

Human Values Reflected in Bengali Text Books at Elementary Level in West Bengal

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ABSTRACT

Since time immemorial of ancient values are the salient feature in education and human life. Education is like a pregnant woman and in her womb the values are nurtured. But in the present society, the mass erosion of values has tempted the intelligentsia to think over the importance of value and its propagation through education in a systematic manner. The attempt in West Bengal in this respect goes back to 2011 when the newly formed government has given importance to value education in its renewed curriculum for elementary education. The present study aims at investigating the values reflected in the contemporary curriculum of elementary level and their reflection in the text books of vernacular. Primary source of the study is all vernacular text books up to class VIII focused on only Bengali text books. The major findings were observed that 54 no's of values should remain in elementary level and 34 no of values are in the contemporary Bengali vernacular text books.

The researcher of the present study wants to investigate the value system as incorporated in Elementary Education of West Bengal, particularly in the vernacular literature books recognized by West Bengal Board of Primary Education and WBSE meant for class I to VIII. The researcher will use techniques like content analysis approach to analyse and interpret data.

Keywords: Human Values, Vernacular Text books, Elementary Level.

1.Introduction:

During the time of Vidyasagar (1820-1891) it has been noticed that to imbibe moral values among children he incorporated moral text books in school syllabus because he believed unless a child is provided with moral education he is never going to attain complete mental and social apprehensiveness. Simultaneously, he also introduced imaginary stories into their curriculum with a hope to familiarize them with language and to attain reading and writing skills along with the development of his mind because child is the future of a nation. Today education system is mainly dependent on definition or rote learning instead of their practical usage in life. According to value frame work, even young learners hardly understand why they are in school, why they are studding different subjects and how their schooling will be helpful to them. Their understanding is limited to learning the subjects. They hardly know how the welfare of the country, care about the environment and other social and moral issues. They are not clear as to what sort of person they hope to become when they complete their school education. (Education for values in school- A Frame work 2012, P-3)

Today's young learners are the good citizens and navigators of tomorrow. But today's modernized realist city, globalization, social media have played very influential roles in the lives of the children or younger's resulting in harsh consequences giving rise to loneliness, indulgence in unwanted activities which does not lead one to be a good citizen. According to primary education system and its curriculum of 1979, a child can not only grow up to a creative person but also a sound citizen on this law based society. Human development is equipped with different elements viz body knowledge, activity and emotion. By following these principles, we can say that mother tongue is the only medium to achieve wisdom, thought detainment and general arithmetic knowledge to create an exploitation free democratic country. So, here in conjunction with science and it has been also observed that mother tongue imbibes children with a positive outlook and mental conscience:

- The attribution of industrious people has led to an advanced human civilization and human resource.
- Sense of magnitude to one's work.
- A sense of patriotism at an evolves though fraternity and love for mankind.
- A respectful attitude should be shown towards democracy.
- Artistic sense leads to ethical development.

Report of the **Primary Education Syllabus Committee-1978** (P-9) Even a democracy cannot survive for long time without support of an extra political normative moral order (Chowdhary, 2005, p-30) with the help of word a child gets a good understanding of the world. By reading books they equally gain pleasure of recognition and joy of understanding and through this we get a ting of their cultural others and moral ethics which gets reflected in their behaviors.

According to NCERT, 'Value should not be treated as ideal concepts but empowering tools which are helpful in meeting the challenges of the contemporary social world be it religious fundamentalism, environmental degradation, multicultural conflicts, misuses of sentence, and technology, inequalities, ill effects of mass media globalization, commercialization and so on. The very nature of value education implies empowering the students with certain attitudes and skill as well as giving them critical abilities to use them in the contemporary everyday would full of myriad challenges. (Education for values in schools – A Framework, 2012, p-5)

With the change of government in 1977, in West Bengal the government with the increasing demand of population established primary education community based on modern and realistic ethic whose aim was to change the old pattern of curriculum and use mother tongue as the mode of instruction to ensure full development of students. In the year 1981, West Bengal primary education council published a book entitled 'kishaloy', an introductory book for letters. This book brought a vital change in the educational pattern. The book descent deal with any moral teachings in particular nut the ethical values are truly submerged in its subject inspiring the minute feelings of the learners.

Again, as per the draft report of school curriculum and syllabus 2011, the new government proposed- the ethic based education should not be confirmed only to a few school text books but also should have some real practical applications in everyone's lives. Hence, the community thinks the teacher's outlook and their effort is the only thing responsible for the implementation of this value education. The books and curriculum designed for primary and upper primary level students by the West Bengal primary education council gains emphasis on ethical values also importance has been given to concept based learning, ability to problem solving, ability to in physical mental coordination in accordance with the standard I (class i) students whereas the curriculum has been formulated in such a way that it will on its own build a sense of cooperation, sharing, in children to become a complete member of the society.(p.29-30)

The objectives of the Study is to identify the values to be reflected in the curriculum as recommended by the experts and to investigate the values whether the values recommended by the experts are really reflected in the textbooks or not.

2. Methodology:

The qualitative research approach was used by the researchers as it was the most appropriate design for this research. Document analysis was conducted on first objective and content analysis for second objective was employed by the researchers to collect the data from important documents and texts.

2.1 Source of Data:

The sources of data of the present study was collected from Existing Primary Sources and secondary sources. The primary sources were Bengali Text Books (class-I to VIII) of WBBPE and WBBSE various educational reports and documents and the Secondary Sources were- reference books, journals etc.

2.2 Tools:

The researcher used a self made opinionnaire for the present study.

2.3 Data analysis procedure:

Qualitative data analysis procedures were followed here in the following ways:

Step 1: The researchers have been identified some valuable educational Reports and documents related to values for making value list.

Step-2: Based on the experts' opinion the suitable values have been selected.

Step-3: Again based on the expert's opinion the suitable values have been selected for the vernacular text books at Elementary level.

Step-4: After getting the final value sheet from 5 no of experts the researchers have compiled the final value list.

Step 5: Values identified by the content analysis have been listed of each text.

Step 6: Specific codes have been identified and also the values have been identified from those codes.

Step 7: identified values and their number have been listed.

3. Analysis and interpretation:

Achievement of Objectives (i) to identify the values to be reflected in the curriculum as recommended by the experts. The present researchers were identified some important words from the texts like:

1. Report of the Education Commission 1964-66 (Kothari Commission)
2. Report of the Primary Education Syllabus Committee-1978 (known as Himangshu Bimal Majumder committee, WB),
3. Prathomik Sikshar Sikshakrom O Pathyasuchi-2003. (in Bengali)
4. National Curriculum Framework-2005
5. Draft report of expert committee on curriculum and Syllabus 2011 (W.B)
6. Education for values in schools- a framework (NCERT)-2012

From the above mentioned text the researchers have deciphered the words which he understood as related to values. The researchers have collected 132 no of words. Then he selected 5 no of experts and requested to give their opinion to select the values from the 132 no of value related words. Here those values that were considered by minimum 3 experts out of five have been taken for the study. The selected value list by experts is given below:

Table 1: list of values selected by the experts

SELECTED VALUES			
Sl. No.	Values	Sl. No.	Values
1	Abstinence	34	Kindness To Animal And Insect
2	Aesthetic Expression	35	Leadership
3	Affirmation Of Others Positive Qualities	36	Learning To Live Together
4	Altruism	37	Love For Family
5	Appreciation And Respect For Cultural Diversity	38	Love For Freedom
6	Appreciation Of Group/Team Working	39	Love For Society
7	Appreciation Of The Value Of Productive Work	40	Making Human Relationship
8	Bravery	41	Modesty
9	Cleanliness	42	Multiculturalism
10	Control Of Feelings And Emotions	43	National Consciousness
11	Cooperation	44	Non-Acceptance Of Untouchability
12	Courtesy	45	Non-Violence
13	Curiosity	46	Patience
14	Democratic Decision Making	47	Persistence
15	Devotion	48	Positive Thinking
16	Discipline	49	Punctuality
17	Dignity Of Manual Labour	50	Quest For Knowledge
18	Dutifulness	51	Religious Tolerance
19	Elegance	52	Respect For Mother Tongue
20	Empathy	53	Reverence For Seniors
21	Environmental Awareness	54	Self- Confidence
22	Faithfulness	55	Self-Dignity
23	Forgiveness	56	Sense Of Discrimination Between Good And Bad

24	Friendship	57	Sense Of Equality
25	Frugality In Consumption Of Resources	58	Simplicity In Conducts And Wants
26	Gender Equality	59	Sincerity
27	Generosity	60	Social Responsibility
28	Gratitude	61	Solidarity Of Mankind
29	Health Consciousness	62	Sympathy
30	Honesty	63	Tolerance
31	Joy Of Giving	64	Trust
32	Justice	65	Truthfulness
33	Kindness To Man	66	Unity

Then present researcher asked the opinion from the experts that which values should be reflected in the vernacular text books. After that on the basis of majority, the researchers compiled the final value list which is to be reflected in the mentioned texts.

Table 2: list of values recommended by the experts are to be reflected in the text books

Sl. No.	Values	Sl. No.	Values
1	Appreciation And Respect For Cultural Diversity	28	Democratic Decision Making
2	Appreciation Of Group/Team Working	29	Devotion
3	Empathy	30	Discipline
4	Faithfulness	31	Environmental Awareness
5	Friendship	32	Frugality In Consumption Of Resources
6	Gender Equality	33	Generosity
7	Honesty	34	Gratitude
8	Justice	35	Health Consciousness
9	Kindness To Animal And Insect	36	Joy Of Giving
10	Kindness To Man	37	Modesty
11	Leadership	38	Non-Acceptance Of Untouchability
12	Learning To Live Together	39	Non-Violence
13	Love For Family	40	Persistence
14	Multiculturalism	41	Religious Tolerance
15	National Consciousness	42	Respect For Mother Tongue
16	Positive Thinking	43	Simplicity In Conducts And Wants
17	Punctuality	44	Social Responsibility
18	Quest For Knowledge	45	Sympathy
19	Self- Confidence	46	Tolerance
20	Self-Dignity	47	Trust
21	Affirmation Of Others Positive Qualities	48	Truthfulness
22	Appreciation Of The Value Of Productive Work	49	Unity

23	Bravery	50	Aesthetic Expression
24	Control Of Feelings And Emotions	51	Altruism
25	Cooperation	52	Dignity Of Manual Labour
26	Courtesy	53	Love For Society
27	Curiosity	54	Sense Of Equality

Achievement of Objectives (ii) to investigate the values whether the values recommended by the experts are really reflected in the textbooks or not.

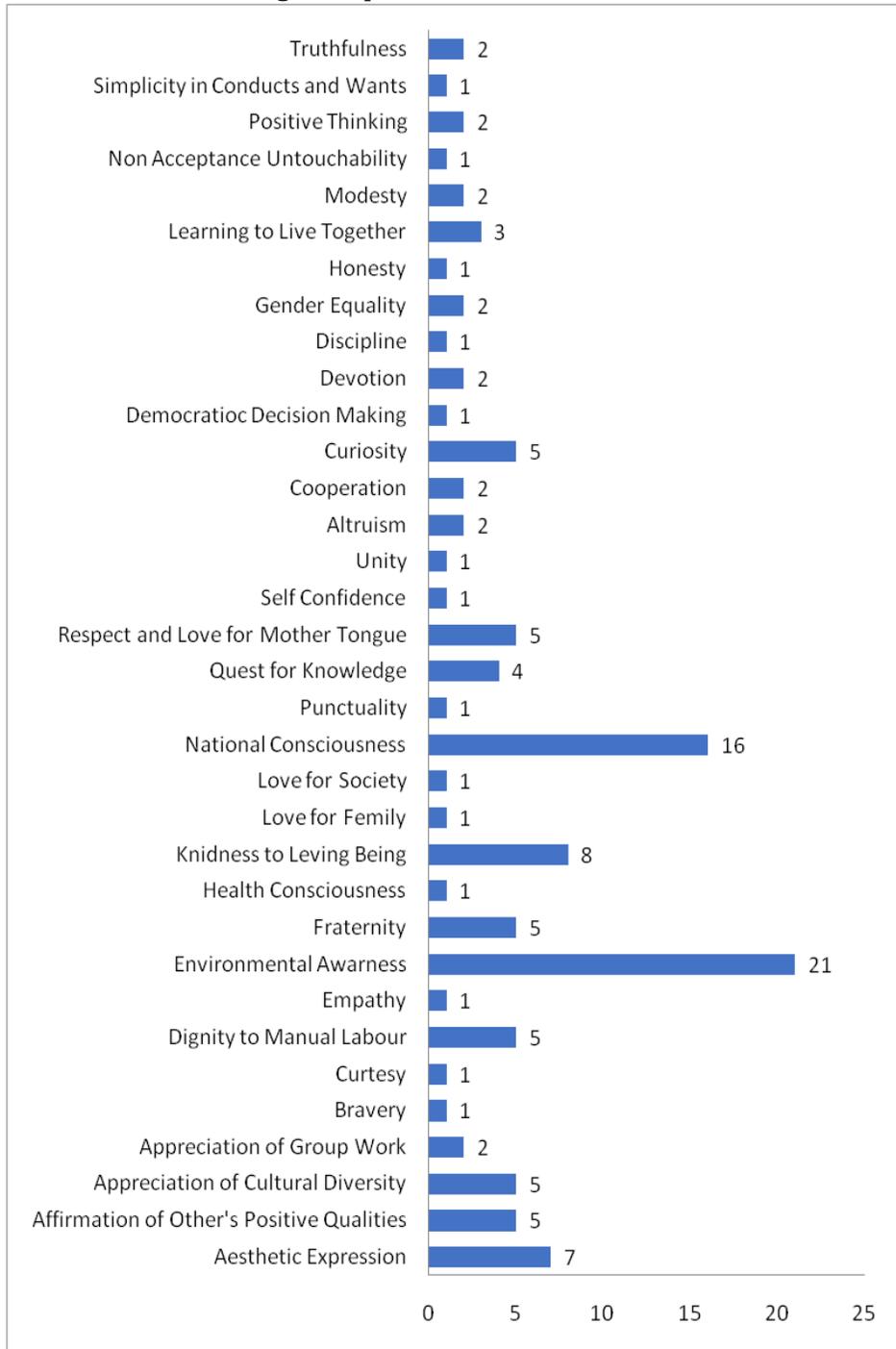
The content of the Bengali text books reflects different kind of values which are projected basically into poems, prose, rhymes, drama, songs, and essay. The researchers have mainly determined on the recommended values which are selected by the experts that contained in those books from class I to VIII. Here the researchers try to find out the values by content analysis. After that, researchers have identified only 34 no of values throughout the texts. Those values were reflected many times in different segment of content of those classes. The frequency of reflected values is given below:

Table 3: list of identified values in texts

Identified values					
Sl no	Reflected values in new texts	Total frequency	Sl no	Reflected values in new texts	Total frequency
1	Aesthetic Expression	7	18	Respect and Love for Mother Tongue	5
2	Affirmation of Other's Positive Qualities	5	19	Self-Confidence	1
3	Appreciation of Cultural Diversity	5	20	Unity	1
4	Appreciation of Group Work	2	21	Altruism	2
5	Bravery	1	22	Cooperation	2
6	Courtesy	1	23	Curiosity	5
7	Dignity to Manual Labour	5	24	Democratic Decision Making	1
8	Empathy	1	25	Devotion	2
9	Environmental Awareness	21	26	Discipline	1
10	Fraternity	5	27	Gender Equality	2
11	Health Consciousness	1	28	Honesty	1
12	Kindness to Living Being	8	29	Learning to Live Together	3
13	Love for Family	1	30	Modesty	2
14	Love for Society	1	31	Non Acceptance of untouchability	1
15	National Consciousness	16	32	Positive Thinking	2
16	Punctuality	1	33	Simplicity in Conducts and Wants	1
17	Quest for Knowledge	4	34	Truthfulness	2
	TOTAL	85		TOTAL	34
Grand total frequency =119					

Total 34 no of values are reflected 199 times from class I to VIII. The below following diagram shows the position of each value according to their frequency reflections:

Figure 1: position of each reflected values



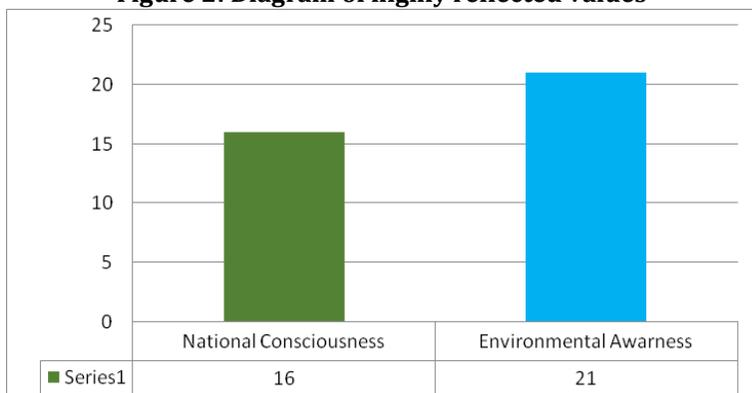
The above mentioned diagram shows the value frequencies which have been reflected in the text books. According to the frequency of values the researcher divided the values into three categories. Those are –

- a) Highly reflected values. (Frequency range: 10 to above)
- b) Moderately reflected values. (Frequency range: 5-10)
- c) Less reflected values. (Frequency range: 1-5)

a) Highly reflected values

Out of 34 values, those are reflected more than 10 and above times in The text books have been considered as highly reflected values.

Figure 2: Diagram of highly reflected values

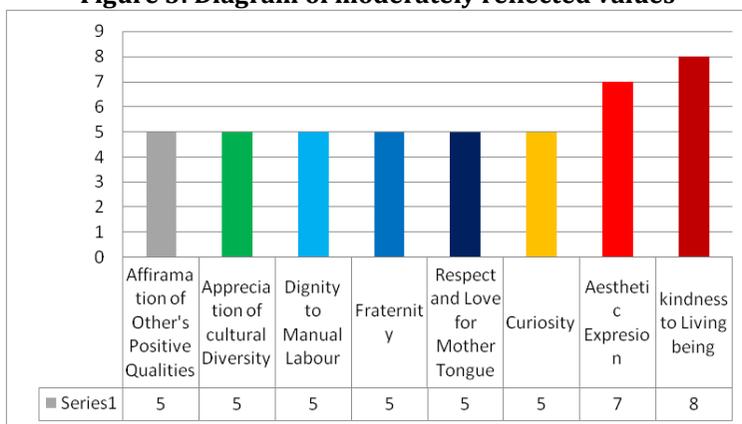


Here only two values i.e. National Consciousness and Environmental Awareness have been given maximum importance.

b) Moderately reflected values

Out of 34 values, the values which have the frequency ranging from 5 to 10 were considered as moderately reflected values. The values are presented in the following diagram.

Figure 3: Diagram of moderately reflected values

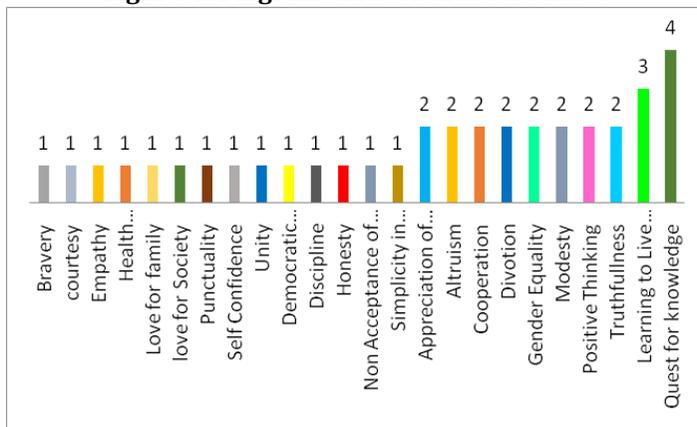


The above diagram shows that- Affirmation of Other’s Positive Qualities, Appreciation of Cultural Diversity, Dignity to Manual Labour, Fraternity, Respect and Love for Mother Tongue, Curiosity, Aesthetic Expression, and Kindness to Living Being are reflected throughout the Bengali text books of elementary level and as per their number of frequency considered as moderately reflected values.

c) Less reflected values:

Out of 34 values, the values which have the frequency less than 5 were considered as less reflected values. The values are presented in the following diagram.

Figure 4: Diagram of less reflected values



The above diagram shows that - Bravery, Courtesy, Empathy, Health Consciousness, Love for Family, Love for Society, Punctuality, Self-Confidence, Unity, Democratic Decision Making, Discipline, Honesty, Non Acceptance of untouchability, Simplicity in Conducts and Wants, Appreciation of Group Work, Altruism, Cooperation, Devotion, Gender Equality, Modesty, Positive Thinking, Truthfulness, Learning to Live Together, Quest for Knowledge are very less in the whole texts. As per the reflection of their number are considered as less reflected values.

5.1 Conclusion:

From the findings, the researcher found that every educational document or report emphasised on values. At elementary level only 34 values were reflected in the Bengali text books like National Consciousness and Environmental Awareness, Affirmation of Other's Positive Qualities, Appreciation of Cultural Diversity, and Dignity to Manual Labour, Fraternity, Respect and Love for Mother Tongue, Curiosity, Aesthetic Expression, and Kindness to Living Being, Bravery, Courtesy, Empathy, Health Consciousness, Love for Family, Love for Society, Punctuality, Self-Confidence, Unity, Democratic Decision Making, Discipline, Honesty, Non Acceptance of untouchability, Simplicity in Conducts and Wants, Appreciation of Group Work, Altruism, Cooperation, Devotion, Gender Equality, Modesty, Positive Thinking, Truthfulness, Learning to Live Together, Quest for Knowledge. But rest of the values were not found in the texts. The books those have been taught for the last five years, National consciousness and Environmental Awareness took more importance among all values at elementary stage. Both values are very important now a day. And only 8 values are in average stage. The frequency of those values which were more widely reflected was very low. Actually values gradually help the students to make a well mannered human or citizen. Value makes a good citizen and a good citizen is a vital part of healthy and democratic society. Lesson of literacy developed the mind of younger. Value education with literary text books makes student fit as a human being. In the era of the erosion of values, teacher should emphasis the values embedded in the text. They should utter the presence of the values in the text clearly and in their teaching such values should be inculcated among the learners. The teacher as a changing agent needs to go beyond the text books and syllabus to evoke values and link them to the world outside for a holistic development. Those values that have been reflected in the Bengali text books are undoubtedly play an important role in the development of the young learners.

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