

Meaning, Development and Source of Value*Dr. Hemalben Prafulkumar Brahmbhatt***Abstract:**

In various domains such as technology, resources, and material aspects, we experience success. However, in our daily lives, we often encounter loss, primarily due to the absence of essential feelings like peace, kindness, and satisfaction. These emotional states are linked to our value system, which is crucial for personal well-being. Understanding the concept of value, its sources, and its development is essential to address the various challenges we face, such as mental health, financial stress, and societal issues. This paper explores the meaning of values, Kohlberg's stages of value development, and various sources of values to offer a clearer understanding of their role in shaping human behavior and society.

Keyword: Meaning of Value, Period of development of value and source of value

Author/S Note _____

Dr. Hemalben Prafulkumar Brahmbhatt,
Teaching Assistant,
Department of Education,
Faculty of Education & Psychology,
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda,
email id- hemalbrahmbhatt@yahoo.com
M: 7016258822

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Introduction:

The term “value” is derived from the Latin word *Valera*, meaning “to be worth” or “to be strong.” A thing is considered valuable when it is perceived as intrinsically good and desirable. The process of value development involves gradually acquiring values and advancing from one’s initial position to a more effective one, ensuring better usage and understanding.

Meaning and Definition:

Value refers to the quality in an individual or object that makes it important, respectable, and useful. This quality may be internal, external, or both. It represents what is precious, worthwhile, and estimable, which makes it worthy of possession. The Oxford Dictionary defines value as something of great importance or significance. Values serve as guiding principles that foster personal and collective development, providing direction and contributing to joy, satisfaction, and peace in life.

Values help regulate human behavior and decision-making, guiding actions in daily life. They are influenced by interests, choices, needs, desires, and preferences, which form the nucleus of value formation. When preferences acquire stability and intensity, they become criteria for judgment and decision-making.

Values are deeply tied to emotions—feelings of strong affection or deep engagement with something valued. People’s actions often provide clues about their values, and by observing how individuals behave when not coerced or prompted, we can infer what they hold dear.

Value refers to the “desirable,” though defining what is desirable is subjective. What is considered desirable may vary by time, location, and context. Generally, desirable actions promote societal well-being and align with the norms and ideals of a particular culture or community.

John Dewey states that value involves “prizing, esteeming, appraising, and estimating” things. It is the act of cherishing something and evaluating its nature relative to other objects or concepts. The *Dictionary of Education* (1959) defines values as the things people want, desire, or feel obligated to become or possess.

VALUE DEVELOPMENT

Human behavior is largely determined by consolidated values. These values provide predictability to actions and are foundational to personality development.

Periods of Development:

Sociologist *Morris Massey* identified three key periods in the development of values:

1. **The Imprint Period (up to age 7):** At this stage, children absorb information and values, especially from their parents. These formative years influence early beliefs about right and wrong, shaping future behaviors and, in some cases, leading to unresolved trauma.
2. **The Modeling Period (ages 8-13):** During this stage, children begin to adopt values from role models, such as parents and teachers, by trying out different behaviors to determine what aligns with their identity.
3. **The Socialization Period (ages 13-21):** Adolescents become highly influenced by their peer group and the media. As they seek individuality, they often gravitate towards social groups that reflect similar values.

SOURCES OF VALUES

Human values are not abstract principles formulated by scholars, but are ideas embedded within life experiences, shaped by culture, religion, and personal circumstances.

Socio-Cultural Tradition:

Social traditions consist of institutionalized relationships that govern behaviors in society. These institutions—such as family, religion, law, and education—regulate how individuals act and interact within a society. In India, for example, cultural traditions have been shaped by the amalgamation of diverse practices and beliefs, fostering unity through values such as non-violence, tolerance, and humanism. Education plays a pivotal role in imparting these cultural values and combating negative traditions, such as caste-based discrimination or superstition.

Religion:

While not the sole source of values, religion significantly influences the moral compass of individuals. Every major religion emphasizes the importance of virtues such as peace, love, and tolerance. The practice of religion transforms individuals by fostering an understanding of life's purpose, promoting universal values, and instilling ethical codes of conduct. *Dr. S. Radhakrishnan* emphasized that true religion lies within the individual's heart and guides one toward spiritual and moral growth.

Religious teachings encourage virtues such as non-violence, truth, respect for others, and selfless action. These principles are universally recognized across various religions and guide individuals toward achieving spiritual fulfillment.

Constitution:

The Indian Constitution, adopted in 1950, enshrines core values such as democracy, socialism, and secularism, which provide a framework for individual and collective functioning. The Constitution also emphasizes equality, justice, and liberty for all citizens, ensuring that values such as tolerance, respect for diversity, and freedom of expression are upheld. The Constitution of India stresses the importance of promoting harmony, protecting the environment, and fostering scientific temper through education.

The Constitution mandates fundamental duties, such as promoting the spirit of brotherhood, respecting national symbols, and striving for excellence, to ensure that citizens align their values with national ideals.

Conclusion:

A thorough understanding of how values develop, their sources, and their role in society allows us to guide and foster the development of values in individuals, particularly in students. By recognizing the significance of values in shaping human behavior, we can take concrete steps to promote positive values within educational and social contexts.

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