VALUES FOR CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY: UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING OF VALUES AND CREATING A PLACE FOR NEEDED VALUES IN THE CURRICULUM

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Abstract

Very few studies address the challenge of value education for children with special needs. This research article attempts to understand the meaning of values for children with intellectual disability and the role of values in their lives. A survey was conducted among 225 participants (parents of children with intellectual disability, experts, general educators and special educators) in and around the district of Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India. The analysis of the data obtained indicates the immense need for value training among such children which should be correlated to their functioning and learning capacities. The thematic analysis reveals nine value domains: self awareness, self help, self care and hygiene, good manners, safety and security, aesthetic values, social behavior, team work and courage. Each of the chosen value domains further was sub divided into sub domains so as to facilitate the process of training in value education for children with intellectual disability. Values in general terms means a specific mode of conduct, enduring belief or end sate of existence among a continuum of relative importance. The findings of the present study reveals that for children with intellectual disability values refer to a code of conduct that helps to maximize their potential for personal and social adjustment. Value education therefore means the inculcation and formation of acceptable habits which will ensure better inclusion for the child with intellectual deficit, in home, school and community. Hence it refers to teaching of basic social skills, good habits, maintenance of cleanliness and hygiene, ability to work in a team, enjoy and appreciate aesthetic values, ability to help self and awareness about self. Value education for such children is needed for: 1) better inclusion and acceptance in society, 2) success in school and work, 3) maintenance of social relationships and 4) success in independent living or group living. The findings emphasize the need for imparting such a type of value education to children with intellectual disability which is relevant for their daily living skills and will prepare them for independent self sufficiency.

Key words: values, value education, children with intellectual disability

Introduction

Education is an instrument for development- of the Self, Community and the wider

society. True education must humanize the person and liberate. Education must initiate a process of life-long development; provide freedom from numerous prejudices, based on caste, gender, religion, language, ability, superstitious beliefs. Education is a sub-system of the wider social system hence it cannot free itself from social and cultural norms and has to relate to its needs. The aims of education should be beneficial for the entire society. Education should pave way for enhanced self awareness, courage to question and face challenges in life, appreciate the beauty of nature and become self reliant (Shetty & Pushpanadham, 1998). This emphasizes the need for value education. According to Rokeach (1973), values are enduring beliefs, specific mode of conduct, or end state of existence along a continuum of relative importance.

Nowadays students are expected to learn and earn. Education has become a tool for earning money. But, true education humanizes man; it does not mean stuffing information in the brain; such an education is immediately forgotten; it instills qualities of unselfishness, discipline, humility and simplicity. Education should strive for development of physical, mental, emotional, social, moral and spiritual characteristics. Education in human values (EHV) aims at development of character by promoting the development of core human values like: right conduct, peace, truth, love and non-violence (Jahannathan, 2003).

Value education is a systematic, well planned educational process aimed at developing in the child knowledge, skills, attitude, values and behavior patterns that the society considers desirable, both as an individual and as a member of the society (NPE, 1986). Hence education, its aims, curriculum, methods should be interlinked with the values to be taught and imparted. The education in values and education towards inculcation of values is called value education. It is a universal process and intrinsic in nature to all the learning and educational activities, whether at home, or in school (Vijyaylaksmi and Nirmalajyothi, 2013). According to Swami Vivekananda, education is the manifestation of perfection already present in man and today there is an immediate want of man-making, character building and nation building education (CW). Ethical life and inculcation of values are the manifestation of the inner divinity and perfection of man, as purity and goodness are our real nature (Handbook on value education, 2015).
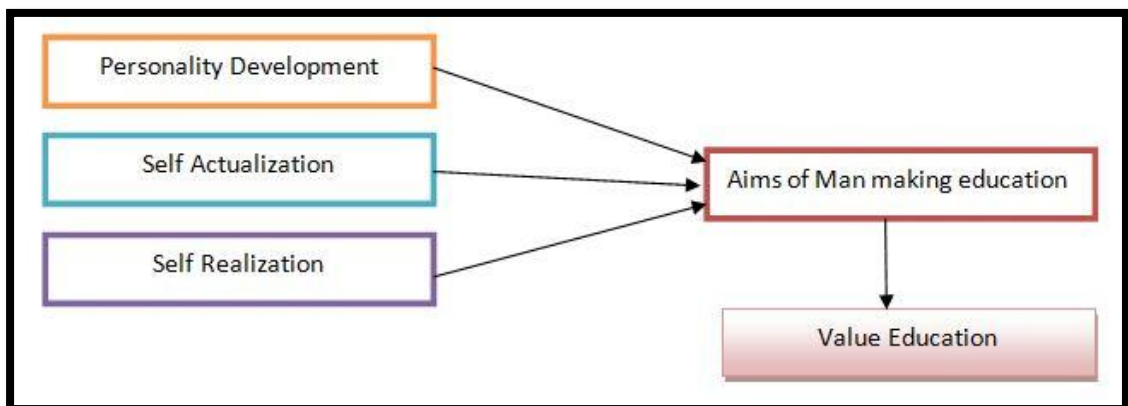

Figure-1: Aspects of Man making education of Sw. Vivekananda

Children with intellectual disability (CWID) have significant limitations in their cognitive ability and adaptive behavior which leads to temper tantrums, display of maladaptive behavior which is deviant from existing social norms. Such behaviours

lead to social exclusion and isolation. They have difficulty in maintaining relationships, show fear, absence of group play, timidness, confusion, poor peer interaction, lack of cooperation and team work, absence of courage to take and follow decisions. Hence they need to be trained in certain values and basic skills that need to be taught and modeled for such children, as the society expects certain behaviours in accordance with social norms.

Some research studies in the area of training and development of children with intellectual disability (CWID) indicate the need for a carefully planned curriculum that needs to be systematic, tested and revised over and over again so that it will help the child with cognitive deficit to make his /her place in society as an acceptable and contributing member of the society. According to Francis (1960), the gross motor development of such children is often retarded which affects their daily living skills. Capobianco and Cole (1960) investigated the free play and social behavior of CWID and found that mental age did not seem to influence the pattern of social behavior displayed, nevertheless these children needed training in good manners and performance of accepted social behaviours. The aim of educational programming for CWID is that they should become well adjusted and responsible citizens of our society. Such children are in need of a more structured classroom environment and a methodology tailored to their needs. According to Cain & Levine (1961), there is a dearth of information on the development of appropriate curriculum and suitable programs for the educable and trainable retarded children, which can be utilized as a basis for school planning.

The curriculum for such children should aim at holistic development and have specific educational objectives. The curriculum for CWID should include the following basic skill areas such as (Haring & Schiefelbusch, 1967):

- **self care and self help:** feeding, toileting, dressing, personal appearance, maintenance of basic cleanliness and hygiene
- **self awareness:** knowing about self name, gender, address, telephone number
- **etiquette:** sharing, caring, basic courtesy, elementary table manners
- **responsibility:** putting away clothes, toys, shoes, folding laundry, helping in household chores
- **personal safety:** usage of stairs, sharp objects, household appliances, heat appliances
- **self amusement:** play-self and group, team play, use of toys, operating machines
- **personal control:** self control of emotions, appropriate behavior at home and neighbourhood

Hence the value educational programme developed for such children should have these value components; as in accordance with findings from some studies and views expressed by experts in the field (Haring & Schiefelbusch, 1967).

Method

Participants

A total of 225 participants were selected for the present survey study out of which 150 were educators (100 special educators and 50 general educators), 25 were experts in

the field of special education and 50 were parents of CWID, using purposive sampling method.
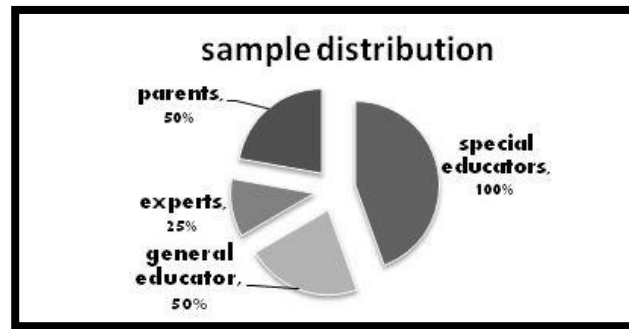

Figure-2: Sample distribution of selected participants

Instruments

The research tools used was designed and developed by the researcher exclusively for the current research. It included:

Tool (1): Opinionnaire on need and importance of Value Education (VE) for CWID (for experts and educators)

- **Domain-1:** Importance, role and need for VE for CWID
- **Domain -2:** VEC-course content
- **Domain-3:** VE- teaching methods and strategies
- **Domain-4:** Role of agencies
- **Domain-5**: VEC - evaluation

Tool (2): Checklist on need and importance of VE for CWID (for parents)

- **Domain-1:** Importance, role and need for VE for CWID
- **Domain -2:** Role of various agencies
- **Domain-3:** Need for training in imparting VE to CWID
- **Domain-4:** Role of environment in imparting VEC to CWID
- **Domain-5**: Supports and services available for imparting VEC to CWID

Tool (3): Checklist for identification and prioritization of values for CWID

This checklist was developed for the identification and prioritization of values for CWID by the target group. The checklist was based on the list of 84 values originally developed by NCERT (1984). This was administered to the target group to facilitate the identification and selection of values to be taught to CWID and thus can be included in the VEC for CWID.

Tool (4): Questionnaire the existing trends and practices in imparting VE to CWID

This questionnaire was developed to find out the current trends, recent practices, and strategies being followed for imparting values among CWID. This was administered to all the participants.

Procedure

1. **Developing and validating the research tool used for survey**

The researcher developed the survey questionnaire by pooling all the items, formulating domains and categorization of the items. The validity of the tool was tested getting the feedback of 10 experts in the field of special education and from 2 experts in the field of general education. Their opinions were considered and some of

the items were reworded, edited, modified and deleted. The researcher tested the reliability of the tool through test-retest method and applied the Pearson's bi-variate analysis. The statistical results reveal a correlation score of .94 (2-tailed) which was found to be highly significant at 0.01 levels of significance. At the initial stage the questionnaire was developed in English later it was translated into regional language (Tamil) for convenience of teachers working in special schools. The translation was done without affecting the original meaning. Combined version (English and Tamil) were given for proof reading to check the original meaning of the text in both the languages. Pilot study was conducted by giving it to 5 educators and the scores obtained by them in the rating scale was calculated and considered as pre-test scores. The tool was then revised and modified according to the problems encountered during the pilot study.

2. **Collection of data from participants through survey**

The appropriate target group was selected consisting of educators, experts and parents of children with disabilities. The respected school/college/institution/organization coordinators, heads of institutions and were approached for gaining permission. The data was collected and analyzed. As part of ethical considerations, informed consent was taken from each participant for the present study.

Results and Discussion

The participants were given a list of 83 values from the NCERT document on social, moral and spiritual values (1979) and directed to choose the values needed by children with intellectual disability in order to promote personal independence, social competence and vocational sufficiency.

Table-1: 83 values (source: NCERT document on social, moral and spiritual values, 1979)

1.	Abstinence
2.	Appreciation of the cultural values of others
3.	Anti-untouchability
4.	Citizenship
5.	Consideration for others
6.	Concern for others
7.	Cooperation
8.	Cleanliness
9.	Compassion
10.	Common cause
11.	Common good
12.	Courage
13.	Courtesy
14.	Curiosity
15.	Democratic decision making
16.	Devotion
17.	Dignity of the individual
18.	Dignity of manual labour
19.	Duty

20.	Discipline
21.	Endurance
22.	Equality
23.	Friendship
24.	Faithfulness
25.	Fellow feeling
26.	Freedom
27.	Forward look
28.	Good manners
29.	Gentlemanliness
30.	Gratitude
31.	Honesty
32.	Helpfulness
33.	Humanism
34.	Hygienic living
35.	Initiative
36.	Integrity
37.	Justice
38.	Kindness
39.	Kindness to animals
40.	Loyalty to duty
41.	Leadership
42.	National unity
43.	National consciousness
44.	Non-violence
45.	National integration
46.	Obedience
47.	Peace
48.	Proper utilization of time
49.	Punctuality
50.	Patriotism
51.	Purity
52.	Quest for knowledge
53.	Resourcefulness
54.	Regularity
55.	Respect for others
56.	Reverence for old age
57.	Sincerity
58.	Simple living
59.	Social justice
60.	Self discipline
61.	Self help
62.	Self respect

63.	Self confident
64.	Self support
65.	Self duty
66.	Self reliance
67.	Self control
68.	Self restraint
69.	Social service
70.	Solidarity for mankind
71.	Sense of social responsibility
72.	Sense of discrimination between good and bad
73.	Socialization
74.	Sympathy
75.	Secularism and respect for all religions
76.	Spirit of equality
77.	Team work
78.	Truthfulness
79.	Tolerance
80.	Universal truth
81.	Universal love
82.	Universal brotherhood
83.	Values for national civic and property

The values identified and selected by the participants was then thematically analyzed and grouped into nine domains which are listed below:

- **Domain-1:** SELF AWARENESS- this domain contains values such as knowledge about gender, age, class, names of parents, grandparents, siblings, house address, phone number, ability to travel by public transport, favourite food items, games and sports, likes and dislikes, ability to control emotions and deal with them.

- **Domain-2:** SELF HELP – i. **Responsibilities towards self:** such as eating, drinking, dressing, toileting, grooming, ii. **Responsibilities towards others:** serving food, house hold chores like cleaning, mopping, washing, helping mother in cooking, sewing, gardening, putting away toys, clothes, books, washed laundry, folding clothes, moving about in the neighbourhood, buying items of daily need form neighbourhood shops, handling money, use of household appliances like fridge, television, telephone, small items like stapler, scissors, punching machine.

- **Domain-3:** CLEANLINESS, SELF CARE AND HYGEINE- in this domain, we have items pertaining to **i. Personal hygiene:** body hygiene, hair hygiene, hand hygiene, feet hygiene, nail hygiene, food hygiene, **ii. Surrounding cleanliness:** throwing trash and waste in dustbin, keeping surroundings clean, unclean surroundings and lack of self hygiene leads to diseases.

- **Domain-4:** GOOD MANNERS- this domain has items on **healthy habits and good manners** like waking up on time, going to bed on time, daily exercise,

daily prayer, etiquette, sharing, caring, polite and courteous behaviour, helpfulness, turn taking, waiting for turn.

- **Domain-5:** PERSONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY- **i. Road safety:** using zebra crossing, not playing on roads, following traffic rules and signals, **ii. Personal safety:** using heat appliances, sharp items like scissors, knife, glassware, stairs, putting sharp objects in ear.
- **Domain-6:** AESTHETIC VALUES- **i. Appreciating beauty** in nature, order, symmetry. **ii. Application of aesthetic sense** in painting and decorating.
- **Domain-7:** SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR- i. **Behavior in public places:** courteous behavior, polite behavior, no teasing, fighting, hitting, appropriate dressing, table manners, ii. **Privacy-** closing door while performing private activities.
- **Domain-8:** TEAM WORK- playing group games and team sports, caring for team, feeling for team, team victory or loss is self victory or loss, developing cooperation skills, sharing of items an ideas among team members, respecting all other team members, understanding **group dynamics**.
- **Domain-9:** COURAGE- showing courage to take and follow decisions, complete assigned work, solving simple problems of day to day life.
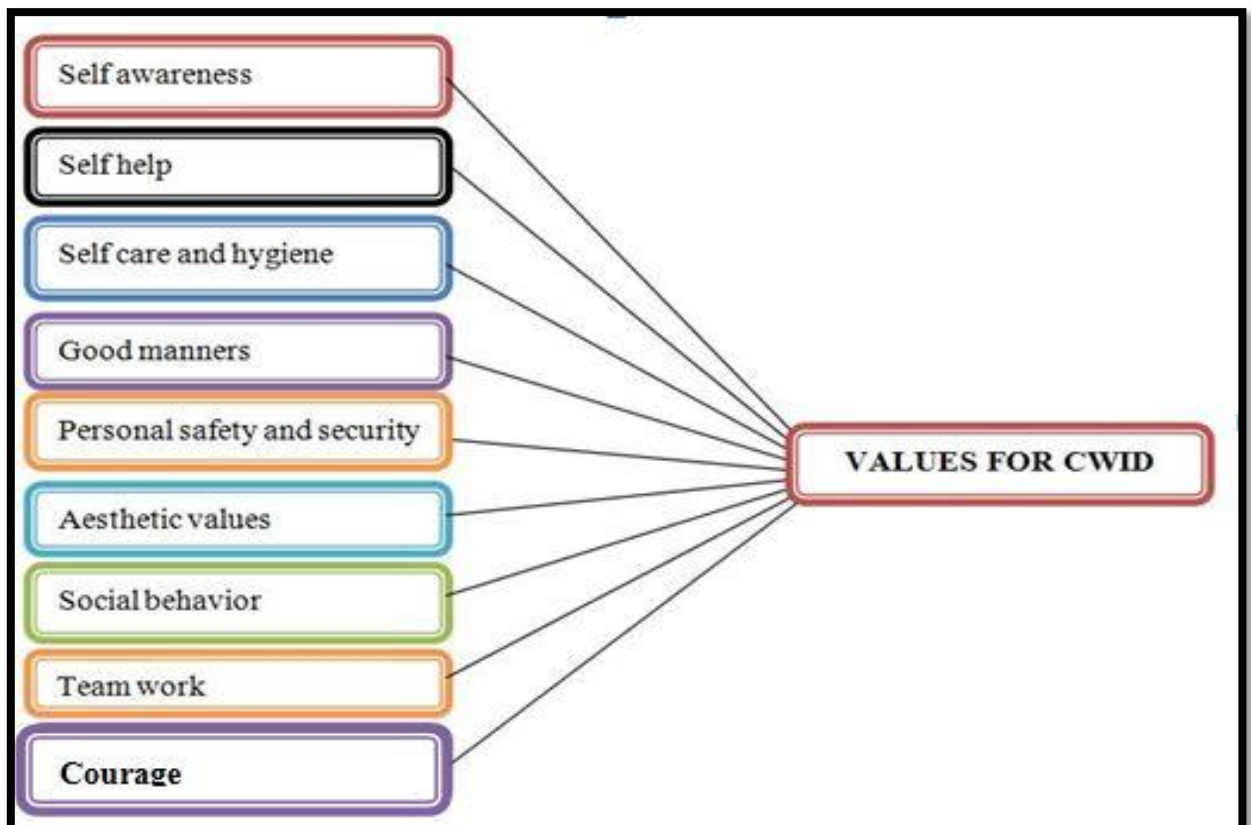

Figure-3: Values for children with intellectual disabilities

Summary of the findings

1. There is a strong need for imparting value education (VE) for children with intellectual disability (CWID) in order to foster value development for their success in home and work.
2. Values for such children are basic skills needed for everyday living such as cleanliness for self care and hygiene, sharing, caring, courtesy, to show respect to elders, ability to work in a team with others etc.

3. Need is felt for the training of special educators, general educators and parents for aiding in the effective and efficient transaction of values among such children.

4. There should be a place in the functional curriculum for values needed by these children. Hence a separate, specially designed, systematic value education curriculum (VEC) with appropriate assessment and evaluation formats, teaching aids and materials will be useful. Such a curriculum should be child-centered, culture friendly, simple to administer and have provisions for accommodations and modifications according to the unique needs of the child.

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