

SURYA SEN MAHAVIDYALAYA
(A GOVT. AIDED DEGREE COLLEGE)
[Affiliated to the University of North Bengal]
Establishment: 1998

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Handbook on Human Values and Professional Ethics

*Quality education is the fundamental right of every Indian citizen.
Quality Education lays the good foundation for Individual growth.
Surya SenMahavidyalaya is committed to impart quality education,
to create skilled man power for the nation.*

About the College

Surya SenMahavidyalaya, affiliated to the University of North Bengal, made its humble beginning on September 18, 1998, for conducting degree courses in Arts, Science and Commerce streams. Initially, classes were held in Siliguri College campus. The present campus of the college at Surya Sen Colony, Siliguri, became operational since July 2000. With the establishment of Surya SenMahavidyalaya, a long standing demand for a third college in Siliguri finally became realised. Since its inception, the Mahavidyalaya has carved out a niche in the academic frame of Siliguri. The college, within this short period, assumed the status of one of the premier colleges in North Bengal – thanks to the able stewardship of college authorities, teaching and non-teaching staff and students.

Objectives of the Handbook:

(Human Values & Ethics)

- To understand the human values that ought to guide the profession, resolve the moral issues in the profession,
- To justify the moral judgment concerning the profession.
- To develop a set of beliefs, attitudes, and habits that human beings should display concerning morality.
- To create an awareness on Ethics and Human Values.
- To inspire Moral and Social Values.
- To appreciate the rights of others.

Human Values

Meaning of Value:

Human values have been employed in so distinctively different ways in human discourse. It is often said that a person has a value or an object has a value. These two usages have been explicitly recognized by writers in various disciplines such as Charles Mortris in Philosophy, Brevster Smith in Psychology and Roibin Williams in Sociology.

If one wants to know the origin of the term 'VALUE', it may be stated very firmly that the term 'VALUE' comes from the Latin word 'VALERE' which means 'to be of worth'. Whereas, the concise Oxford Dictionary defines the term 'VALUE' as the 'worth, desirability or utility of a thing'.

In fact, it is difficult to define values, for they are as comprehensive in a nature as our human life. Somewhere, some other dictionary states that Value is that which renders anything useful, worthy or estimable. It is price, worth or importance of a thing'.

Value is "a concept explicit of implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristics of a group of those desirable traits which influence the selection from available modes and ends of action."

In fact, value is an abstract term which is commonly regarded as an economic conception. In the words of John Dewey, "Value means primarily, to price, to esteem, to appraise, to estimate. It means the act of cherishing something holding it clear and also, the act of passing judgment upon the nature and amount of its value as compared with something else,"

According to Rokeach, "Value is an enduring belief, a specific mode of conduct or an end state of existence, along a continuum of relative importance." Values are part and parcel of philosophy. Hence, aims of education are naturally concerned with values. Ail education is, in fact, very naturally value-oriented. Each educational goal, whether originating in a person, a family, a community, a school or an educational system, is believed to be good. 'Good' is intended to mean here 'avoidance of bad'.

If possible objective, is not good, then there is no reason for pursuing. But again, the same question spurts out, and when the question 'what is a value?' spurts out, we know something of its religion, philosophy and ideology.

The guiding social aims and beliefs which are regarded as the important aspects of a culture, then, the different aspects of culture are also 'valued' by the people; and the ideas lying behind which they think worthwhile, are called as VALUES! A value is a preference as well as conception of the preferable. According to Kluckohn a value is a conception of the desirable and not something "merely desired".

Values are defined as something which are desirable and worthy of esteem for their own sake. Human values are defined as those values which help man to live in harmony with the world.

Values that may be included in the general definition of human values are love, brotherhood, respect for others — including plants and animals — honesty, sincerity, truthfulness, non-violence, gratitude, tolerance, a sense of responsibility, cooperation, self-reliance, secularism and internationalism.

R. M. Maclever, in his “THE WEB OF GOVERNMENT” has used the term ‘MYTH’ where the term ‘value’ is used. According to him, myths are “value impregnated beliefs and notions that men hold, that they live by or live for.” He says that every society is held together by a myth-system and “all social relations are myth born and myth-sustained.”

According to Maclever, myths include “the most penetrating philosophies of life, the most profound intimations of religion...” Since myth is usually understood as a fictitious story or belief, Maclever has used this term differently, far from normal use. A. K. C. Ottaway in his book ‘EDUCATION AND SOCIETY’ has rightly observed by saying “A myth suggests a popular idea which is not in fact true and one hesitates to apply this term indiscriminately to the philosophies and religions of mankind”.

Hence, the use here of the word ‘VALUES’ stands for the idea men live for. In the most elementary sense, value means whatever is actually liked, prized, desired or enjoyed by anyone at any time. It is the actual experience of enjoying desired object or activity. Hence, Value is an existing realisation of desire’.

Even though, value has been said to be the experience of pleasure and joy; value experience are not under the direct control of reason.

In spite of the definitions quoted so far, one more definition still remains and it is of the eminent sociologist Prof. R. K. Mukerjee, who defines ‘value’ as follows —

“Values are socially approved desires and goals that are internalised through the process of conditioning, learning or socialisation and aspirations.”

The sociologists are concerned with the questions like value-diversity, value-clashes, value-tensions, value-conflicts, social change, socialisation, innovations, modernisation and preferred futures. The legitimacy of the sociologists’ involvement is based on the task of examining the social relations and processes as valuation phenomena.

According to Shaver, “Values are standards and principles of judging worth. They are a criteria by which we judge things — people, objects, actions, ideas and situations — to be good, worthwhile, desirable or on the other hand, worthless, despicable, undesirable or somewhere in between these two extremes”.

The Shaver’s definition consists of three elements:

- (i) Values are concepts, not feelings.
- (ii) Values exist in the mind independently of self-awareness or public affirmation.
- (iii) Values are dimensional rather than absolute categories.

Truly speaking, making an attempt to define the term 'VALUE' is really a difficult task. Yet, we have, so far, come across many definitions given by the eminent people. And, we now get one more definition as given by Paker which reads as follows — 'Value is the assuagement of desire'.

But Perry, interprets the term 'VALUE' in terms of 'interest' or 'object of interest', whereas R. M, Williams defines value as "mode of organising conduct" or "the principles that guide human action".

We have already seen that the term 'VALUE' stands for 'worth'. However, still more perfectly, it may be said that the term 'VALUE' stands for 'intrinsic worth'. Whatever is actually liked, prized, esteemed, desired, approved or enjoyed by any one, is valuable. A interdependent, accepted or consistent set of value is called Value-System'.

Education is capable of developing strong and abiding values. At all times, education has built on value-system, conducive to the development of physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual life. In activates the latent capacities of the individual enabling him or her to recognise 'truth', 'duty' and 'goodness'.

One may go on adding lines after lines and write pages after pages about 'VALUE'. But truly speaking, a full, detailed description of value and also value-education would entail a study in itself.

There are corroborating findings by many researchers, and when we try to analyse and then study the entire description of such researchers, one may come to the conclusion that value is really a forceful tool for the cultivation of social good, and, values are the very essence of human life! It is that system which aspires the people for leading good life.

With regards to this, it is better to quote a statement given by Radhakrishnan Commission which runs as follows:

"If we exclude spiritual training in our institutions, we would be untrue to our whole historical development".

— Radhakrishnan Commission of 1948.

Nature of Values:

From the definitions of 'VALUE', certain most important things regarding values are noted. These are:

1. Values are not feelings, but they are concepts.
2. Values are express feelings but they are more than feelings.
3. Values exist in the mind, and, are independent of Public affirmation.
4. Values are absolute but they are dimensional. That is, values are criteria for judging the degree of goodness of badness, Tightness or wrongness.

5. Values are concepts heavily weighted with emotions and influence the child's selection from variable modes, means and ends of action.
6. Values are primarily, ethical, social and subjective. Therefore, they are strong dispositions of human behaviour than concepts with less heavy emotional weightage.
7. Values are based on respect for human dignity. They assume that personal integrity is the nucleus around which ethical community and global stewardship resolve.
8. Values are the very essence of human life.
9. Values are essential for a fair and equitable community which reflects our respect as well as responsibility for the global environment.
10. Values are cross-cultural and are essential for the development of community and global citizenship.
11. Values are that in which people are interested.
12. Values are the things of worship.
13. Value is the product of feeling, set and action.
14. Values are the product of human spirit and not of intellect.
15. Values never change. It is only the perceptions of these that undergo changes as a result of ever-evolving human consciousness.
16. Values act as forceful tools for the cultivation of social good.
17. Values are caught through literature.
18. Value is a motivating force behind the individual's thought emotion and action.
19. Values are integrated into personality and many times they act as barriers to the acceptance of new change or innovations.
20. Every value is reflected in a person's reactions.
21. Values influence every aspect of educational process.

Once again there is a temptation to quote Kothari Commission and Sri Prakasha Commission on Religions and Moral Instruction, which is stated as below —

“Every effort must be made therefore to teach students true moral values from the earliest stage of their educational life”.

— Sri Prakasha Committee on Religious and Moral Instruction

Kothari Commission (1964-66) reads as follows:

“A serious defect in the school system is the absence of provision for education in social, moral and spiritual values”.

Types of Values:

I. Ultimate Values:

Value statements that identify the significance of certain ideas, experiences and activities to us, are the ultimate values. These go beyond mere statements of intellectual belief to the extent that they represent the beliefs that affect our decision on how to live.

Human beings tend to rank their values in a rough order of priority, in accordance with ultimate beliefs about the world and their place in it. Religious traditions represent the most systematic attempts to explain our place in the world, and supply different accounts. There are certain value statements about the Ultimate Values that represent the level of agreement achieved between several theistic religious traditions.

The following aspects show or represent the ultimate values taken for granted from four different angles:

1. Life Perspectives:

Here God is taken as the Creator and Self-revealer and about the religion is it said that religion arises from the human responses to God.

2. Individual:

Each individual realizes God given wholeness and is to encourage self-respect and learn from cultural traditions.

3. Society:

Each individual recognises the human rights and is consistent with what we know to be the law of God — developing relationship in accordance with God’s commandments.

4. Natural World:

Nature is appreciated as a gift of God and our relationship to nature is that of stewards, charged with managing it in trust for future generations.

II. Democratic Values:

Democracy consists of a Society in which all people have equal rights to participate in the political process, while exercising the freedom to live as they choose, provided they do not infringe the right of others to do the same. Democracy, therefore, is a procedural notion, not an ultimate vision of living.

For this reason, people with differing ultimate values may be prepared to accept a number of values whose practical justification is the maintenance of a viable democratic state and

sustainable environment, thought they might have different ultimate reasons for being prepared to endorse those values.

The following aspects show or represent the Democratic Values taken for granted from four different angles:

1. Life Perspectives:

Here, search for knowledge, especially that which enhances the achievement of the other ends, is taken for value consideration. So too, right of all individuals to freedom to worship or not to worship is taken into consideration.

2. Individual:

Here, the basic rights of all people regardless of differences to race, gender, ability and religious belief, is thought of and each individual is encouraged to contribute to the community services consistent with good citizenship.

3. Society:

Responsibility is provided as a safety net for those in the society who lack the capacity through sickness, disability or unemployment, to sustain a viable lifestyle.

4. Natural World:

Nature is taken for conservation of the environment, and the need to continue to develop natural resources to sustain human life is taken into consideration.

III. Educational Values:

In addition to the values associated with common life with regards to Ultimate Values as well as Democratic Values, education draws on:

- (i) Values intrinsic to the knowledge it seeks to impact, and
- (ii) The ethics of providing instruction to human beings within the constraints of the classroom.

The following aspects show or represent the Educational Values taken for granted from four different angles:

1. Life Perspectives:

Encouragement is given to the students to explore the moral point of view and to develop a personal value system.

2. Individual:

Every child has the right to access to available knowledge at an appropriate developmental level.

3. Society:

Critical reflections are recognised on both the cultural heritage and the attitudes and values underlying current social trends. A social obligation to support research that promises to improve the quality of human life and to share the benefits as widely as possible is also noted.

4. Natural World:

There is a human drive to understand the realities of the world as being a valid quest for truth in its ultimate unity, and the aims of understanding of all the domains of human experiences — especially physical, intellectual, aesthetic, social, moral and spiritual is promoted.

Values, at the outset are not bifurcated as shown in the above manner alone, but values are, at the outset are divided into still many other ways. They are Subjective and Objective types of values.

I. Subjective (Or Internal) Values:

Some educators hold the view that educational values are internal and subjective. They are biological and psychological in origin. They satisfy the wants and desires of the student. They do not have any intrinsic or inherent worth of their own. Only the students or teacher 'value' them from his or her point of view and needs, instincts and emotions.

II. Objective (Or External) Values:

There are other educators who regard educational values as external and objective. They do not believe that they are just internal or private concern of the teacher or the student. The followers of this view believe that personal desire may be an important element of educational value, but they hold that values are independent of such desire.

Values are again divided into:

I. Instrumental and

II. Intrinsic Values.

I. Instrumental:

The Instrumental Values are values which are judged good for something. That is, their values are dependent on the consequences or the outcomes.

II. Intrinsic Values:

On the other hand, Intrinsic Values are interest in the objects, not imposed or applied by outside agencies. They are judged good not for something else, but are good in and of themselves. There are still another two types of values from an altogether different point of view to Value'.

Some values are used to value and others are utilised to evaluate. The same distinction is evident in the values “to prize and to appraise”, “to esteem and to estimate”. Similar difference also appears in “what is desired and what is desirable.”

It is very significant to note then, that values have been variously classified. There is still one more type given by Shaver. Shaver has classified values as aesthetic, instrumental and moral. There are still others who have classified values as PERSONAL, COMMUNITY and NEIGHBOURLY VALUES. Let us have a look at these now.

I. Personal Values:

The values that are prescribed by the individual alone, irrespective of his or her social relationships, are termed as personal values — e.g. Dignity of Labour, Sensitivity, Cleanliness, Politeness, Honesty, etc. are Personal Values.

II. Neighbourly Values:

Unlike personal values, the practice of neighbourly values necessitates the interaction of two or more persons. For instance, one can exhibit his or her patience with oneself, but this value is correctly actualized in the exercise of calmness and tranquillity with another person or persons.

III. Community Values:

The values that entail the complexities of wider interactions between groups of people are termed as community values. For instance, treating all in a friendly and loving manner can be practiced by one individually with one’s neighbours. So far, we have seen various categories of values, yet, a three-tier hierarchy of values still remains to be discussed. These are OKAY values, NOKAY values and new values.

OKAY values are those values that can be acquired and transmitted. These are universal, eternal values such as Truth, Compassion, and these are also constitutional values like Secularism, Socialism etc. These have to be reinstated and given a new relevance and respect.

NOKAY values are those values that can be consciously and habitually discarded. These are the beliefs and attitudes like ‘vulgar consumerism’, ‘mindless defiance of authority’ which are to be considered wrong and curbed resolutely.

New Values are those values that can be created and adopted. These have emerged from the process of modernisation and urbanisation such as ‘environment’, ‘preservation’, ‘value of time’, ‘punctuality’, ‘Public Hygiene’ which can be acquired and fostered by teachers.

In fact, value experiences are not under the control of direct reason, but values are the product of feeling, set and action. It is here that we come across again another kind or type of values that are as follows, and these values have been classified into six categories as per the things in which a person is interested which are described as below:

I. Theoretical Values:

Dominant interest in the discovery of truth.

II. Economic Values:

A characteristic interest in all that is useful in terms of money, and that which is useful for the satisfaction of bona fide needs.

III. Aesthetic Values:

Places high ranking on beauty as an art.

IV. Social Values:

Highest love for the people. The social man prizes other persons as ends and is therefore himself kind, sympathetic and unselfish.

V. Political Values:

Main interest is to gain prestige and power.

VI. Religious Values:

The highest value for a religious man may be called unity and he seeks to comprehend the cosmos as a whole, to relate him to its embracing totality.

Professional Ethics

Professionalism is the conduct, aims or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or professional person; it implies quality of workmanship or service. Every organization knows that a professional reputation is the difference between success and failure and they seek to keep their most professional staff. Professionalism is all about success and influence; having a reputation for excellence and being thought of as someone who exhibits professionalism under any circumstances can open doors for you either in the workplace or in your personal ambition.

Following are ten golden ethics to being professional in service to your organization:

- **Always strive for excellence**

This is the first rule to achieving greatness in whatever endeavour you undertake this is the quality that makes you and your work stand-out. Excellence is a quality of service which is unusually good and so surpasses ordinary standards, it should be made a habit for it to make a good impression on your bosses and colleagues.

- **Be trustworthy**

In today's society trust is an issue and any employee who exhibits trustworthiness is on a fast track to professionalism. Trustworthiness is about fulfilling an assigned task and as an extension- not letting down expectations, it is been dependable, and reliable when called upon to deliver a service. In order to earn the trust of your bosses and colleagues, worth and integrity must be proven over time.

Be accountable

To be accountable is to stand tall and be counted for what actions you have undertaken, this is the blameworthiness and responsibility for your actions and its consequences- good or bad.

- **Be courteous and respectful**

Courteousness is being friendly, polite and well-mannered with a gracious consideration towards others. It makes social interactions in the workplace run smoothly, avoid conflicts and earn respect. Respect is a positive feeling of esteem or deference for a person or organization; it is built over time and can be lost with one stupid or inconsiderate action. Continued courteous interactions are required to maintain or increase the original respect gained.

- **Be honest, open and transparent**

Honesty is a facet of moral character that connotes positive and virtuous attributes such as truthfulness, straightforwardness of conduct, loyalty, fairness, sincerity, openness in communication and generally operating in a way for others to see what actions are being performed. This is a virtue highly prized by employers and colleagues, for it builds trust and increases your personal value to all.

- **Be competent and improve continually**

Competence is the ability of an individual to do a job properly, it is a combination of knowledge, skills and behaviour used to improve performance. Competency grows through experience and to the extent one is willing to learn and adapt. Continuous self development is a pre-requisite in offering professional service at all times.

- **Always be ethical**

Ethical behaviour is acting within certain moral codes in accordance with the generally accepted code of conduct or rules. It is always safe for an employee to “play by the rules”. This is always the best policy and in instances the rule book is inadequate, acting with a clear moral conscience is the right way to go. This may cause friction in some organizations but ethical organizations will always stand by the right moral decisions and actions of their employees.

- **Always be honourable and act with integrity**

Honourable action is behaving in a way that portrays “nobility of soul, magnanimity, and a scorn of meanness” which is derived from virtuous conduct and personal integrity. This is a concept of “wholeness or completeness” of character in line with certain values, beliefs, and principles with consistency in action and outcome.

- **Be respectful of confidentiality**

Confidentiality is respecting the set of rules or promise that restricts you from further and unauthorized dissemination of information. Over the course of your career, information will be passed on to you in confidence – either from the organization or from colleagues- and it is important to be true to such confidences. You gain trust and respect of those confiding in you and increase your influence within the organization.

- **Set good examples**

Applying the foregoing rules helps you improve your professionalism within your organization but it is not complete until you impact knowledge on those around and below you. You must show and lead by good example. Being a professional is about living an exemplary life within and without the organization.

Professionalism is highly valued by every organization today and professionals are hardly out of work. Apply the ten golden rules of ethics and enjoy a wonderful, professional and prosperous career.