

Developing Sustainable Environment

Ist VALUE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME

DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

DAULAT RAM COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

23rd September - 30TH October 2015

Convener:

Dr Meetu Khosla



From the Conveners' Desk...

My visit as a Fulbright fellow to USA made me realize the importance of Values in life . I participated in the Academic Civic Engagement Program in St Olaf College, MN and the experience inspired me to develop a Value Education Center in my College and initiate a Value Engagement Program in my psychology department.

There are many questions that wander around in our mind; what constitutes a good life? Is it something that is meaningful, or happy, or values-based ?then again what is a meaningful life? What constitutes happiness? And where do values come in? This program was conceptualized to provide an opportunity to pause and reflect upon who we are ?and what we want out of our lives? How can we make it useful? Can we make a choice? How can we make a difference , not only in our lives but also in the lives of others....

We live in a difficult time, when peace and human security are facing new challenges at individual and global level, hence I thought that education is the medium through which one can try to build peace, tolerance , justice, understanding, cross-cultural communication...to create a better world! Not only for ourselves but also for others with whom we share space...our attempts must be urgently devoted towards reorienting ourselves and constructively building a healthier and happier society by recognizing our strengths and utilizing it for social justice, equality and harmony.

Value education is nothing new, but we are trying to rethink our role in this society, our social responsibility, to build upon that already exists..to strengthen our self esteem, decision making ability, optimism, all our positive traits that have been overshadowed by the negativity that surrounds us..we need to break all barriers of resistance in thought and behaviour...think about trajectories to use aesthetic ethics in making this place a beautiful place to live in..not simply exist...but to thrive.

Values are based on beliefs, we need to understand what our values are, why we all think differently? We need to deliberate upon issues related to human dignity,

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power, health, education, human rights, ethics, equality and happiness. Interacting in open discussion forums in during the Fulbright program made me realize that students could contribute positively to their environment and society. This motivated me to develop a program that will make the students realize that they could make a difference...bring about the change by changing themselves...to bring about a positive change in their cognition and actions. This program would provide an opportunity for the students to actively engage in discussions, introspection, role plays, workshops, critical thinking, seminars, interactive presentations, experiential exercises to bridge the gap between the mind and the heart...to develop compassion, empathy, altruism, forgiveness and understanding.

The emphasis was to enable the students to understand their values, which are the building blocks of a just society and a nation. Further the aim was to make the students aware of the need to have a vision, to think about our goals, both personal and global. This program was developed with the purpose of building resilience among the participants and a sense of social responsibility, to effectively engage the community in health enhancing behaviors. Sessions involved the students in self reflection and experiential exercises where they could identify the challenges they face and discover ways to cope with them effectively.

The program was envisioned with certain objectives ,such as:a) to develop an understanding of values education strategies; b) to perceive the relation between values and personal behaviour affecting the achievement of sustainable futures;c) to reflect upon on our awareness, commitment and importance of just actions; and d) to promote the awareness and benefits of valuing the values.

The main theme of the First Value Engagement Program was “Developing Sustainable Environment”. There were four modules, such as:

- a) Values for developing Sustainable Environment**
- b) Building a vision of Future**
- c) A vision of Holistic Education**
- d) Health Education**

The Program was conducted from September 23rd ,2015 to October 30th ,2015, in the psychology department. The total duration of the course was 14 hours and 15 students were enrolled for the program. A certificate was given to the participants upon completing 14 hours of the program. The students participated wholeheartedly, were deeply involved in all the modules. They felt stimulated to introspect, rethink

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about their role in this society and their social responsibility. They were encouraged to voice their thoughts and overcome their barriers to actions. The students were motivated to think about various trajectories to use aesthetic ethics in creating a healthier environment and instigated to develop new ways of thinking and learning how to make a difference. The students were provided with certificates, folder, reading material, research paper photocopies, stationery, handouts, questionnaires, travel allowance to the community (if required), refreshment on valedictory function.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to USIEF for the wonderful Fulbright experience as a Fulbright-Nehru Visiting Professor to USA that inspired me to develop this program in my college. I would also like to thank my college principal, Dr Savita Roy for supporting me in my endeavor. I would like to thank my department members for contributing to this program and helping in making it a success. I would also like to thank all the lab staff members for helping me organize the sessions. I also extend my thanks to all my students who actively participated in the program during their free hours.

Schedule of the Program

Session I	Developing a sustainable environment	Dr Meetu Khosla
Session II	Developing a vision of the future	Dr Preeti Kapur
Session III	Developing a sustainable environment	Dr Meetu khosla
Session IV	A vision of holistic Education	Dr Pooja V Anand
Session V	Developing a vision of the future	Dr Preeti Kapur
Session VI	Health Education	Dr Meetu khosla
Session VII	Health Education	Dr Meetu Khosla
Session VIII	A vision of holistic Education	Dr Pooja V Anand
Session IX	library review	
Session X	Field visits	
Session XI	Data Collection	
Session XII	Data analysis	
Session XIII	Research report writing	

Module I

Values for Developing Sustainable Environment

Module Content:

Knowing your Values:

Students were engaged in several Questions pertaining to their knowledge of values, such as: if they understood the meaning of personal values? if they were important to them, what they considered as their most important values? How they lived this value through their behavior? Rate the values on individual, relationship and societal value? If they believed that diversity of life has intrinsic value? Why or why not? How would they assess the beliefs of those who disagreed with them? Students were asked to imagine that if they had to make an argument for protecting an endangered species, but at the cost of restricting economic development, how would they combine scientific and ethical principles to do so? They were asked if they had ever made an ethical argument based on holism? If they had ever thought about the relationship between the concept of an ecosystem and an ethic of holism?

Value education strategies were used to enhance sustainability in social, economic and environmental issues. Exploring the opportunities and reflecting on the resources and developing a strategy to resolve the conflicts and enhance development in sustainable options. Group discussions were carried out to understand the challenges involved due to pollution of the environment and seek out ways to deal with them effectively via community involvement. Students were guided to develop critical thinking skills and use values to spread awareness and sensitivity to the environmental issues. The aim was to motivate them to apply values to understand the need of the society and actively participate in developing strategies to resolve disputes and find solutions to improve the environment, reduce the waste, re-utilize the resources and prevent any further degeneration of natural resources and further pollution of the environment. Students went in the community settings in metro, in stations, on bus stand, in canteen of campuses, in parking areas, in market places, in public gardens, in corridors of institutes to experiment upon and spread awareness about the values involved in environmental issues as cleanliness, increasing hygiene, promoting conservation of resources, reducing waste, eliminating toxic substances in garbage, disposal of waste etc.

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The sessions dealt with exploring questions as: how does the environment influence the individual, and how does the individual influence the environment? The challenges we face and lock us into future pathways. These may be environmental challenges such as climate change, natural capital challenges such as resource limits or social challenges such as local and global inequity. The aim is to support you to deliver sustainability solutions to some of today's global challenges. Did you notice that the world is getting smaller? I don't mean it is physically shrinking in size, but there's no denying that in today's modern world we are more keenly aware of the fact that an event or action that happens on one side of the globe can impact what happens on the opposite side.

Things like the Internet, a more globalized economy, and widespread changes in climate draw our attention to events happening around the world, and with this new awareness comes some ethical questions regarding the responsibilities humans have with respect to the care of the planet. Environmental ethics and human values were discussed and further how they affect our ability to deal with the environmental problems that our world faces.

Environmental ethics is the philosophical discipline that considers the moral and ethical relationship of human beings to the environment. In other words: what, if any, moral obligation does man have to the preservation and care of the non-human world?

There is increased awareness of how the rapidly growing world population is impacting the environment as well as the environmental consequences that come with the growing use of pesticides, technology, and industry. Environmental ethics helps define man's moral and ethical obligations toward the environment. But human values become a factor when looking at environmental ethics. Human values are the things that are important to individuals that they then use to evaluate actions or events. In other words, humans assign value to certain things and then use this assigned value to make decisions about whether something is right or wrong. Human values are unique to each individual because not everyone places the same importance on each element of life. For example, a person living in poverty in an undeveloped country may find it morally acceptable to cut down the forest to make room for a farm where he can grow food for his family. However, a person in a developed country may find this action morally unacceptable because the destruction of forests increases carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere, which can negatively impact the environment.

Environmental ethics, along with human values, make for challenging philosophical debates about man's interaction with the environment. Water and air pollution, the

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depletion of natural resources, loss of biodiversity, destruction of ecosystems, and global climate change are all part of the environmental ethics debate. And we see that within the discipline of environmental ethics there are tough ethical decisions humans must consider.

For example: is it acceptable for poor farmers in undeveloped countries to cut down forest to make room for farmland, even if this action harms the environment? Is it morally wrong for humans to continue to burn wood fuels knowing that this action leads to air pollution and global climate changes? Is it ethically permissible for man to build a hydroelectric dam knowing that this will disrupt the migration pattern of certain fish, leading to their extinction? Does a mining company have a moral obligation to restore the natural environment destroyed by their mining techniques?

Learning Outcome:

- a) Values were related to building relationships on open, just or considerate actions
- b) Learnt how to maintain a holistic balance and modest attitude with a willingness to change
- c) Developed skills about guiding others and having a positive impact on them
- d) Indulged in environmental awareness projects in the community settings
- e) Created a positive change in the community through positive psychology interventions.

Module II

Building a Vision of Future

Module Content:

The values and attitudes we live by affect how we relate to other people. It also tends to influence all our activities in the environment, and so are a major influence on our prospects for achieving a sustainable future. Although they cannot be separated from cognitive understanding, values and attitudes relate to the affective (or emotional) dimension of human behaviour. While values and attitudes are similar in this regard, they differ in several important ways. Values are generally long-term standards or principles that are used to judge the worth of an idea or action. They provide the criteria by which we decide whether something is good or bad, right or wrong. However, attitudes predispose us to respond in particular ways to people around us and events that we experience. They are not so deeply felt as values and quite often change as a result of experience. This module provides an opportunity to consider the importance of human values and attitudes in shaping the future. It also provides ideas and examples for two categories of strategies for exploring values in the classroom – values clarification and values analysis.

Role of values in developing a sustainable community programme that would: a) enhance health and wellbeing, b) change which facilitates positive outcomes in social justice, equity, economic development, health care systems, conflict resolution, without compromising outcomes for future generations, c) to identify the social and institutional indicators as: demographics, housing, education, security, health, wellbeing, social and community services, governance, and expenses and public administration, d) Social sustainability as relating to: meeting basic human needs; promoting greater connections between people and the environment; and enabling valued social and cultural practices to continue, e) Understanding the prevailing living conditions in the community, the socio-economic problems and developing a framework for good urban planning policies.

The purpose of this programme was to share and learn from each other how to implement a whole system change process in communities and nation in order to improve the level of well-being of citizens. The main objective of this programme is value promotion amongst students, to help them grow up as 'responsible' citizens

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and 'good' human beings. Their world-view and life-view should not be limited only to their individual self and to their personal career advancement. Such a limited self-view leads to selfishness and exploitation of the society for personal gains. Therefore the goal of this module is to help the student see that she belongs to the larger social and cultural community. This sense of belongingness leads to acceptance of one's moral responsibilities towards these larger wholes. With this orientation the student would be able to engage more positively and actively with the concepts of ethical and human values. Thus the effort will be to provide students with a conceptual framework which would enable them to appreciate the value of the 'good', of being 'good' and of doing 'good'. Students will be provided with an opportunity to explore and test their civic sensibilities and skills as they apply new learning and grow into effective value leaders. Students will be involved in teaching, learning, and acting cooperatively on important community-based project and create informed research agendas that will make a palpable difference in people's lives.

The psychology department, realises this imperative need to play a key role in promoting values and developing community engagement projects in order to achieve the true meaning of education. This programme will allow students to use their knowledge in meaningful, real-world contexts. As a community-based approach to literacy, service-learning will involve the application of academic skills to address or solve issues and problems in the world. We envision that our students have the potential to become a community of shared values that can play a constitutive role in shaping the meaning of the larger community within which they belong. Students will work/interact with others in the community to identify and address issues of public concern.

Learning Outcome:

- a) Understood the goodness of their cultural values and how they were important for community wellbeing
- b) Learnt the values that foster meaningful relationships, enhance self-esteem and transformation of the self.
- c) Gained knowledge about the various kinds of moral conflicts and resolution towards more meaningful pursuits
- d) Reflected upon the importance of community wellbeing and ways to enhance peace.

Module III

A Vision of Holistic Education

Module Content:

There was an introductory session on Values. Students were made to reflect as to what are values? What are *my* values? And, why? Where did my values come from? How do my current commitments reflect my values? How have my values changed? How might they change in the future?

Values have been conceptualized as personal principles that guide us and our actions. Individuals may turn to their values when they are uncertain about what to do or when faced with a difficult situation. Institutions may do the same. Though institutions certainly have discrete purposes and different missions, it is the rare institution that is value-free. The values that guide individuals and institutions reflect our diversity insofar as the inspiration for these values may come from family, culture, faith, the law, and beyond. This programme does not endorse any one particular set of values. The only one principle that is heavily promoted is the notion that being reflective is worthwhile. The goal of VEP was to get you to consider your own values. One may cite honesty and compassion while another will claim influence and equality.

Taking time to think about values, outside of a crisis or decision-making moment, should lead to greater self-awareness and what could be called personal transformation. It is critical to consider our values because they tie directly to our social and moral responsibilities, typically relate to advancing the common good and well-being of society. In a democracy, advancing the common good is achieved through educated and involved citizens. Citizens draw upon their knowledge, experience, and values to vote and make decisions about how to solve problems and make their communities better. Hence the psychology department has initiated this effort to promote time dedicated directly to defining values and their utility in the environment, community, education and health domains. This program aims at developing practical solutions to the sustainability challenges we all face through academics, both locally and globally. This program equipped the students to become value leaders, bringing together the information that is needed to make decisions and taking action towards growth and sustainability in academic pursuits globally.

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The module on Holistic Education was multifaceted in nature and covered a wide spectrum of topics. Mainly the module focused on “Social Emotional Learning”, finding meaning and purpose in life, and experiencing high subjective well-being. Social emotional learning encompasses understanding and managing one’s emotions, and developing positive and long-lasting relationships. Finding meaning and purpose in life was encouraged through connections to the community, natural world, and to values of compassion and peace. The module aimed at enhancing the emotional, cognitive, social, and spiritual aspects of an individual’s life. Various experiential exercises and group activities were done to ensure that learning is interesting and effective and that the students develop a passionate love of learning.

Learning Outcome:

- a) Students became aware of how emotions and value systems influenced learning process.
- b) Learnt the importance of utilizing values in making life meaningful
- c) Developed values of sharing, compassion, and peace.

Module IV

Health Education

Module Content:

Public health is concerned with the total system and not only the eradication of a particular disease. Environmental health, community health, behavioral health, health economics, public policy, insurance medicine and occupational safety and health are other important subfields in public health which need to be spread through health education programs.

Health promotion and prevention requires a clear orientation framework and appropriate guidelines, decision-makers and specialists in their challenging work of health promotion and prevention and encourage ethically responsible, scientifically based and context-sensitive action. Health promotion and prevention is based on the three dimensions of values, knowledge and context: the implementation of the framework requires systematic, recurrent reflection or critical questioning when making decisions or when planning, implementing and evaluating activities.

There are three interrelated aspects which need to be addressed while dealing with health issues. Health strategies or programmes do not exist in a vacuum. These are values, knowledge and the context in which health issues arise. Until we do not understand these three interdependent issues we cannot plan any programme or any intervention thereof.

As health promotion is a field of activity implemented in a social setting influenced by values and interests, rather than in a neutral and unbiased professional environment, norms and values play an important role in interventions and decision-making processes. Reflecting on norms and values and the respective context is, therefore, crucial and can be used for interventions. This requires that values be made explicit and discussed with the actors involved. Values and principles, such as participation, empowerment, equal opportunity and the consideration of social diversity must be included.

Learning Outcome:

- a) Learnt about community health education
- b) Understood how values can help in cultivating health
- c) Developed a public health program on hygiene and health

Research Projects

Students actively participated with the community on a particular issue and gave a report on it in detail. Students worked in groups (max number of 5 people). They discussed the plan of research, follow up and intervention programme in the community on a particular topic of interest with their supervisor. They discussed the challenges that they faced by the community/society on a particular issue, sought ways to understand the causal factors and ways of developing intervention strategies of helping them, judge the effectiveness of these strategies. They discussed and reported their work progress after each visit with their supervisor (a minimum of three visits). Students were advised to collect data/information using forms, interviews, questionnaires and also selfies about their interaction with the community. The supervisor will evaluate the report submitted in APA format (worth 80 marks) and a viva (20 marks)/presentation (20 marks). The report will be in soft copy as well as two hard copies for the college.

Report included:

1. Issue of interest from Indian and global perspective (review of literature)
2. Challenges faced/problems foreseen
3. Intervention programs suggested/designed
4. Perceived effectiveness of the intervention/prevention initiatives.

All the reports were collected and presented together in hard copy to the college and the resource centre with suggested intervention programs or policy initiatives. A feedback was also collected about the expectations, and evaluations of the VEP.

RESEARCH PROJECT I

Title: Emotions and Expressions

Student: Mohini Choudhary

Supervisor: Dr Meetu Khosla

Abstract

The present research examined the role of emotions in one's life, the way they influence our daily life activities and their importance to perceive and understand others' emotions effectively. Emotions were focused in the light of interpersonal understanding. There were two studies, carried on in a case study method. Study 1 included the analysis of case studies in which emotions were analyzed by being a passive observer. Study 2 on the other hand included case studies in which emotions were analyzed by being an active observer, where both emotions of oneself and that of others were understood properly. Role of expressions emerged as an essential component through these studies, which denoted that expressions play a very important role in giving us an insight into others' feelings and emotions. The case studies analyzed were truly subjective in nature. The findings from these case studies reveal that both verbal and non-verbal expressions like body language, verbalisms, eye contact, gestures, tone of speech, facial expressions etc. develop deeper understanding about others' emotions and the way we interpret their behaviour. The findings also revealed that language can also become a great source of barrier in understanding emotions. It was observed that emotions were understood more effectively when they are in mother tongue.

Title: Values, Happiness and Meaning in Life: A study in the Indian Context

Students: Prerna Dua, Rashmi Marwaha, Anika Virmani, Yashasvi Verma

Supervisor: Dr Pooja V. Anand

Abstract

Values play a crucial role in one's life as they determine the judgments and the course of actions. Happiness is one of the main pursuits in people's life and recent research tries to understand the point of intersection between happiness and meaning in life. The present study aimed to study the construct of values, happiness, and meaning as well as understand the relationship between happiness and meaning in life in the Indian context. The design of the study was exploratory and mixed methods approach was followed. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin (1985) and the Meaning in Life Questionnaire by Steger (2010) were used for data collection. A sample of 43 participants living in Delhi was taken. For interviews randomly 53 people were taken. Results revealed the values, level of happiness and meaning in life of the participants. A positive relationship was found between happiness and presence of meaning and a negative relationship was found between happiness and search for meaning. The study has implications for value engagement and happiness enhancement.

Title: Enhancing Emotional Intelligence Skills Interpersonal Understanding

**Students: Alankriti Sharma, Ekta Chopra, Mohini Choudhary,
Smritika Sharma, Rashi Tanwar**

Supervisor: Dr Meetu Khosla

Abstract

Emotional intelligence is the ability to sense, understand and effectively apply the power of emotions, appropriately channeled as a source of energy, creativity and influence. Five studies were conducted in the community, where in different social and environmental conditions were created and their impact on interpersonal functioning was assessed via verbal and non verbal questionnaires. Qualitative analysis and emotional component analysis of the studies reveal that emotional intelligence helps to strengthen interpersonal understanding, motivates to work for the community, enhances self-esteem, influences health and wellbeing. Learning to understand other's emotions and one's own emotions, and regulation of negative emotions helps in dealing with stressful situations, conflicts and resolves interpersonal difficulties in personal and workplace domains. Intensity of the experienced emotions was related to the perceived value of the emotion eliciting situation in the socio-cultural context.

Title: Role of Values in the Development of a Sustainable Community and Environment

**Students: Alankriti Sharma, Mohini Choudhry, Smritika Sharma,
Sonali Dahiya**

Mentor: Dr Meetu Khosla

Abstract

The present research examined the role of values for the development of a sustainable community. There were two types of studies that focused on the need and development of these human values for sustainable community and healthy environment. Study I was centered on the development of a clean sustainable environment, while Study II was centered on the development of a vision of tomorrow that focused on growth of community with its citizens values. Study I was conducted in the communities that included different types of population with varying ages. It was conducted in various college premises, metro platforms, public parks and colonies etc. The finding revealed that values play a huge role in the building up of a sustainable and cleaner environment that was noted through people's reaction to the litters that were thrown and their different acts to its consequence. These findings have been discussed in the light of the research purpose for the concept based on the life code of values for a healthy living. Study II was done to analyze peoples view about sustainability in an environment that went out as a community swot .Study II was conducted in the community with the sample size of 30 that included people of different categories such as teenagers(18-24 years), adults(25-45years) and elderly(60+years). Findings of this study revealed that teenagers are focused more on creating awareness among people to save the environment while adults find a major time constrain acting as a hindrance and elderly are more focused on the plantation for a better sustained environment. The study highlights the importance of moral values in well-being.

Research Project V

Title: A Sustainable Programme for Health Awareness and Promotion: A Value Driven Approach

Students: Roohi,Utkarsha Jagga, Ritu, Swapnil Rashi

Supervisor: Dr Preeti Kapur

Abstract

To develop a sustainable programme for public health awareness and its promotion at the college level. To use the ecological principles associated with holism, sustainability, diversity and balanced development. For this study the following value was undertaken

'Help Yourself by Helping Others'

This particular value was decided after much deliberation. The group felt that rather than going out to study a community the need to put our own house in order was necessary. Concerns about students and their health was discussed and the group finally decided that the washrooms in the college premises were not conducive for regular use. Discussion then brought up the issue of menstrual hygiene. The group shared their experiences of how they used the washroom only in an emergency situation. Hence, after much deliberation it was decided that if students wanted clean and hygienic washrooms for themselves then they had to help other fellow students to be aware of cleanliness and hygiene. Hence the other value to be undertaken would be *'Equal Rights and Equal Duties'* If the college provided washrooms and the students needed to use the same, then it is a right but along with this right also comes another significant aspect – one's duty towards the washroom. Often students do not have sufficient awareness about a given issue because they do not have knowledge, or insufficient knowledge, or know about stigmas and myths about certain topics. This brings us to the next value *'Empowerment and Participation'* Empowerment comes through adequate knowledge and active participation in the event/s.

Outcome of the Value Engagement Programme

This program was very beneficial for the students. The program provided :

- a) an opportunity for the students to actively engage in discussions, introspection, role plays, workshops, critical thinking, seminars, interactive presentations, experiential exercises to bridge the gap between the mind and the heart,
- b) to develop compassion, empathy, altruism, forgiveness and understanding,
- c) Students were given an opportunity for conducting field Studies with visits to the field for research work. Students actively participated with the community on a particular issue and give a report on it in detail. Students discussed and reported their work with their mentor who guided them with the research work, report writing and presentations,
- d) psychological strength by enhancing their self esteem, decision making ability, optimism, and reinforced their positive traits to thrive.
- e) social support by engaging in community development programs, initiating new awareness programs, promoted health enhancing behaviors and opportunities for the community.
- f) certificates were given after completing the course, with 90% attendance and minimum of 75 % in the report.

