THE ROLE OF VALUE EDUCATION IN STRENGTHENING PEACE & HUMAN RIGHTS

Ms. Hemani Patankar
SYBA, Department of Defense & Strategic Studies
PTVA's Sathaye College (Autonomous)

Lt Kasturi D Medhekar
Research Mentor, Department of Defense & Strategic Studies
PTVA's Sathaye College (Autonomous)

INTRODUCTION:

Peace and human rights are fundamental to the progress of any society. While legal systems protect these rights, lasting social harmony depends on the values individuals learn and practice daily. Value education develops essential qualities such as respect, empathy, tolerance, honesty, and responsibility traits that guide fair behaviour and discourage violence, exploitation, and discrimination. By shaping attitudes from an early age, it promotes cooperation, acceptance of diversity, and the moral courage to challenge injustice. In this way, value education becomes a foundation for building a peaceful, human-rights-oriented society.

Value education also aligns with global regimes that promote peace and human dignity. Frameworks such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the UNESCO Peace and Human Rights Framework, and International Humanitarian Law emphasize equality, dignity, justice, and non-violence. These same principles are central to value education. When educational systems internalize these values, individuals become aware of their rights, respect the rights of others, and contribute positively to peaceful and just social structures.

KEY WORDS: Value Education , Peace , Human Rights , Empathy , Diversity

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Research Papers:

1.   Askerov (2010) – Peace Education and Conflict Resolution: A Critical Review:

This research paper offers a foundational analysis of peace education as a tool for reducing conflict and strengthening nonviolent behaviour. He argues that peace education cultivates ethical value such as empathy and cooperation and shifts learners from reactive conflict responses to proactive peacebuilding. The review emphasizes peace education as both a conceptual and behavioural framework.

2.   Um e Rubab & Yousuf (2022) – Peace Education: An Effective Tool for Conflict Resolution

This empirical study uses survey methods to show that peace education enhances students' interpersonal skills, empathy, social harmony, and conflict-resolution abilities. The authors highlight peace education as a measurable and effective strategy for schools and communities, demonstrating clear improvements in learners' attitudes and communication skills.

3.   Sheikh (2023) – Peace Education: A Pathway to the Culture of Peace

In this paper it explores peace education as a means of building a "culture of peace." The work emphasizes diversity, tolerance, human rights, and cooperative learning. Sheikh argues that peace education strengthens not only individual behaviour but also community values and long-term cultural change.

4.   Um E Rubab et al. (2023) – *Promotion of Peace Education in Social Studies*

This qualitative study argues that integrating peace and human-rights themes into the social studies curriculum enhances students' ethical awareness and sense of responsibility. The authors show that structured lessons on justice, equality, and cooperation shape peaceful behaviours and encourage active citizenship.

Books

5.   Zajda & Daun – *Global Values Education: Teaching Democracy and Peace* (2009)

This book analyses how *values education* can strengthen democratic culture and peaceful coexistence. It examines school systems across different countries and argues that teaching values such as tolerance, respect, and cooperation helps reduce prejudice and encourages students to become responsible global citizens. The authors highlight that values education is essential for promoting multicultural understanding in increasingly diverse societies. They also discuss curriculum reforms and policy frameworks that support global peace education.

6.   Holland & Martin – *Human Rights Education and Peacebuilding* (2014)

Holland and Martin present comparative international case studies to show how *human rights education (HRE)* empowers marginalized communities. They argue that teaching human rights enhances ethical awareness and civic responsibility while promoting equality and justice. The book links HRE to long-term peacebuilding, explaining how human-rights- literate citizens are more capable of resolving conflict peacefully. It also explores classroom methods, community initiatives, and governmental programs that integrate human rights principles into education systems.

7.Hantzopoulos & Bajaj – *Educating for Peace and Human Rights* (2021)

This book focuses on practical strategies for embedding peace and human-rights education into everyday teaching. Using examples from schools worldwide, the authors emphasize participatory learning techniques: dialogue circles, project-based learning, critical pedagogy, and community engagement. They argue that peace and human rights education must be lived experiences not just theoretical lessons. The book also provides guidance for teachers on transforming classroom culture to encourage collaboration, reflection, and conflict resolution.

8.Packham, Taplin & Francis – *How Values Education Can Improve Student and Teacher Well-being* (2024)

This text shows how teaching core values such as empathy, respect, honesty, and responsibility directly improves emotional and social well-being in schools. It presents evidence that values education creates healthier classroom environments, strengthens relationships, reduces behavioural problems, and supports positive mental health for both students and teachers. The authors also outline the Education in Human Values (EHV) approach, offering practical steps for educators to integrate values-based activities, reflective practices, and character training into their routines.

9.Nugmanova, Mikkola, Rozanov & Komleva – *Education, Human Rights and Peace in Sustainable Development* (2020)

This book connects peace education with the broader agenda of *sustainable development*. It argues that educating students about ethics, human rights, environmental responsibility, and global citizenship contributes to peaceful and stable societies. The authors show how human rights and peace education support the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those related to justice, strong institutions, and quality education. They also examine policy frameworks and international initiatives that integrate peace and sustainability into national education systems.

Article:

10.UNESCO (2024) – *Human Rights Education: Key Success Factors*

It reports synthesizes global best practices in human-rights education. It concludes that human-rights teaching significantly improves learners' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. The report emphasizes institutional support, teacher training, and interactive essential for promoting peace and ethical conduct in educational systems worldwide.

OBJECTIVIES:

1.   To develop core human values such as respect, empathy, honesty, and tolerance that guide individuals toward fair and non-violent behaviour.
2.   To promote appreciation of diversity and respect for human dignity by shaping positive attitudes from an early age.
3.   To strengthen peace in society by encouraging individuals to uphold and protect human rights in their daily lives.

HYPOTHESIS:

• H1: Learning values enables students and individuals to develop peaceful and cooperative behaviours.

• H2: Value education promotes respect for the rights and dignity of others.

• H3 :Acquiring core values strengthens empathy, helping people understand and respond positively to diverse perspectives.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study uses a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative data were gathered from books, academic papers, reports, and digital sources on value education, peacebuilding, and human rights. Key documents from UNESCO and OHCHR were examined to understand global frameworks and standards. Quantitative data were collected through Google Form surveys from participants of different ages and professional backgrounds. The study analyses both literature and survey responses to assess the role of value education in promoting ethical behaviour, non-violence, social harmony, and responsible citizenship.

DATA ANALYSIS:

The study included 139 participants from varied educational and professional backgrounds. Respondents ranged from 17 to 65 years, with a major concentration between the ages of 18– 23. This diversity helped capture perspectives from students, young adults, professionals, Teachers, officers and older participants, offering a comprehensive understanding of how value education is perceived across generations.

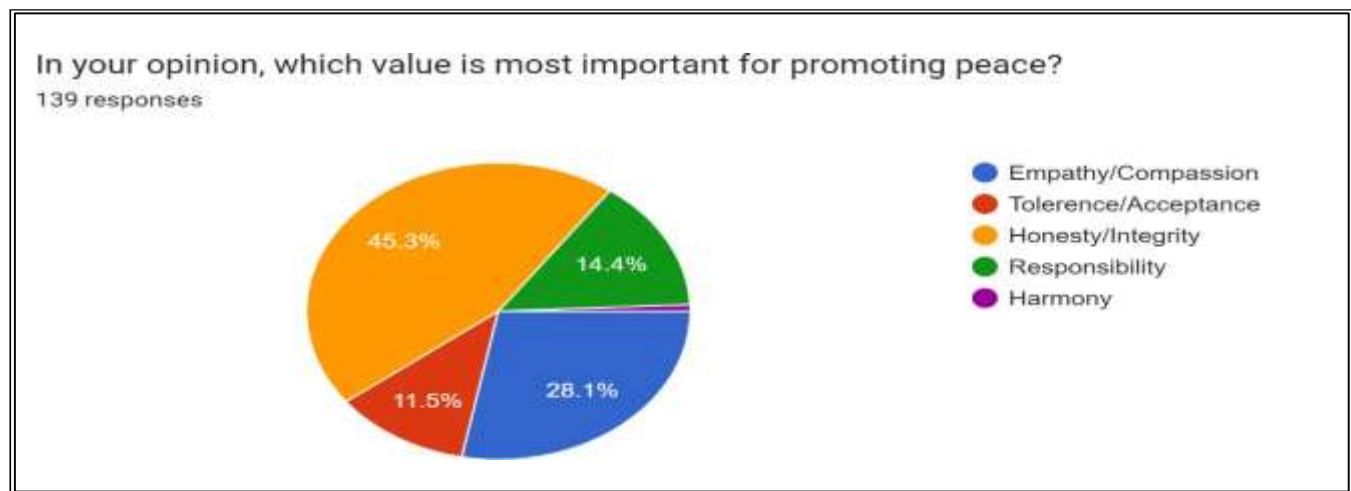How familiar are you with the concept of value education?
139 responses
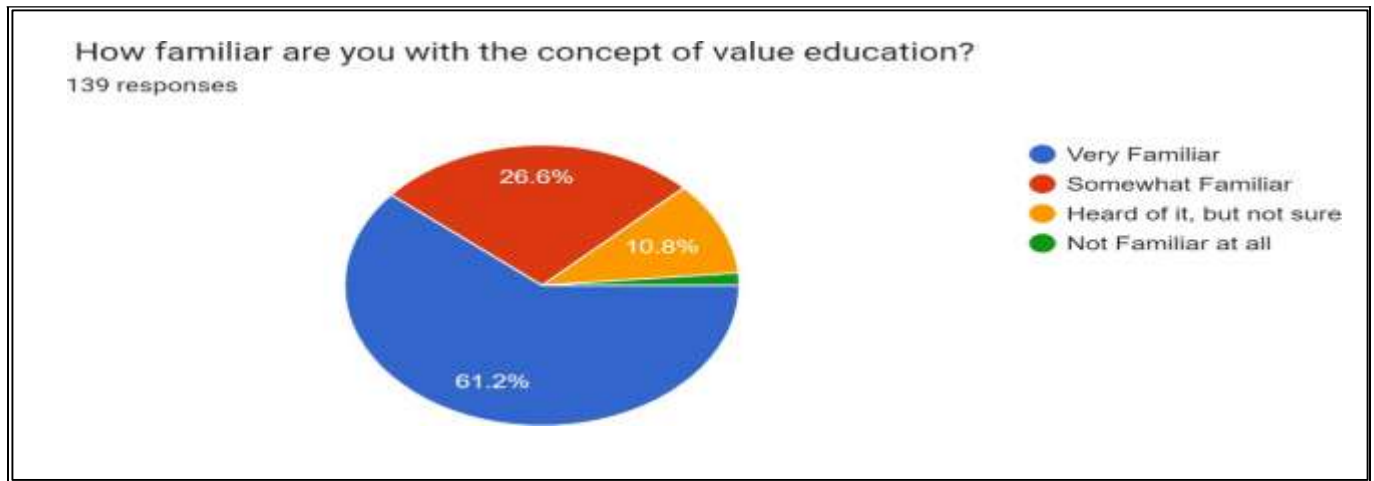
Q.1. Most participants showed high familiarity, while a smaller group had moderate awareness, and only a few had low understanding of the concept. Overall, awareness is strong with a minor gap in deeper understanding.

Have you received any form of value education in school, college, or workplace?
139 responses
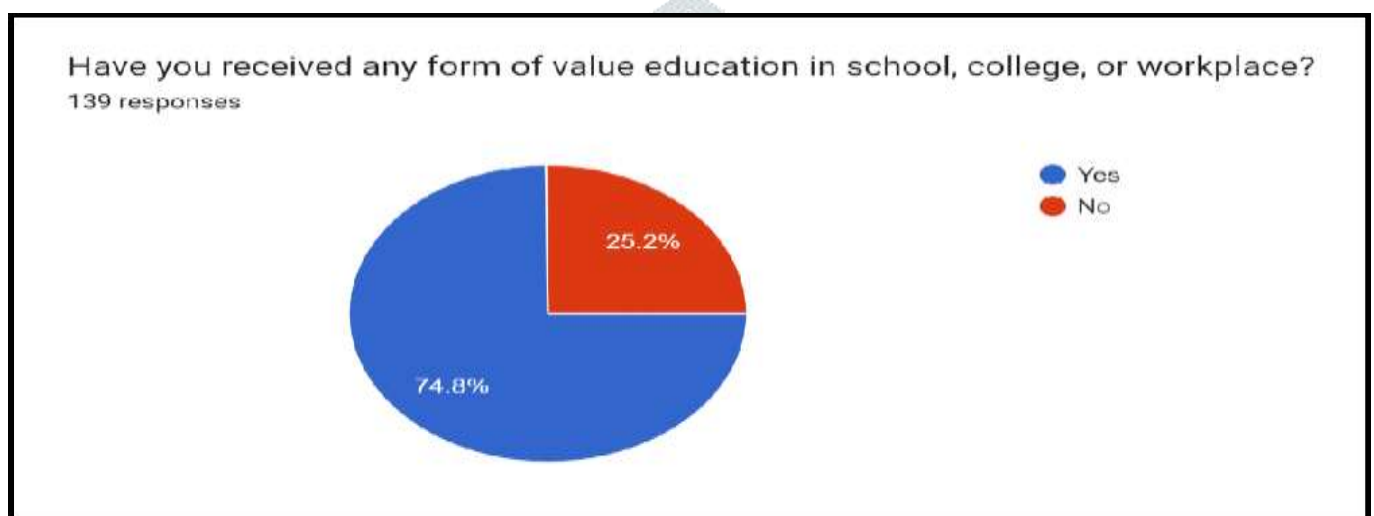
Q.2. A large majority had received value education in school, college, or the workplace, while a smaller portion reported no exposure. This shows growing inclusion but still uneven implementation.

How often do you practice the values learned through education in your daily life?
139 responses
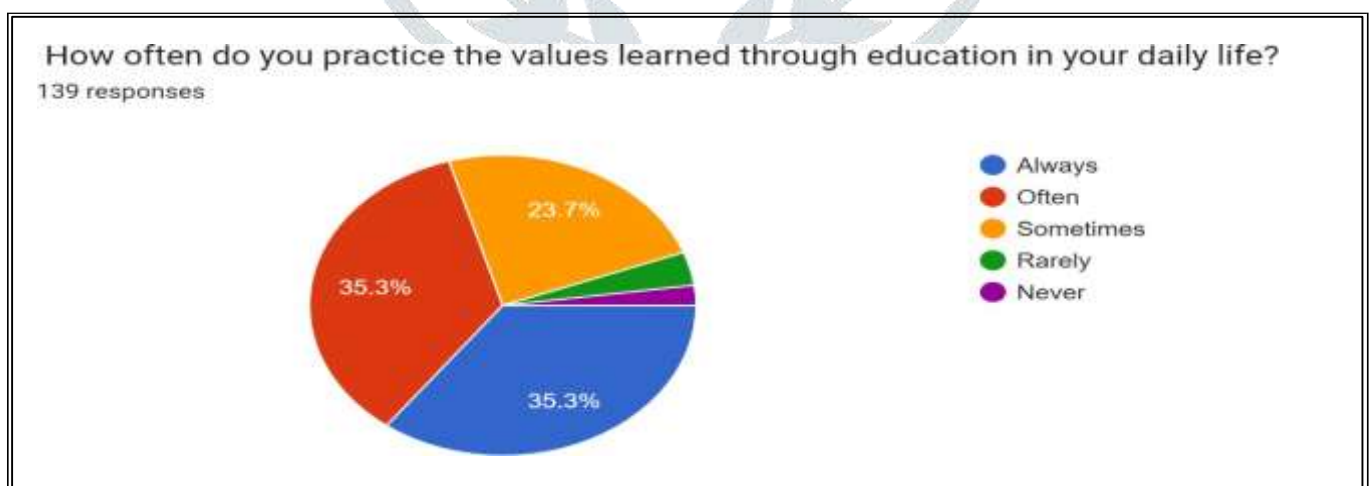
Q.3.Most respondents regularly practice the values they learned, some practice them occasionally, and very few rarely use them. This suggests value education influences daily behaviour.

In your opinion, which value is most important for promoting peace?
139 responses

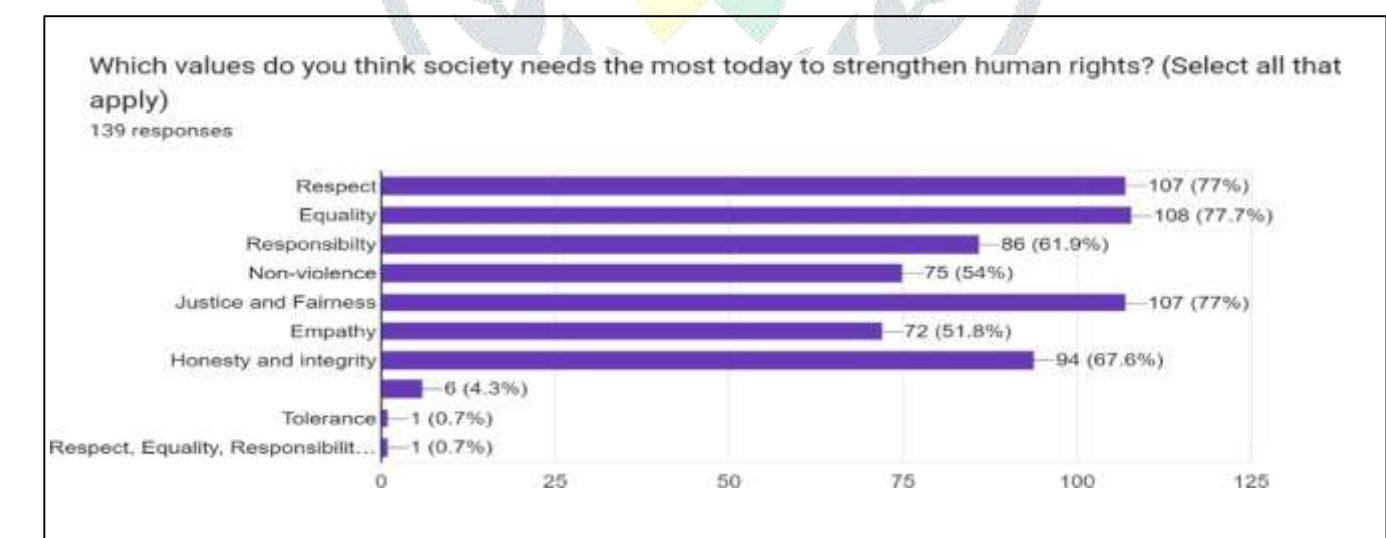- Empathy/Compassion
- Tolerence/Acceptance
- Honesty/Integrity
- Responsibility
- Harmony

Q.4.Honesty and integrity were the most preferred, followed by empathy and responsibility, with fewer choosing tolerance or harmony. This reflects the belief that peace relies on ethical conduct and sincerity.

Which international regime do you know is most supported or strengthened by value education?
139 responses

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child(UNCRC)
- UNESCO Peace and Human Rights Framework
- International Humanitarian Law
- No idea
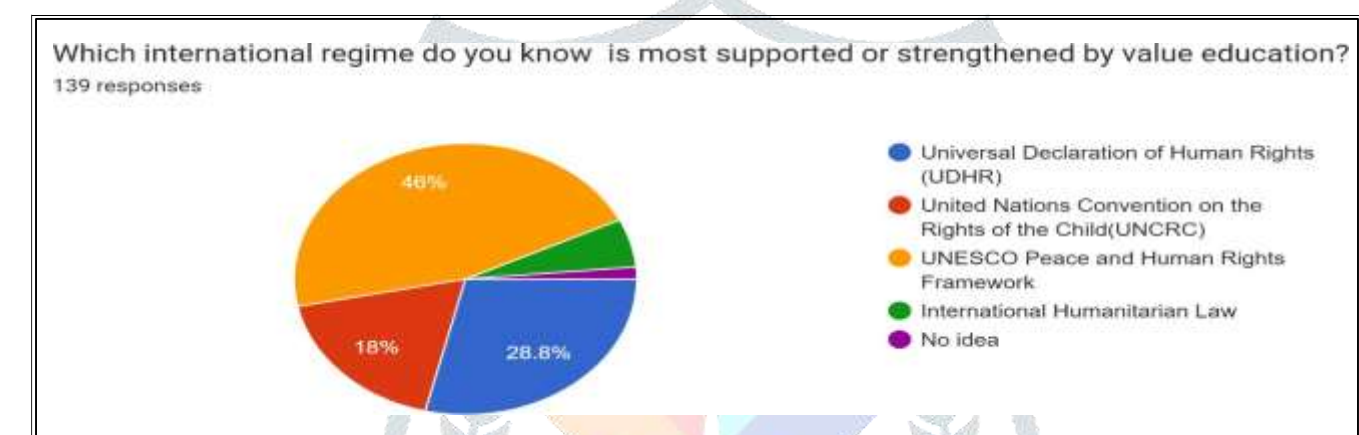
Q.5.Most respondents associated value education with UNESCO's peace and human-rights framework, followed by other major human-rights documents. This shows awareness of its global relevance.

Which values do you think society needs the most today to strengthen human rights? (Select all that apply)
139 responses

Value	Count
Respect	107 (77%)
Equality	108 (77.7%)
Responsibilty	86 (61.9%)
Non-violence	75 (54%)
Justice and Fairness	107 (77%)
Empathy	72 (51.8%)
Honesty and integrity	94 (67.6%)
	6 (4.3%)
Tolerance	1 (0.7%)
Respect, Equality, Responsibilit...	1 (0.7%)

Q.6.Equality, respect, and justice were highly emphasized, along with honesty and responsibility. Participants clearly believe moral values are essential for protecting human rights.

**Do you think value education helps in reducing conflicts in society?**
139 responses

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

46.8% — 9.4% — 41.7%
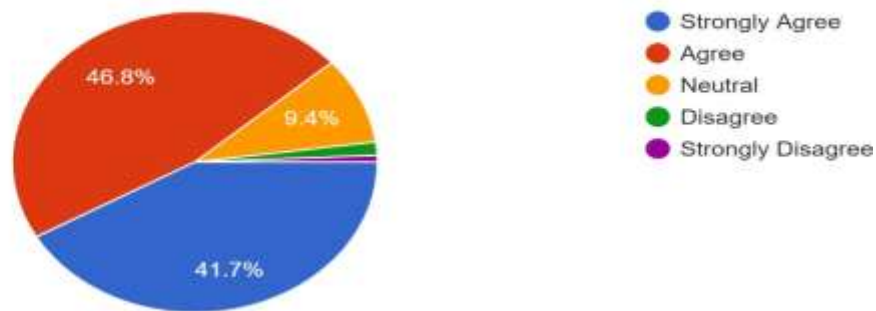
Q.7.The majority agreed that value education reduces conflicts by promoting understanding and peaceful behaviour, with very few disagreeing.

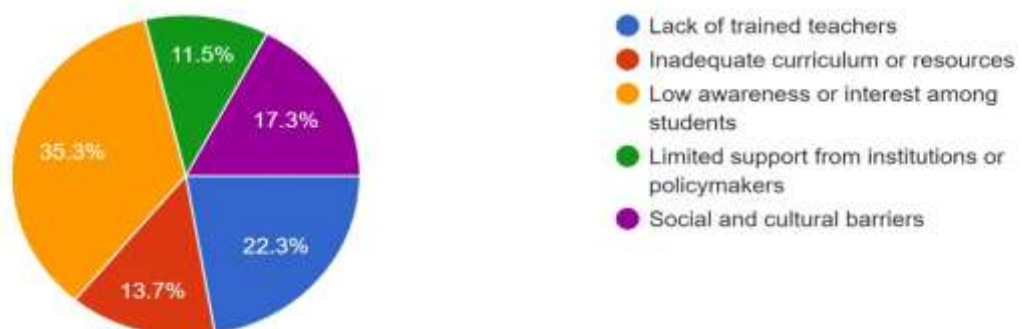**How important is it to include value education in school or college curricula?**
139 responses

- Very Important
- Important
- Neutral
- Less Important
- Not Important

34.5% — 61.9%
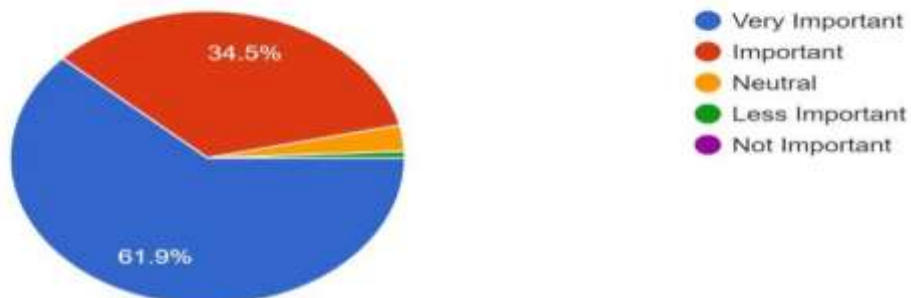
Q.8. Most respondents felt it is very important or important to include value education in academic curricula, showing strong support for its integration.

What do you think is the biggest challenge in effectively implementing value education in society?
139 responses

- Lack of trained teachers
- Inadequate curriculum or resources
- Low awareness or interest among students
- Limited support from institutions or policymakers
- Social and cultural barriers

11.5% — 17.3% — 35.3% — 22.3% — 13.7%

Q.9.These findings highlight Low awareness or low student interest, followed by lack of trained teachers, social and cultural barriers, and limited resources. This points to the need for better training and improved curriculum support.

Q.10. Respondets opinion on sharing their experience in applying values learned through education to promote peace or support human rights:

Respondents agreed that value education plays a key role in promoting peace and human rights. Students noted

that values like empathy, honesty, and responsibility help them resolve conflicts and treat others fairly. Professionals applied these values at work to support ethical decisions and teamwork. Some participants also engaged in social initiatives to promote equality and justice. Overall, value education was seen as strengthening society by encouraging ethical behaviour and respect across different settings.

FINDINGS:

- Most students and young adults are aware of value education; older professionals show deeper practical understanding.
- Almost all participants agreed that value education promotes peace, ethics, and human rights.
- Key values identified: honesty, empathy, responsibility, equality, and justice
- Implementation exists but is uneven; some participants lack structured exposure.
- Most apply values in daily life, though social and cultural challenges can limit consistency.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Integrate value education consistently in curricula.
- Train teachers/faculty for effective delivery.
- Encourage practical application through community and workplace programs.
- Address social and cultural barriers to promote inclusivity.
- Use digital tools to make value education accessible and engaging.

CONCLUSION:

The study shows that value education is widely understood and valued across groups. Participants highlighted its role in promoting peace, ethics, and human rights. Despite some gaps in exposure and social challenges, support for including it in curricula remains strong. Improved teacher training and modern teaching methods are seen as necessary. Overall, value education is viewed as essential for shaping responsible and socially aware individuals.

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