

## **Ethos and Values for Students**

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### **Abstract**

The word *Ethos* is a Greek term which means “character” that is used to describe the guiding beliefs or ideals that characterize a community, ideology or nation. Some ingredients of human values should be incorporated in the teaching learning process so that it becomes meaningful and unique. It may, at the first instance, sound unrealistic and unachievable, but it is possible and ought to be adopted. Of course, readily, five basic human values – truth, righteousness, love, peace and non-violence can be incorporated in the present-day education system to make it value based. The saying “The End of education is Character” speaks volumes on how much emphasis is put on character building which includes human values as well. Since character is a broad and all-encompassing concept, the present article confines only to the values that have to be implanted in the minds of students, right from their childhood in homes, schools and colleges.

### **Conflicts and Clashes**

It would not be out of context at this juncture to provide what value-based education exactly means; it is the study of moral and ethical values that makes a person perfect. It has, of late, gained much significance. The manner the world bodies such as the UNO and the UNESCO have taken it up stands testimony to this fact. The main reason for the sudden thrust is the critical phase the world is passing through at present. There are conflicts and clashes, bloodshed and massacre, wars and battles – all in the name of caste, class, race, region and religion. Human vices like greed, ego, jealousy, lust and hatred have taken the front seat. It is therefore imperative that human values propounded by great saints are coolly forgotten.

### **Instilling Human Values**

But instilling human values is a seemingly very difficult proposition in our day-to-day life as they have become more conspicuous by their absence. We, however, need to make them a part of our life and, in fact, way of living. This can be done by incorporating ethics in our education system right from the KG level to the PG level. There exists an ideal education where values are harmoniously blended with learning.

### **Qualitative and Quantitative**

Education should be qualitative and quantitative. It is qualitative in the sense that it should develop knowledge of the surrounding world combined with the practical skill to solve the problems keeping in mind the law of ethos. It is quantitative in the sense that one should develop an interest in learning even after finishing formal education and at the social level; all the sections of the people should be exposed to the benefits of good education. Such a concept agrees with a total evolution of the society at all levels. Rajaji says, “The education that we receive in schools and colleges, is worth nothing if it does not prepare us for life. It is not a mere process of acquiring knowledge. It is a process of acquiring the method of correct thinking, of correct feeling and correct action. If they keep this in mind, all colleges and schools, whatever their deficiencies will do good.”

### **Free It from Commercial and Political Interests**

Education should be made free from commercial and political interests. Education becomes fruitful only when the ideal of educating the next generation is entrusted to teachers who are fully devoted to the cause of knowledge and character and to schools and colleges which do not make education a means for extracting money. Without a good rapport between the teachers and the students, no real education is possible. More discipline, more self-reliant attitude, great devotion to studies have become essential components for both the teachers and the students. Swami Vivekananda comments, “Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.” He also adds, “We want the education by which the character is formed, strength of mind is increased and by which one can stand on his own legs. The aim of all education should be character – formation. What we want are Western science coupled with Vedanta, Brahmacharya as the guiding motto, and also Shraddha and faith in one’s own self.”

## Teacher's Role

The role of teacher has been vital in the all-round personality growth of the students. In fact, a teacher is a role model influencing every facet of a student's life. He should be a good friend, philosopher and guide to his students. Hence it goes without saying that the teacher of today is equally responsible to enable and empower his learners to emerge as competent youth, ready to take on the challenges of the rapid changing world. So, a teacher should continuously upgrade his/her knowledge and teaching methodology. If the quality of teaching is good and the commitment of teachers is high, then the standard of the institution where he/she works is sure to rise. The main duty of a teacher is to inculcate the twin feelings of discipline and brotherhood among the students. A teacher's work is complex but honourable.

## Abdul Kalam

Regarding Abdul Kalam's early life, Professor K. Balachandran writes, "Kalam's emphasis on outstanding teachers is an acknowledgeable fact. As a Tamil proverb proclaims, it is God's gift to have an inspiring wife. Similarly, to have inspiring teachers and that too at the elementary level is God's gift to one. In this aspect, Kalam was very lucky to have good and inspiring teachers."

"Aacharya Devo Bhavaha" is a Sanskrit slogan which means "Teachers are Gods". In Hindu Philosophy, a teacher is held in a very high position. For example, in *Mahabharata*, Lord Krishna becomes the teacher to Arjuna to deliver The Bhagavad Gita.

## Gandhi and Value-Imbued Education

It is relevant here to cite what Gandhiji felt. He cited 7 major structural and collective sins of modern times all of which ought to be dispensed with such that the quality of our life improves.

1. Politics without Principles
2. Wealth without work.
3. Pleasure without conscience.

4. Knowledge without character.
5. Commerce without morality.
6. Worship without sacrifice.
7. Science without humanity.

He also comments, “If money is lost, nothing is lost. If health is lost, something is lost. But if character is lost, everything is lost.”

### **To Conclude**

Thus, to conclude, it can be said willingly and voluntarily that education can become ripe only when it is accompanied by ethical values. Reading some classics for the purpose of exams and degrees is no education at all. A person can be called liberally educated only if he/she is able to strive, nurture and empower human values. A teacher and his pupil have to work together in order to bring about change in the society.

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