Education and Inculcation of Values

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Abstract

Education is of paramount importance for the progress of society and a vital instrument of socialization as well as social change. It aims at holistic development of personality. Education as an agency of socialization plays an important role in development of character. This paper attempts to understand the nature of interplay between society and education. Contemporary Indian society is facing a variety of problems like increasing violence, corruption, intolerance, apathy, individualism etc. together with many other evil social practices which are indicators of erosion of values. This paper examines functionalist perspective for elaborating the role of education in inculcation of values and recommends that education for future must take into account the increasing need for value education to be made an integral part of the curriculum.

Keywords: Education, Socialization, Society, Values

Inter-relationship between Education and Society

Education plays an important role in the personal and social development of members of society. It is a learning process which develops critical consciousness and skills for reading, writing and viewing any phenomenon with 'analytical-ideological' and rational perception. It is a sub system of the total system of society and a vital organ of superstructure which shapes society and culture. At the same time the nature of society and culture also determines the nature of education. Thus reciprocity based interplay between society and education is a sociologically significant issue and development and advancement of education is of paramount importance for the progress of society. It is one of the major forces behind the social and cultural life of a community. In the era of globalization, education provides the knowledge required to practice professions and provides skills with which to gain an entry to the new urban occupations. Education on one hand is the key to individual advancement and on the other hand the great agent of socialization in the values of the society. Education is the functional pre-requisite for smooth and efficient functioning of any society

and leads to democratization of social relations. Every society has to provide for ways and means to bring up its young members and channelize their energy in right direction. This process of upbringing must include facilities for positive and functional growth of the child. It should also prepare the child to assume multiple roles in society so that the child is able to adjust in the society and in specific groups. It means 'general' and 'specific' socializations are associated with education which makes social unit 'culturally' conscious. In primitive societies this function of upbringing was mainly carried on within the frame-work of a single institution of the family but in modern societies it is shared mainly between two institutions—the informal system of family and the formal system of education. Sociologically, it can also be said that the institution of education does not arise due to individual needs but it arises out of the needs of the society. The life-span of the members of society is limited but the society continues to exist due to birth of new members. It is necessary to socialize the new generation according to the values which are prevalent in the society and prevalent dynamic situations. Education socializes as well as controls the new generation and prepares them to be able to adjust according to changes in social life. It helps in the integrated development of personality of individuals according to the expectations of society. The development of personality depends on the interaction of an individual with the nearby physical and social environment. At the same time individuals further develop their own qualities, abilities, beliefs, attitudes etc. with the help of distant social environment. Such interaction becomes possible when individual makes contact with education and media. For proper development of personality it is essential that equilibrium is established between the external-internal, close-distant, informal-formal environments of an individual. Education helps in the development of such equilibrium by moulding the personality. Education is that agency of socialization which helps in constructive development of the child. In this context the views of Vygotsky that, "In perceiving some of our own acts in a generalizing fashion, we isolate them from our total mental activity and our thus enabled to focus on this process as such. In this way, becoming conscious of our operations and viewing each as a process of a certain kind—such as remembering and imagining—lead to their mastery. School instruction induces the generalizing kind of perception and thus plays a decisive role in making the child conscious of his own mental process" become significant (Vygotsky, 1962, p.92). It helps in the development of self-dependence, critical evaluation of social situations and adjustment to social situations. Education plays an important and extensive role in the

lives of individuals and the society as a whole. Durkheim rightly states that "Education is the influence exercised by adult generation on those who are not yet ready for social life. It's object is to arouse and develop in the child a certain number of physical and moral states which are demanded of him by both the political society as a whole and the social milieu for which he is specifically destined" (Durkheim, 1956, p.71). It means that one of the most important functions of education is socialization of the new generation. Socialization is the process of transmitting those attitudes, values, norms and beliefs and skills in a way that an individual is able to conform to prevalent social values and at the same time is able to accept changes which are taking place in cultural patterns of society. Education in this sense becomes defining principle agent for control and change. It helps to broaden the vision and cultivate open mindedness and ability to assimilate changes and adjust accordingly.

Values

Values provide general guidelines for conduct for members of society. They set the standards for arranging priorities and choosing between alternative courses of action. According to R.K. Mukherjee "Values are higher order norms. They are socially approved desires and goals that are internalized through the process of socialization, conditioning and learning and that becomes subjective preferences, standards and aspirations" (Mukherjee, 1969). The National Curriculum Framework, 2005 echoed the vision of education where values are inherent in every aspect of schooling. The framework articulates the need to reaffirm our commitment to the concept of equality amidst diversity, mutual interdependence of humans to promote values that foster peace, humaneness and tolerance in a multi cultural society (Gulati & Pant, 2005). Honesty, duty consciousness and compassion are important values that need to be inculcated in the children. Thus values represent the ends which people should pursue in order to ensure peace, happiness and a just and humane society.

Education and Values: Functionalist Perspective

Sociologically, education refers to those sets of activities by which knowledge and information are preserved, disseminated, innovated and created. Durkheim recognizes that education has taken different forms, at different times and different places. He believes that in virtually all societies, education was of critical importance in creating the moral unity

necessary for social cohesion and harmony. For Durkheim the moral values were the foundation of society (Sadovnik, 2006, p.24). If we closely observe the state of education in different phases of history we find that in simple and complex societies education has always been playing functional role. The Functionalist Perspective of Education focuses on the positive contributions of education because it maintains social systems. Discipline, self-discipline, social order and internalization of that curriculum which produces functional members of society constitute the domain of functionalist perspective on education. . Functionalists opine that every society possesses its own specific culture which includes values and norms. There is consensus on certain values and norms in every society. Values are standards that define some action as desirable and others as undesirable. Norms are the rules and regulations of everyday life and are particular application of values. The majority of members come to accept the values and norms as valid. This is because they have internalized such values and norms during the socialization process. They therefore fulfill the expectations associated with their roles and as a consequence social institutions function effectively. Socialization into culture thereby insures order and stability in society. According to functionalists education contributes to the stability of society by fulfilling its functions of socialization and selection. Durkheim observes that education moulds the members of younger generation in a social-self who give importance to continuity of social order. Durkheim defines education as "The influence exercised by adult generations on those not yet ready for social life" (Durkheim, 1956, p.71). It simply means that education is a mechanism used by the adult members of the society for converting the younger members into capable potential work force. Since society is a dynamic entity, the content of education varies from society to society and from time to time. In other words content of education is society-specific, culture-specific and time-specific. Education is social in nature and it is a means to an end. This end is defined by the society and not by the social units being educated, or by the teachers or by the educational administrators. The most important function of education is to develop those abilities and capacities which are required by the society. Thus Durkheim argues that "each society sets up an Ideal of man, what he should be, as much from the intellectual point of view as from the physical and moral. The general function of education must be to arouse in the child — a certain number of physical and mental states, that the society, to which he belongs, considers should not be lacking in any of its members. In fact each society needs some similarity of thoughts, values and norms among its members in order to continue."

(Durkheim, 1956, p.78). It also requires some specialization, as division of labour is necessary to maintain society. Education fulfills societal needs in these respects. It satisfies the requirements of society. In creating the new generation for society, education lays down the condition for society to perpetuate itself. In this sense education has the function of preserving and developing society. Education's function of fitting people into society is accomplished by the process of socialization. During the socialization process the child is formed according to societies' requirements. Although such socialization is required by the society it is also necessary and desirable when looked at from the social actor's point of view. In one sense the alternative to 'socialized man' is man in a 'state of Anomie'. The state of anomie i.e. normlessness is undermined and discouraged when education acts as an agent of socialization. Durkheim stresses that "human desires are endless and therefore full satisfaction can never be achieved. The individuals will not limit their desires, but will try to satisfy them all. The end result of living in this state of anomie is perpetual unhappiness. Men suffer from "the malady of infinite aspirations'." (Durkheim, 1961, p.40). In order to achieve satisfaction in life a people must limit their desires. It is also a fact that persons are not capable of restricting their desires. Some external control is necessary for this purpose. Education does the individual a service by socializing man according to society's requirements. It provides with the values and norms and thus gives a frame work by means of which an individual can live a satisfying life. As Durkheim argues that, "Where as we showed society fashioning individual according to its needs, it could seem from this fact, that the individuals were submitting to an unsupportable tyranny. But in reality they are themselves interested in submission, for the new being that collective influence through education, builds up in each of us, represents what is best in us. Man is man, in fact, only because he lives in society." (Durkheim, 1956, p.75-76) This is one of the most important view on which Durkheim's theory of education is based. Education helps in creating a stable and structured environment which provides the necessary cognitive frame-work required for acquisition of knowledge. It provides those norms and values which are in conformity with that of society and builds up the necessary consensus for society which helps in continuation and stability of society. The main functions of education are socialization and humanization of social units by providing the normative and cognitive frame works, they lack. It means that 'discipline' is the most significant value which establishes the importance of education as an agent of socialization. The nature of education becomes distinct when it is examined in context of typology of society. In mechanical

solidarity based system, the nature of education directly or indirectly endorses the value of collective conscience whereas in organic solidarity based social system education constructs a complex division of labour and the value of rational individualism, efficiency, ability, specialization, merit and stress on formal social norms becomes the main sphere for which education operates. It means in Durkheim's views "in a society in which the traditional constraints and religious morality are dying, moral education can help in saving the man from the possibility of anomie". There are three characteristics which all moral systems share (i) The 'spirit of discipline', (ii) 'Attachment to social group' by the individual and (iii) The 'self-determination' or autonomy. (Durkheim, 1961, p.30) Durkheim suggests that moral conduct involves those norms which are in conformity with the society and abiding by them. These norms cannot be changed at our own free will. In this sense morality demands submission to the authority of moral rules and thus helps in regulating and maintaining consistency in our behavior. In order to achieve this, spirit of self-discipline must be inculcated in the students. They must be taught to restrain their desires and needs. But practically due to inbuilt limitations a person is not able to do this for himself/herself. The self restrain required can only be done through exercising some external restrain. According to Durkheim, "we should teach children the benefits of self restraint and show them that the only way to be happy is to set proximate and realizable goals, corresponding to the nature of each person" (Durkheim, 1964, p.49). It means students should be made to identify their potentialities and limitations and accordingly set their goals in life. The second characteristic of morality is attachment to social groups. Another important aspect of morality is an action which involves acting in the interest of the society. Durkheim believes that, "To act morally is to act in terms of the collective interest. Now, it is evident that a moral act must serve some living and sentient being and even more specifically a being endowed with consciousness. Above and beyond those sentient beings who are other individual human beings, there is nothing else save that sentient being that is society" (Durkheim, 1961, p.59). Society has interests which are in accordance with all members of society or it can have interest of its own which may differ from those of any one member or all members. An action that is devoted to the pursuance of an individual's own interest is not a moral action. Only those actions which benefit the society and are approved by the society are regarded as moral actions. Moral actions help in restraining the desires of man. The third characteristic of morality is autonomy. Autonomy means rational acceptance of society's morality. Only secular morality can give rise to a rational understanding of

why a person should accept a moral code. These three basic characteristics of morality can be applied to schools. The school going children are susceptible to ideas and commands. In order to develop the spirit of discipline in pupils the school must built on this susceptibility. The rules and regulations of the school occupy a very important place in this process. The children's entrance into formal system of schooling is marked by definite rules and procedures. The children get familiar with rules which are more general in nature than the one's experienced at home. The children are made to understand that these rules are to be observed strictly. However, too much strictness in the enforcement of rules might result in making the children rebellious or it can make the children too much dependent on external rules, to the extent that they will fail to develop the spirit of self-discipline. Punishment assumes an important place in this respect. It makes the children realize that the rules are same for all and binding upon all. Any breach of rules amounts to indiscipline in the school and calls for punishment. But there is no place for physical punishment in the process. It serves no useful purpose except making the children either more aggressive or too much submissive. At the same time physical punishment is also not in conformity with the basic principle of morality i.e. respect for dignity of an individual. There must be a grading scale for punishment. First the child should be reproached and a warning should be issued to him/her. Next step should be disapproval of child's action in front of the class and parents should be informed. On further repetition of the offence the child should be suspended from the school with proper information to the child as well as the parents about the reasons for suspension. In this way discipline should be developed in the children. In order to develop the second characteristic of morality i.e. attachment to social group, the school activities must be organized in such a manner that the children can lead a communitarian life and is able to participate in group activities. The children should be made to identify themselves with the group to which they belong. It is the responsibility of the teacher to develop the spirit of unity and solidarity in the class. Collective rewards and punishment help in developing the feeling of oneness among the class-mates. At the same time it is also the responsibility of the principals that they organize the school in such a way that the students realize that their class is a part of a larger whole. Thus the pupils learn to identify themselves with groups and also learn to attach themselves to the society as a whole. The third element of morality i.e. autonomy requires that children should know the reasons for acting morally. For this purpose it is essential that the children have an understanding of the needs of society. This understanding

should be developed by inculcating scientific attitude among children. Science employs observation and logic in order to demonstrate the complex phenomena taking place in the world. The children should be made to study society in a scientific way. This will help them to understand their dependence on society and will lead to willing acceptance of morality. In such a condition the need for external restrain will become less. It is also essential that children realize discipline is necessary for themselves as well as for society. For this purpose Durkheim lays stress on scientific understanding in education. Durkheim opines that, "the clearer our notion of reality, the more apt we are to behave as we should. It is science that teaches us what is. Therefore, from science, and from it alone, must we demand the ideas that guide action, moral action, as well as any other" (Durkheim, 1961, p.274). Science inculcates rationality in the minds of children and also helps them to accept freely the moral values of society and to understand the society as a whole. Thus according to Durkheim—(1) Education can be projected as major agent of socialization. (2) Education helps in the development of physical and mental states of the child. (3) Education helps in the transmission of values and norms so that disciplined and controlled personality emerges. (4) Man's capabilities are channelized through education. (5) Education leads to minimization of state of anomie and (6) Education is the mechanism by which aspirations are met out.

Thus education can be considered as dominant as well as vital agency of quantitative and qualitative change. In developing societies which attempt to introduce rapid social changes through democratic and peaceful ways, education is the chief agency that can initiate and speed up mobilization and transformation of human resources. Social change involves an intellectual acceptance of alternative values as well as extension of existing values in new spheres of life. It also involves modification of existing attitudes and behavior patterns. Education is considered as a powerful instrument of social change because it moulds the younger generation. It plays an important role in inculcating new thinking and ideas, ideals, ideologies, attitudes and helps in developing intellect and critical thinking. In this sense value education at every level of education acquires significance. The young spend a large proportion of their waking hours in classrooms. It is an important place for the socialization of the new generation. Value Education will generate appropriate value system into the personality of social unit. As a result do's and don't's become a part of pupils cognitive behavior. It will give rise to rationality and tolerance and a controlled personality can come into existence. Education also contributes

to the internalization of culture of nearby social environment and of outside world. As a result manifestation of appropriate response with the alien population becomes a possibility. It provides rational consciousness about group interest and group identity due to which units constituting a group get involvement in almost uniform behavior for the attainment of a particular goal. It contributes to group control. Education also makes significant contribution for establishment of equality before law. Several general and specific responsibilities and possible consequences of action, issues associated with civil rights and human rights, the effective operation of institution of law and other institutions associated with formal control mechanisms are made known to social units through education. Social control becomes a part of knowledge and action of the pupil. Thus, education has the potential to shape the personality in accordance with the societal values.

Need for Inculcation of Values through Education

It is an empirical reality that contemporary Indian society is undergoing a process of transition and is characterized by individualism, corruption, lack of accountability, injustice, intolerance, social and economic inequality, violence, increasing apathy, human rights violation and insensitivity towards social issues. On the basis of empirical study conducted on parents and teachers, Weil (2011) states that discipline, autonomy and social concern were given prime importance as objectives of education. These objectives have many similarities with the characteristics of moral behavior which have been identified by Emile Durkheim earlier in his work on moral education (Weil, 2011, p.14-15). Sarangi (1994) examined the basis and implications of moral education in schools. According to him there is a necessity to impart value education at primary school level. Moral education should be carried out in schools through morning prayers, guest lectures and a special moral education period. The Kothari Education Commission (1964-66) argued about the importance of inculcation of moral and spiritual values among learners in the following terms 'while a combination of ignorance and goodness may be futile, a combination of knowledge with lack of essential values may be dangerous". The commission insisted on the need to pay attention on cultivation of moral values at every stage of education and suggested that a separate period may be set apart for the purpose (Nanda, 1997). The National policy on education,1986 lays emphasis on the acculturating role of education and states 'the growing concern over the erosion of values and increasing

cynicism in the society has brought to focus the need for readjustments in the curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for cultivation of social and moral values'(Nanda,1997). A bill related to moral education "The Compulsory Imparting of Moral Education in Educational Institutions Bill, 2012" (Bill 3 of 2012) has been presented in the parliament on 27 April 2012. The primary objective of the bill is to provide for compulsory imparting of moral education in educational institutes up to secondary level in the country. The mass deterioration of values, behavioral disorders and increasing violent activities are clearly visible in Indian society and our society faces an uncertain future. These are issues for concern but not for despair. Education is one of the main agents of socialization and plays an important role in moulding the younger generation according to the needs of the society and transforming societal relationships but increasing problems in our society point towards deficiencies in our education system. The main deficiencies in the present education system may be described as follows:(i) The present education does not generate or fortify the type of knowledge that is relevant to our changed society, (ii) Technology associated with a particular body of knowledge is inappropriate to our stage of development in terms of its employment potential or investment demands, (iii) Education has failed to provide value framework which may prepare committed politicians, bureaucrats, technocrats and professionals on whom our nation can depend for sophisticated system of support services to be useful in taking the country to the highest level (Ahuja 2004, p.220).The UGC recommendations on updating curricula express the need for inculcation of moral values in education by stating that the recent debate about professional - vocational education versus liberal – humanistic education has added a new dimension to the discourse on educational curricula. While allowing technology to permeate our lives and classroom environment, we must emphasize that technology must ever remain a means; it can never become an end from the point of view of education. The task of humane development of the learners, of fostering their inquisitiveness and of encouraging them to undertake humanistic pursuits would ever remain primary and the more cherished. Rapid erosion of values in our changing society highlight the need for building up a strong component of value based education. Value education should be participatory rather than sermon based and should support the holistic development of personality. (www.ugc.ac.in/model/curriculum).Recently UGC has expressed its concern about educated youth indulging in anti-national and anti-social activities and has asked

universities to take steps to check "radicalisation of youth". Following recommendations made by the National Integration Council, the University Grants Commission has written to all universities and recognized institutes asking them to ensure that students enrolled even in science and technology courses study humanities and social sciences alongside, so as to remain sensitive to human values. (Indian Express, 21 February, 2013). Education system in India has evolved through the years after independence. Many reforms have been carried out in the system of education according to the changing needs of the society but these reforms have not been able to achieve the desired goals. The twenty first century, striving for the development of highest technological and information skills in order to convert the entire world into a global village may fail to produce a real man along with deep rooted human values and emotional blending. Education has the dual responsibility of preparing the younger generation for a highly competitive market and at the same time inculcating moral values and developing new ways of acting and thinking which make the society just and humane. Education must move towards the fulfillment of social needs and not only towards the attainment of advanced technological skills. With the advancement of educational technologies such as computerization, satellite communication, Internet, Tele-conferencing and audiovisual aids there has been a paradigm shift in setting the preferential goals of education. With the rapid progress in knowledge and explosion of information technology we are moving towards knowledge based society. The individual is to be armed with information and skills but not act as a robot or a machine but a human being with feelings and sentiments. The human potentialities are to be unfolded and wholesome personality is to be nurtured. In the era of increasing individualism and excessive preoccupation with materialistic comforts, value education assumes importance and it is the need of the hour that values are inculcated in the children right from the beginning. The abovementioned studies and recommendations draw our attention towards increasing concern for imparting value education. We need to reformulate our priorities and inculcation of moral values through education has to be given a serious thought. Curriculum reforms in education can go a long way in bringing desirable changes in the society.

Final Remarks

The Functionalist Perspective stimulates us to accept this logic that education has always been a principal agency of socialization. This

perspective proves that education fulfills the needs of the society and it can lay the foundation for desired social change. It is essential for all teachers, administrators, researchers and policy makers to have an understanding of functionalist perspective concerning education. In the present era of globalization education is faced with the dilemma of producing a workforce according to market demands and at the same time producing a population with critical thinking and awareness which makes this world a democratic and humanitarian place. To achieve the goal of a humanitarian and just society, revision of curriculum in terms of content and objectives is required. It is also essential that teaching, learning and extracurricular activities focus on development of moral virtues and give collective experiences in group life. The role of teachers, who are the role models for young learners, is very important in this context. Brilliant scholars with strong ethics and values should be encouraged to take up teaching as their profession because personal examples set by teachers have long lasting and deep impact on the minds of learners. The economic dimension of education which has acquired great importance in the recent times needs to be balanced with learning to live in a community and inculcation of values which can help in building a just and humane society. It is within this type of debate that education as an agency of socialization has to find its place and the educational institutions have to work out their future.

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