **valued** by someone. In other words, values are what is considered **‘important’** by an individual or an organization. Examples include courage, honesty, freedom, innovation etc.

Values help in determining what actions are best to do.

Values are ‘beliefs’ about ‘what is important’

Values are the beliefs of an individual or a social group about what is held important. That motivate people to act one way or another. “Equal rights for all”, “Merit above all else”, “Dignity of labour” etc are representatives of values.

Values have a major influence on a person’s behaviour and attitude.

Values are **ideals of someone (or a group) about what is good or bad** (or desirable or undesirable).

Ethics is all about **reasoning how to do the right action**. (Don’t miss our article on the dimensions of ethics)

Values motivate, while morals and ethics constrain.

The conflict between Values and Ethics

Generally, people are predisposed to adopt the values that they are raised with. People also tend to believe that those values are “right” because they are the values of their particular culture.

For example, if making money is a value cherished by a society (most societies cherish that value!), and if the society is not that bothered about how that money is made, that can lead to unethical practices.

Ethical decision-making often involves weighing values against each other and choosing which values to elevate.

A conflict between Values: Value ‘A’ vs Value ‘B’

Conflicts can also result when people have different values, leading to a clash of preferences and priorities.

Can you think of an example?

What if a person values honesty as his core ideal, while the other person values efficiency as the priority? Is there a chance of conflict?

Values vary among Individuals and Cultures, and Time

Just like morals, values also vary among individuals and across cultures and time.

For example, for some people, their nation's flag may represent a sacred value. But for others, the flag may just be a piece of cloth.

Types of values

We know that honesty, goodness, humility etc values. They form a group of values called Moral Values. There are other types of values as well – like Genius, Beauty, Power etc. However, moral values are rated highest among all natural values.

Values can be classified as:

- Spiritual Values
- Moral Values
- Social Values
- Intellectual Values
- Economic Values
- Political Values etc

Personal Values vs Social Values

Personal Values – Important for Individual well being. Examples of personal values – self-respect, comfortable life, freedom etc.

Social Values – Important for other people's well being. Examples of social values – equality, social justice, national security, world peace etc.

Note: A coordinated and balanced pursuit of both self-serving and other serving values will lead to a positive and fulfilling life.

Lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and

We are fortunate to have many great leaders, reformers, and administrators who cherished noble values and ethics. They not only lived an ethical life but also taught many human values.

Let's have a quick look at the lessons from the lives of eminent persons. We shall deal with each of them in detail in the next posts.

- **Mahatma Gandhi:** What he valued – Simplicity, Minimalism, Satyagraha, Sarvodaya, Secularism, Ahimsa, Non-Violence, Truth, Forgiveness, Self-Sufficiency, Dignity of labour etc.

- **Jawaharlal Nehru:** What he valued – democracy, institution building, consensus building, socialism, secularism, self-determination, internationalism etc.
- **Nelson Mandela:** What he valued – service, dignity, self-belief, equality of the human race, freedom, fairness, justice, etc.
- **Abraham Lincoln:** What he valued – humanism, equality of the human race, integrity, idealism, honesty, freedom etc.
- **Martin Luther King Jr:** What he valued – self-belief, equality of the human race etc.
- **Raja Rammohan Roy:** What he valued – social equality, equality of the human race, women empowerment, scientific thinking etc.
- **Swami Vivekananda:** What he valued – self-belief, equality of the human race, patriotism, compassion etc.
- **B R Ambedkar:** What he valued – self-belief, equality of the human race, radical thinking, compassion etc.
- **Mother Teresa** – What she valued – compassion, altruism, helpfulness, kindness, cleanliness, determination.
- **Vergheese Kurien** – What he valued – self-belief, co-operative societies, entrepreneurship, innovation, farmer welfare etc.
- **M.S. Swaminathan** – What he valued – sustainable development, green revolution, poverty alleviation, farmer welfare etc.
- **Sam Pitroda** – What he valued – self-belief, dreaming big, entrepreneurship, policy making, innovation etc.
- **E. Sreedharan:** What he valued – punctuality, self-belief, integrity, high-quality standards etc.

Role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values

Now, we are living in an age where people don't have the right values or ethics. Family, society, and educational institutions can play a great role in inculcating values to the new generation.

Role of Family in inculcating values

The family is the earliest and without question the most influential agent of socialization. Socialization via the family goes from cradle to grave. The father, mother, siblings, and grandparents become the immediate agents of socialization.

Children pick up behavioural traits from all those who are in his/her immediate environment. Values are imbibed by children by observing what parents do (and not just what parents say).

The power of the family is strongest during infancy and toddler years. During the teenage, the influence of peer group and media usually overshadows the power of the family. However, the family returns as a predominant agent of socialization during the adult years with the roles of marital partner and parents becoming prominent. There can be differences in values between family to family based on their socio-economic statuses.

Role of Educational Institutions in inculcating values

Schools and Colleges are important agencies in the process of socialization and thus can help a lot in inculcating values.

- School is the first place where the individual values get compared with the larger value system of the society.
- The curriculum imparts the values of accepted behaviour.

- A school student learns not only from the official curriculum but also from the social curriculum of peer groups. Values are also imbibed from the hidden curriculum (Eg: don't talk while a teacher is taking the class).
- This is the place where one learns the values of punctuality and discipline.
- Values education is an explicit attempt to teach about values. There are five basic approaches to values education: *inculcation, moral development, analysis, action learning, and values clarification.*

Role of Society in inculcating values

Society can also inculcate a lot of values in people. The elements of the society who have great influence in people include:

- Friends
- Neighbours
- Media
- Films
- Religion
- Leaders
- Governmen

The **culture of India** refers collectively to the thousands of distinct and unique cultures of all religions and communities present in India.

India's languages, religions, dance, music, architecture, food and customs differ from place to place within the country. Indian culture, often labeled as an amalgamation of several cultures, spans across the Indian subcontinent and has been influenced by a history that is several millennia old.^{[1][2]} Many elements of India's diverse cultures, such as Indian religions, philosophy, cuisine, languages, dance, music and movies have a profound impact across the Indosphere, Greater India and the world.

Indian-origin religions Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism,^[3] all of which are based on the concept of dharm and karma. Ahimsa, philosophy of nonviolence, is an important aspect of native Indian faiths whose most well known proponent was Mahatma Gandhi who through civil disobedience brought India together against the British Raj and this philosophy further inspired Martin Luther King, Jr. during the American civil rights movement. Foreign-origin religion, including Abrahamic religions, such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, are also present in India,^[4] as well as Zoroastrianism^{[5][6]} and Bahá'í Faith^{[7][8]} both escaping persecution by Islam^{[9][10][11]} have also found shelter in India over the centuries.^{[12][13]}

India has 29 states with different culture and the second most populated country in the world.^[14] The Indian culture, often labeled as an amalgamation of several various cultures, spans across the Indian subcontinent and has been influenced and shaped by a history that is several thousand years old.^{[1][2]} Throughout the history of India, Indian culture has been heavily influenced by Dharmic religions.^[15] They have been credited with shaping much of Indian philosophy, literature, architecture, art and music.^[16] Greater India was the historical extent of Indian culture beyond the Indian subcontinent. This particularly concerns the spread of Hinduism, Buddhism, architecture, administration and writing system from India to other parts of Asia through the Silk Road by the travellers and maritime traders during the early centuries of the Common Era.^{[17][18]} To the west, Greater India overlaps with Greater Persia in the Hindu Kush and Pamir Mountains.^[19] Over the centuries, there has been a significant fusion of cultures between Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Jains, Sikhs and various tribal populations in India.^{[20][21]}

India is the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and other religions. They are collectively known as Indian religions.^[22] Indian religions are a major form of world religions along

with Abrahamic ones. Today, Hinduism and Buddhism are the world's third and fourth-largest religions respectively, with over 2 billion followers altogether,^{[23][24][25]} and possibly as many as 2.5 or 2.6 billion followers.^{[23][26]} Followers of Indian religions – Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists make up around 80–82% population of India.

India is one of the most religiously and ethnically diverse nations in the world, with some of the most deeply religious societies and cultures. Religion plays a central and definitive role in the life of many of its people. Although India is a secular Hindu-majority country, it has a large Muslim population. Except for Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram and Lakshadweep, Hindus form the predominant population in all 28 states and 9 union territories. Muslims are present throughout India, with large populations in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Kerala, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Assam; while only Jammu and Kashmir and Lakshadweep have majority Muslim populations. Sikhs and Christians are other significant minorities of India.

According to the 2011 census, 79.8% of the population of India practice Hinduism, Islam (14.2%), Christianity (2.3%), Sikhism (1.7%), Buddhism (0.7%) and Jainism (0.4%) are the other major religions followed by the people of India.^[27] Many tribal religions, such as Sarnaism, are found in India, though these have been affected by major religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity.^[28] Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and the Bahá'í Faith are also influential but their numbers are smaller.^[28] Atheism and agnostics also have visible influence in India, along with a self-ascribed tolerance to other faiths.^[28] According to a study conducted by the Pew Research Centre, India will have world's largest populations of Hindus and Muslims by 2050. India is expected to have about 311 million Muslims making up around 19–20% of the population and yet about 1.3 billion Hindus are projected to live in India comprising around 76% of the population.

Atheism and agnosticism have a long history in India and flourished within Śramaṇa movement. The Cārvāka school originated in India around the 6th century BCE.^{[29][30]} It is one of the earliest form of materialistic and atheistic movement in ancient India.^{[31][32]} Sramaṇa, Buddhism, Jainism, Ājīvika and some schools of Hinduism consider atheism to be valid and reject the concept of creator deity, ritualism and superstitions.^{[33][34][35]} India has produced some notable atheist politicians and social reformers.^[36] According to the 2012 WIN-Gallup Global Index of Religion and Atheism report, 81% of Indians were religious, 13% were not religious, 3% were convinced atheists, and 3% were unsure or did not respond.^{[37][38]}

Philosophy

Indian philosophy comprises the philosophical traditions of the Indian subcontinent. There are six schools of orthodox Hindu philosophy—

Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta—and four heterodox schools—Jain, Buddhist, Ājīvika and Cārvāka – last two are also schools of Hinduism.^{[40][41]} However, there are other methods of classification; Vidyaranya for instance identifies sixteen schools of Indian philosophy by including those that belong to the Śaiva and Raseśvara traditions.^[42] Since medieval India (ca.1000–1500), schools of Indian philosophical thought have been classified by the Brahmanical tradition^{[43][44]} as either orthodox or non-orthodox – āstika or nāstika – depending on whether they regard the Vedas as an infallible source of knowledge.^[38]

The main schools of Indian philosophy were formalised chiefly between 1000 BCE to the early centuries of the Common Era. According to philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the earliest of these, which date back to the composition of the Upanishads in the later Vedic period (1000–500 BCE), constitute "the earliest philosophical compositions of the world."^[45] Competition and integration between the various schools were intense during their formative years, especially between 800 BCE and 200 CE. Some schools like Jainism, Buddhism, Śaiva and Advaita Vedānta survived, but others, like Samkhya and Ājīvika, did not; they were either assimilated or became extinct. Subsequent centuries produced commentaries and reformulations continuing up to as late as the 20th

century. Authors who gave contemporary meaning to traditional philosophies include Shrimad Rajchandra, Swami Vivekananda, Ram Mohan Roy, and Swami Dayananda Saraswati.^[46]
