

## **ROLE OF MORAL VALUES AND ETHICS IN TODAY'S YOUTH**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Most of us think that they hardly encounter a youth with moral values and ethics (good manners) in this era. If any boy or girl showing good manners or proper decorum is always well noticed. It has been rightly stated that the future of any nation rests on the shoulders of today's youths. So the leaders of tomorrow must have truthfulness, tolerance and cooperation, Respect for human life, dignity of persons, harmony, loyalty, patient, generous, honesty, loyalty, fairness, integrity, personality, attitude, and behavior. We can say that they must have Moral Values and Ethics. Moral is the customs established by group of individuals whereas ethics defines the character of an individual. Morals are the social, cultural and religious beliefs or values which tell us what is right or wrong. Ethics deals with the principles of conduct of an individual or group. Through this work we have found that the new generation is not really lacking their moral values and ethics but these are just changes as per demand of the society or time. We have also found what are the role of parents and teachers in inculcating moral values and ethics to their children and the younger generation as well as impact of social media, peers and education. As youth get prepared for future leadership roles in every field; it is pertinent to obtain moral standards and values that will shape them into personalities ready to lead for the progress of the society. Youth need to realized that they are be committed to imbibing moral values and ethics upholding them through life as these values will shape the ways they think, speak and even act. This paper is a study of factors which are changing moral values and ethics in youth.

**Keywords:** *Proper decorum, Youth, Moral value, Acquire, Morality, Philosophy, Pertinent, Harmony, Integrity.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

It has been stated and rightly said that the future of any nation rests on the shoulders of youth of today as they will eventually become the leaders of tomorrow. Leadership is an art as well as an activity through which the affairs of humans. In the society are directed in line with the attainment of goals. As youth get prepared for their role in leadership; it is important to get moral

standards and values that will shape them into personalities and make them ready to lead for the advancement of the society. The youth are the drivers of any developmental trend and activity in society and major determinants of the extent of growth and development in any given society. Youth is usually very energetic and are always willing to go the extra mile if needed. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010) defines youth as "the time of life when a person is young especially the time before a child becomes an adult". Youth is actually very idealistic as they are taught right from childhood to value "unchanging" ideals such as justice, fairness and equality; brought upon a culture that promotes ideals and "idea of permanence".

We generally encounter moral and ethical issues, in our day to day life. What are moral values and ethics? These two defines the personality, attitude, and behavior of a person. Being moral or being morally conscious means adopting standards or principles to guide one's actions and conduct in society. First we all need to understand what morality and moral education are? Morality is derived from the Latin word mores which means "manners" or "morals". It is a program of study which teaches the pupil about behaving in accordance with what is good while rejecting the bad. It is a holistic approach to inspire character building and moral development (Okoh; 2003).

Morals are the traditions or we can say the way of life which is established by group of individuals whereas ethics define the character of an individual. While morals are concerned with values, principles, main beliefs of right and wrong, ethics are related to right and wrong conduct of an individual in a particular situation. Many use the two terms as synonyms, but there are slight different.

### **CHANGES IN THE SOCIETY**

Youths, do not need to follow the path of destruction by not being morally conscious but can make a difference in their society by doing what is right. We all have choices in life, always; and we all are always a product of our choices. What we choose can make or ruin us. Youth of today surely can make a difference in their societies by only standing out of the crowd and perpetuating moral values.

With civilization a lot of changes have took place both positively as well as negatively. But moral decadence and laxity was the one negative change that came with the dawn of the new era. That new changing society has witnessed a fall in moral standards and as well as an increased interest in enjoyment and gratification as contrasting to more serious things.

Youth must learn to appreciate the differences, put up other's weaknesses and pull together each other's strengths to work together. They need to develop tolerance power and cooperation ability in themselves, which means being receptive towards others' differences and simply identified as team work. It requires both mutual understanding resulting from mutual respect as well as mutually beneficial relations

## **RESPECT**

Respect is an acknowledgement of the inherent worth and innate rights of the individual and collectivity (Isichei and Bolaji; 2010). The value of respect was cherished in the past, especially respect for elders.

Changing is the universal phenomena. We all know that society is changing from simple to complex and traditional to modern societies; so everything is changing like- people, values, trends and activities etc. Along with the changing and developing societies, values have also continued to change to costume the changing world which has brought in an increased wave of moral decadence and moral slackness in today's societies.

It is always supposed that elders are more knowledgeable and wiser than young persons. That's why they deserve respect, as they comported themselves in conducts worthy of imitation. Respect comes with honor and dignity as the individual or group of individuals are regarded as important personalities in their own rights.

Youths are usually referred to as young person's but judging from the above age brackets, specific ages cannot be given for a person to be identified as a youth. Youths require to be morally ready in order to develop themselves first and then society.

## **ETIQUETTE**

Think about it. When was the last time you saw someone demonstrating proper decorum? Unfortunately, in today's society we are continuously deluged with examples of bad manners. Social norms have changed so much that now it's the kids with good manners that get noticed. Breaches of etiquette plague all facets of our society. Youth show a lack of respect and courtesy to their peers and to adults. Recently, college etiquette classes have developed to correct the error of their student's social ways. We need to impart them expected protocol at an earlier age so they have more time to improve their self-esteem and exceed society's social expectations. The problem is, very few adults take the time to teach their children proper etiquette. Etiquette can help youth of all ages avoid social blunders that can offend others and cause them embarrassment.

## **MORAL VALUES**

Certainly the moral value in today's generation is lacking and generation will be confused about their ethics. In general morals are mostly about being a good person and treating others well. Even the most principled and dedicated parents sometimes find that their teenagers do not show appropriate manners, etiquettes, moral values and self-discipline. In my opinion, they all are behaving according to the values of their time, of this new changed societies. But at some level These undisciplined and amoral behaviors can stalk from several causes, both biological and

environmental. Attentive parenting and in more severe cases, professional interference, can help teenagers reach their full potential, however.

Thus, teenagers do not have the same ability for reasoned decision-making and self-discipline as adults. Likewise, moral development is a process that keep on throughout adolescence. Teenagers, and in particular, young teens, are not developed mentally and biologically to exercise moral reasoning like an adult or older adolescent. Thus, some degree poor decision-making skills and amoral behavior is normal.

Although teenagers may not have the same decision-making capacity as adults, but at certain level parental influence can affect the way a teen behaves and makes choices. In particular, parental behavior plays an important role in how teenagers make decisions. For example, if a teenager sees his parents acting impulsively or making poor choices such as neglecting household responsibilities or skipping work, the teen might believe that he is entitled to make similar choices. Similarly, parents or caregivers abuse or neglect children, they may develop immoral or impulsive behaviors (Child Welfare Information Gateway).

### **PEER INFLUENCE**

During the adolescent years, peer inspirations play an important role in teenagers' choices. Because peer acceptance is a crucial part of most teens' sense of self and increasing need to separate from the family system, adolescents sometimes base their choices on their friends' opinions, rather than what is morally right or responsible (American Psychological Association). Generally, teenagers will outgrow this type of behavior as they reach adulthood. Additionally, media, television and celebrity influences them a lot. In most of teenagers cases these celebrities are their role model or ideals and they follow them, try to copy them in everything without knowing the real meaning of the words like ideal/role model. Their behavior can affect a teen's behavior, particularly if they do not have strong role models.

Teenagers with more severe mental health issues can also display poor moral values and a lack of self-discipline. For example, teens with conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder or teens who were abused as children may show little empathy for others and make poor choices and have difficulty controlling their impulses. In order to ensure and secure moral values, teachers and parents play a vital role and need to take initiative in helping them to be a true citizen with moral values.

### **PARENTING**

Moral value is really diminishing in today's generation. In this busy parents have no time for that and also children were engaged in the studies and they are also in the busy schedule. So they will grow up with only one motive, to make money. They won't get a chance to spend time together. All parents want to give good education to their children, but unfortunately/unwillingly

overlooking the moral values. If today children are not given the moral teachings; tomorrow's world will be worse than today's.

Moral values are subject to principles. These may also be time and space specific. Today's generation has a different scale by which they calibrate moral values. The moral values have also undergone subtle changes with modernity. Good manners reinforce good moral values. Antisocial behavior results in absence of moral values. However, would be an unfair to state that the new generation lack moral values. There are many good people like, parents and teachers, who have succeeded in imparting good moral values to their children and the younger generation. The responsibility of inculcating moral values lies with the older generation. We have learnt from our earlier generation and likewise it is us who should be doing the same. Now the point is that if the younger generation is willing to imbibe the values? I think here lays the crux of the problem. Yes, the parents, elders and teachers and those having experience of life, should not only preach but also practice moral values; which sadly is glaringly lacking with us.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The family which is the base structure of every society must begin to right their wrongs with regards to restructuring their value systems because most youths learn from the elders in their families and if truly there has to be a positive change in society, the family must play its role as the major primary agent of socialization in the society.
2. Government and other authorities especially in leadership positions must see themselves as role models for young persons and begin to be responsible adults. They have to realize that the future of tomorrow depends on the foundations laid today and youths cannot become trusted leaders if they cannot follow in trust.
3. Youths must encourage themselves by interacting with one another and creating social networks that can easily strengthen them when faced with discouraging attitudes about moral issues. This can be brought about the institution of a strong and practical moral base founded on principles that work.
4. The national goals for the teachings of national consciousness and its unity and the teachings of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual can become a reality if they adopt moral values.

## **CONCLUSION**

Its individual's principles which help him throughout his life to cope up with any confrontational situation; they are known as ethics. On the other hand, Morals are not the hard and fast rules or very rigid, but they are the rules which a majority of people consider as right. That is the main reason people widely accept them. This is all for differentiating between Morals from Ethics. But moral values are based on observations of right and wrong, whereas social values may also include ideas about things being socially acceptable. However, the youth do not find anything wrong or change in their morals and ethics. They think they all behave accordingly, which is not

at all wrong. Those moral and social values and ethics of our time have not ended or missed, in fact, they are there but they have changed a lot according the need/ demand of this modern society and modern time. Social values are often based on things like majority rule and tradition. “We’ve always done it this way.” somehow equates to “This is the good and righteous way to do it.” Moral values are usually based on religious and/or philosophical bodies of belief.

Youths are always major factors of the level of expansion in any society. Without youths, there can be no sustenance of society. Realizing this, young people ought to know their importance and worth in society and begin to value themselves as purveyor of the fortune and progress of any society. Youths need to realize that they are committed to imbibing moral values and ethics upholding them through life as these values will shape the ways they think, speak and even act. Youths can be the representatives of changes in their societies and become “lights in perceived darkness” to show the way forward for nations to become truly prosperous, developed and functional.

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