ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN VALUES CULTIVATION

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Abstract :

Libraries have considerable potential to contribute to this process. Traditionally, libraries have been regarded primarily as centres for collecting, organizing, preserving, and providing access to information. Their role, however, can extend beyond the circulation of books to include learning, reflection, discussion, character development, and social awareness. Through carefully selected reading materials, biographies, storytelling, book reviews, discussions, debates, quizzes, creative activities, community-service programmes, library clubs, and other value-oriented initiatives, libraries can provide students with opportunities to understand and practise moral values.

The paper proposes various library-based activities for moral cultivation and character building among students, including value-based reading programmes, biography reading, storytelling sessions, thought-for-the-day displays, book review competitions, reflection journals, role-model corners, peer mentoring, community-service activities, and value-based creative programmes. A particularly effective approach is to connect reading with discussion, reflection, and practical action, enabling students not only to understand moral values but also to apply them in their daily lives.

Introduction :

India is moving towards becoming a developed nation and is emerging as one of the world's largest economies. The country's literacy rate has also increased significantly. Many educated and highly qualified people are working in important positions and earning substantial salaries. However, despite this progress, we continue to face serious problems such as corruption, cheating, crime, theft, examination paper leaks, and negligence of duties. This raises an important question: **Why does economic and educational progress not always lead to moral and social progress?**

Education should not only provide knowledge and employment; it should also develop honesty, responsibility, discipline, compassion, and a sense of duty. A person may be highly educated and financially successful, but if he or she does not perform duties honestly, the progress of the individual and the nation remains incomplete. India's development therefore needs to be accompanied by the development of **character and values**. In the Indian

philosophical tradition, values such as *dharma* (duty and righteousness), *satya* (truth), *ahimsa* (non-violence), *seva* (service), and self-discipline have traditionally been regarded as

important foundations of a good life.

A truly developed India will not be measured only by its GDP, literacy rate, infrastructure, or number of highly paid professionals. It will also be measured by the honesty of its citizens, the integrity of its institutions, respect for law, and the willingness of people to perform their duties sincerely. Therefore, India needs **both material development and moral development**. Economic growth can make a nation prosperous, but ethical citizens make it strong, just, and truly developed. How the libraries can play a role for moral cultivation among the students. The paper suggested the use of library in moral education and principles to be taught at every stage of education

What is the Moral Value :

Moral values are the core principles and standards that guide our behavior and help us distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad, and fair and unfair. They act as an internal compass that shapes our character, influences our decisions, and enables us to live peacefully and responsibly with others. Values such as **honesty, respect, compassion, kindness, responsibility, and accountability** should be developed among students from an early age. These values help students become not only educated but also responsible, ethical, and good human beings.

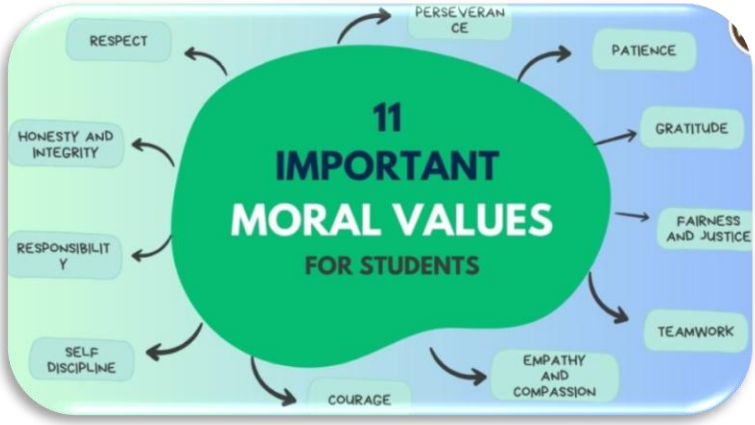


Figure 1.1 Moral Values

Importance of Moral Value :

It is often said that moral values are the cornerstone of any society. These values guide our behavior toward others and help us understand what is right and wrong. They shape our character, influence our decisions, and help us live peacefully and responsibly with others.Moral values are important because they provide a foundation for living a good and

meaningful life. They also create common ground among people. When individuals share moral values, they are more likely to understand one another, cooperate, maintain harmony, and contribute positively to society.

There are many moral values, but **honesty, compassion, responsibility, and respect** are among the most important.

Honesty is essential because it builds trust among people. When we are honest with one another, we can communicate openly and rely on each other. Honesty also helps us develop a strong and trustworthy character.

Compassion is important because it enables us to understand the feelings and difficulties of others. It encourages us to empathize with people, see situations from their point of view, and offer help and support when needed.

Responsibility teaches us to be accountable for our actions and decisions. A responsible person fulfils their duties, keeps their promises, and understands the consequences of their actions. Responsibility helps individuals become reliable and disciplined members of society.

Respect is equally important because it teaches us to treat others with dignity and kindness. It encourages us to value the opinions, feelings, rights, and beliefs of others, even when they are different from our own.

Thus, moral values play a vital role in shaping individuals and society. By practicing honesty, compassion, responsibility, and respect in our daily lives, we can become better human beings and contribute to building a peaceful, ethical, and harmonious society.

Consequences of declining moral values :

Moral values are on the decline in today's society. This is evident from the increasing rates of crime, violence, corruption, domestic violence, smuggling, and other social problems. Many factors contribute to this decline, including the breakdown of the family, the influence of the media, and the growing trend of individualism in society. The family is the fundamental pillar of society and an important source of moral values. However, many modern families face problems such as divorce, single parenting, neglect, and child abuse. When children grow up without proper care, guidance, and emotional support, they may fail to develop a strong moral foundation. Therefore, families have an important role in teaching children values such as honesty, respect, compassion, responsibility, and discipline.

The media also has a significant influence on moral standards. Television, movies, social media, and music sometimes portray violence, drug use, and irresponsible or immoral behavior as attractive or acceptable. Constant exposure to such content can desensitize people, especially young people, and gradually influence their attitudes and behavior. Finally, society is becoming

increasingly individualistic. Many people are more focused on their own needs, success, and desires and are less concerned about the welfare of others. This selfish attitude can weaken feelings of empathy, cooperation, and social responsibility, thereby contributing to the decline of moral values.

Thus, the decline of moral values is a serious social concern. Families, educational institutions, libraries, media organizations, and society as a whole must work together to promote ethical behavior and moral education. By developing strong values in children and young people, we can build a more responsible, peaceful, and compassionate society.

Education :

Education is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values, and good habits. It helps individuals understand the world and develop into capable and responsible adults. Learning takes place not only in classrooms but also at home and through everyday experiences. However, today's education system often places greater emphasis on intellectual development while giving insufficient attention to values, good habits, and character building. True education should aim at the holistic development of an individual by nurturing the mind, character, and moral values.

Role of Libraries in moral education :

The scope of libraries is not limited to the circulation of books only. Libraries have huge possibilities to perform multiple and multidisciplinary activities. They can play an important role in the overall development of individuals and society. Today, many unethical activities are happening in different strata of society, such as corruption, violence, killing, stealing, smuggling, cheating, and other crimes. If we think deeply about these problems, we understand that one of the major reasons behind them is the lack of values and moral education. Due to this lack of moral understanding, a person may not be able to judge what is right and what is wrong. As a result, people may fail to follow and uphold important human values.

Moral education should begin in childhood, especially at home. It should continue through primary school, secondary and higher secondary education, and college. Unfortunately, moral education is not always effectively imparted at every level of education. Therefore, we need to consciously cultivate moral values among students. Libraries can play a significant role in this process. They can provide books, stories, biographies, discussions, activities, and other resources that promote honesty, responsibility, empathy, discipline, respect, and social responsibility.

Thus, libraries should not be viewed merely as places for issuing and returning books. They can become centres of learning, character building, value education, and social transformation. By using their full potential, libraries can contribute significantly to creating responsible, ethical, and value-oriented citizens.

Proposed activities which can be perform by the library for Character building :

Proposed activities that a library can conduct for character building, especially for school or college students :

1. **Value-Based Book Reading** : By this activity librarian can encourage students to read biographies, moral stories, inspirational literature, and books on ethics and values.
2. **Book Review Competitions** : The library can organize such competitions where students review books focusing on honesty, courage, kindness, leadership, discipline, and social responsibility.
3. **Storytelling Sessions** : Conduct storytelling sessions based on moral and inspirational stories, followed by discussions on the values learned.
4. **Biography Reading Program** : This activity introduces students to the lives and achievements of great personalities who demonstrated integrity, perseverance, courage, and service.
5. **Thought for the Day** : Display an inspiring thought, quotation, or value-based message n simple bard r electronic display board in the library every day or week.
6. **Group Discussions and Debates** : Organize discussions on topics such as honesty, respect, responsibility, empathy, digital ethics, environmental responsibility, and good citizenship.
7. **Character-Building Quiz** : Conduct quizzes based on inspirational personalities, moral values, literature, and important social issues.
8. **Reading Challenges** : Introduce monthly or annual reading challenges encouraging students to read a specific number of books related to personal development and values.
9. **Expert Talks on Value education** : Invite authors, educators, counsellors, social workers, or community leaders to speak about character development and life values.
10. **Library Volunteer Programme** : Give students responsibilities such as arranging books, helping younger students, maintaining reading areas, and assisting in library activities. This develops responsibility, cooperation, and leadership.
11. **Essay and Creative Writing Competitions** : Organize competitions on themes such as *"Importance of Honesty," "My Role Model," "Kindness in Everyday Life,"* and *"Responsible Citizenship."*
12. **Role Model Corner** : Create a special section displaying books, photographs, quotations, and achievements of inspiring personalities.
13. **Book Donation and Sharing Drive** : Encourage students to donate or share books with those who have limited access to reading materials, promoting generosity and social responsibility.
14. **Community Service Activities** : Link library reading programmes with activities such as literacy drives, book collection for underprivileged children, or awareness campaigns.
15. **Film Screening and Discussion** : Screen educational or inspirational films based on real-life personalities, followed by a discussion on the values demonstrated.

16. **"One Value–One Month" Programme** : Select one value each month, such as **discipline, honesty, empathy, respect, patience, or teamwork**, and conduct related reading and activities.
17. **Reflection Journal** : Encourage students to maintain a journal recording what they learned from books and how they can apply those values in daily life.
18. **National and International Days** : Organize library displays and activities around occasions such as **National Youth Day, International Literacy Day, Human Rights Day, World Environment Day**, etc.
19. **Peer Reading and Mentoring** : Encourage senior students to read with or mentor younger students, developing empathy, leadership, and cooperation.
20. **Character-Building Library Club** : Establish a library club that regularly conducts reading, discussion, storytelling, quizzes, community service, and other value-oriented activities.
21. **Book Mark creation on values :** Encourage students t make the bk mark f paper n motivational thoughts, slogan and shlok and display it in the library.

A particularly effective approach would be to combine reading with discussion, reflection, and practical action. For example, after reading a biography about a great leader, students can discuss the person's qualities and then undertake a small activity demonstrating one of those qualities, such as teamwork or community service.



Figure 1.2 Glimpses of Moral Education and Cultivation

Conclusion :

Libraries can become important centres of moral and character education by providing access to value-based literature, biographies, inspirational stories, ethical discussions, and meaningful activities. Programmes such as storytelling, book reviews, debates, essay competitions, reading challenges, role-model displays, library volunteering, community service, and reflection journals can help students understand moral values and apply them in their daily lives.

The most effective approach is to **combine reading with discussion, reflection, and practical action**. Merely reading about honesty, compassion, discipline, or responsibility may not be sufficient; students should be encouraged to understand these values, reflect on them, and practise them in real-life situations. For example, after reading the biography of an inspiring personality, students can discuss the qualities demonstrated by that person and undertake activities that help them practise those qualities.

Thus, the library should be viewed not merely as a place for issuing and returning books, but as a **centre for knowledge, character building, moral education, and social transformation**. Librarians, teachers, parents, and educational institutions should work together to create a supportive environment in which students can develop strong moral values. Such efforts can contribute to producing honest, compassionate, responsible, disciplined, and socially conscious citizens.

Ultimately, **the development of a truly developed India requires not only educated minds but also ethical and responsible hearts**. Libraries, with their rich resources and educational potential, can make a meaningful contribution to this process by nurturing moral values among the younger generation.

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