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Utility of Introducing Values and Ethics in Profession

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Our Indian Universities, especially in technological and management Institutes are now emphasising on the subject entitled “Values and Ethics in Profession”, to foster among our future managers and technologists with higher thinking capabilities, so that from the very outset they understand their roles in professional as well as personal life to live and let live with dreams of advancing the society in a noble direction, developments in individual, social, intellectual and cultural level. The subject if read with care could be an asset for leading a decent living with dignity and grace. The study of the subject is an attempt to understand and recognise the virtues, condemning the vices as far as possible. It would shape the future professionals, the motto to set their goals and realise it by being productive for the advancement of the civilisation with noble mission and vision.

Keywords: professional, individual, social, intellectual, cultural, productive.

“Values and Ethics in Profession”, as a subject in Technical and Management institutes are gaining momentum these days. Questions crop up why a subject called human values in an engineering or management institute? What is the contribution of the subject for the aspiring B.Tech and management students in our country?

How human values would inculcate among our students to realize and develop their potentialities?

* The search for values is an essential cultural quest of human kind.

* It is a quest into the nature of, goodness which gives worth dignity and nobility to human existence.

* Civilisations advance and flourish when they are active in the search or else decline.

There was a time when India lost her sovereignty again and again. It started from Alexander, the prince of Macedonia and reached to Robert Clive of East India Company. Bharat had to bleed many a times. The Humes, the Pathans, Mongolians, Dutch's, Portuguese, the French put scars by plundering, looting and creating havoc in the life of the Bharatas. She was under the yoke of British Slavery for two hundred years, but she withstood the ravages of time. Life became a deadly labyrinth and the country men lost their moorings. The Sun of hope had set sail to the western horizon and dark clouds hover around the sky.

Well, life begins anew when the going gets very tough. As it says when the night becomes dark, dense and murky and nothing is visible, life becomes desolate. Death seems near, but then at that moment the crimson sun lights up the sky forging ahead from the mountains behind, spreading cheers to the world. The flapping wings of the birds in a round circle and their twittering produce the sound of music, pleasant for the soul. We become one with Nature and feel the presence of Almighty within our hearts.

“One impulse from vernal wood

May teach you more of man

Than moral evil and of good

Than all sages can.” (The Tables Turned-William Wordsworth)

A new India emerged under the able leadership of great men-Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Gurudev Tagore and Mahamanya Malaviya. These stalwarts with soaring idealism created the modern Indian renaissance.

Leadership training is an essential necessity for a nation to prosper. Leadership not only in political front, but everywhere- agricultural, industrial, medicine, engineering, space science, law, even art and architecture, music, fine arts. The value based leadership of the Indian great reformers produced a cultural, moral and social upsurge which resulted independence to the country and build a new nation.

Unfortunately their values ideas and ideals went out of fashion in the days of post independence. It was thought, new nation could be as easily built only on the strength of a liberal social-political ideology and material development based on modern science and technology.

“We have no time to stand and stare

At the nature

That is ours

The world became too much with us”-(The world is too much with us: William Wordsworth.)

We were and are still confused as to what should we choose-Indian spirituality or western materialism? May be in order to catch up with the progress of the first world countries we forgot and forget the values of our heritage, and roots. We started negating the bond of human relationship that exists in many forms-parents children, teacher-taught, employer-employee husband-wife and friends, neighbours acquaintances. Integrity, commitment, morality, trust, self respect, patience, endurance, fortitude, truth, nonviolence, fellow feelings and respect for women or chivalry vanishes into the air.

“Every thing become fair in love and business”.We are now engulfed with value crisis in all walks of our life-personal, social, professional, national. “From the glorious height of being one of the most civilized countries we are now plunged into an abysmal chasm of corruption, strife, inequality, moral social and human degradations”. Professor A.N Tripathi –Human values- new age international: preface.

There has been an erosion of values in every nook and corner of our society. Life becomes a game of getting and spending. It is a game where anger and hunger go side by side. It is no classless society that Mahatma Gandhi dreamed of that is based on Sarvodaya and Antodaya (compassion for all and at End) .Swami Vivekananda had predicted that education is “panecie of all evils”. Now is it relevant in this 21st century when corruption is at its peak?

Our universities and educational institutes have become centres of man-power training centers, where only careerists and job seekers are produced who believe in grabbing the power by hook or crook. The refinements of social, moral and human sensitivities are not being inculcated as expected to achieve progress for the development of our society. The young generation coming out of the universities neither enjoy the happiness and satisfaction of leading a good life , nor do they contribute to the social and human well being .The ultimate aim of life is pursuit for happiness and perceive ‘ sat chit anand’(existence, knowledge, bliss), even in mundance existence, amidst the hard toil. It is possible if one understands and aims to follow the values or standard of life as set by our ancestors, sages, seers, and prophets down the ages, both ancient India and the west.

A good life is the realization of all the values- material, social, psychological, aesthetical, moral and ethical and human. The classical Indian tradition follows the realization of the four purusharthas (pillars) – ‘dharma, artha, Kama, and moksha (religion, wealth, enjoyment of sensual pleasures, salvation)’. The crisis of values in modern life is traced to a narrow perception of good life, in terms of material values ie, in terms of ‘artha and kama (wealth,

pursuit of sensuous pleasure) 'alone'. As a result in the world of professionalism, work gets jeopardized and obviously there is no question of productivity. Chaos prevails, scams, lock out, close down of multinational companies are the deadly fruits of such negative attitude. Rights and duties no longer move side by side. "Values and Ethics in Profession", is inculcated in the syllabus of West Bengal University of Technology and other universities; both for the engineering and management students to filter among them the sense of service, discipline, responsibility and work to reach a common goal-development of the society by improving the qualities of life for all. After all our students need to realise the Indian Philosophy of 'Vasudeva kutumbakam' (the whole world is one family) or the concept of 'OUM' where the world is one and find one among all. We all belong to one family: the family of humanity. Then only the true sense of unity in diversity can be realised for spreading peace, harmony, creativity in the world. As there is a proverb "United we stand and divided we fall." If we realize this concept than only can cherish the concept of "Satyameva Jayate". Yes, there is always a silver lining amidst the dark clouds. Life is to be lived at every moment. It is a bundle of opposites; hope and despair, good and bad, tears and joy. And moving along with the tide and against, we fall and again bounce back to win. We hope to win with the weapon of education. As says Swami Vivekananda- "Education is the panacea of all evils". "Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man. Like a fire in a piece of flint knowledge exists in the mind. Suggestion is the friction which brings out." Education here is not merely developing the intellectual capabilities of the self, 'but drawing out of all the best in man and child-body, mind, soul'. Mahatma Gandhi. It is not only the development of the intellect, but the other faculties simultaneously: physical, emotional, aesthetical and spiritual. Then only creative thinking can flow as when all the human faculties of ourselves are involved in our man making process, there is growth physically, mentally and spiritually. There would be a kind of inquiry going in our mind to judge and evaluate as to what we read. We then could help ourselves to come up with innovative ideas that would lead to new discoveries, inventions for the betterment of our society.

A long time back Aristotle had said- 'a sound mind exists only in a sound body'. Hence meditation, yoga, swimming and other games and sports could be welcome for our future professionals from the field of B.tech and management to practice the ideals of values and ethics in shaping up their personalities, lead a stress free life to remain focussed in their job. They could sail through life even while facing a tornado with poise. Aesthetic values would inculcate among them to appreciate beauty in life, nature, art and sculpture. Then only could they recreate the beautiful world again and again by expanding their wings of imagination. It would help them to overcome their stress and strains in this mundane world. Beauty in Nature would help them to recreate the world with a new vision and a mission. Beauty in life would be a better understanding of relationship: be between peer groups, colleagues, family, parents. And of course beauty in art and sculpture would be an endeavour for a better understanding of artistic creativity or the artist's labour of love. It would shape their mind and heart inspired by an artistic zeal to come out of the box, with innovative ideas, designs, town planning and implement them in real life. While spiritual values would be an endeavour to discover oneself in the vast cosmos, understand the duties and responsibilities to shoulder upon with courage with fortitude and calm mind. Life would then be lived fruitfully both in personal and professional front enhancing productivity.

Productivity could then be realised when all perceive and recite:

"The woods are lovely, dark and deep"
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep

And miles to go before I sleep”-(Stopping by the woods on a snowy evening:
Robert Frost)

The very thought of utilizing time and energy in a useful manner is the hallmark of mentally healthy persons. The enthusiasm for living a wholesome life would develop in them the spirit for positive contribution where they live, guided by love and enthusiasm. They will be cheerful to seek out avenues where their talents and endowments could be utilized properly and productively. There would be no complaints, but a zeal to give better performance without nurturing any grievances even if not compensated in the best suitable manner. Life could be then lived with renewed strength and joy with every sunrise from the mountain peak. They would then create opportunities not only for themselves, but also for others.

The subject “ Values and Ethics in Profession”, would further develop among our future engineers, managers an understanding of emotional intelligence. They would enable them to understand and recognise the human feelings, we experience and how strong we are in accepting them. Emotional Intelligence would make us realise what motivates and propels us into action and also what deters us. It would develop a feeling of empathy, understanding other’s feeling and be considerate and compassionate in our professional as well as personal life, attuning oneself emotionally with other person to feel the emotional vibrations. Efficient handling of emotions would lead to personal and social competence with strong character and will power. Then only good leaders could be produced, if not born. The qualities of endurance, fortitude, forgiveness, self control, respect for other’s property, purity, cleanliness, restraint in over-sensuous desire, knowledge, philosophic wisdom, truthfulness, absence of ego, patience, egolessness, integrity, fairness, concern for other’s, humility, courage would grow among our students to give our world a better shape.

There would then be a pursuit of excellence in all by constant honing of skills and refinement of values. Professional Ethos would then find meaning. When imbued by the values our professionals would feel motivated towards their service. In the world of professionalism our students would shoulder responsibility to safeguard and advance the interest of the society, colleagues, without fear or favour. They will not succumb to any kind of allurements, nor engage in any falsehood or deception. Their public pronouncement would be authentic, objective with correct interpretation of their skills.

The professionals would then apply their special knowledge and skills in the service of mankind, in which there will be successful expression of creativity and ability to the best of their knowledge.

The spirit of professionalism is clearly brought out in the pledge adopted by USA’s National Society of Professional Engineers: [4]

‘As a professional Engineer, I dedicate my professional knowledge and skills to the advancement and betterment of human welfare.

I Pledge:

To give the utmost performance;

To participate in none but honest enterprise;

To live and work according to the laws of man and the highest standard of professional conduct;

To place service before profit, the honour and standing of the profession before personal advantage, and the public welfare above all considerations.

In humility and with need for Divine Grace,

I make this pledge.”

The above pledge may seem ideal in this consumeristic society where success is hoped to earn without distinguishing the means and the ends. But inspired by the subject of “Values and Ethics in Profession”, our society would gain with professionals ready to work for the humanity at large. As the mission and vision of modern India recommended by the University Education Commission in 1948-49 was “to inculcate high ideals of life such as justice, truthfulness, righteousness and new values of life leading to an integrated way of life. Right type of attitudes and values are helpful for decent and graceful living.”

Therefore the West Bengal University of Technology and the other universities of India and everywhere in the parts of globe, where the subject called “Values and Ethics in Profession” are kept in the curriculum to foster among the students a new vision to build cosmos from chaos deserve accolades.

In the words of our first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru “Universities stand for democracy, nationalism, humanism, adventure of new ideas, tolerance, reason and truth,” “Welfare and betterment of humanity is the ultimate goal of University Education”.

So our universities have rightly taken a step filter among our future leaders of management, engineering the values to design and create a better tomorrow, where the sun smiles in every citizen showering on them a benediction to glow with happiness.

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