

National Conference on Value Initiatives in Institutions of Higher Learning: Key to Youth Empowerment

DISHA Charitable Trust for Value Initiatives, a non-profit social initiative headquartered at Bengaluru and Maharani Lakshmi Ammanni College for Women (MLACW), Malleswaram conducted a 2- day national conference on “Value Initiatives in Institutions of Higher Learning: Key to Youth Empowerment.” The conference was held on 3rd and 4th February, 2015 at MLACW and Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONFERENCE

- **H.E.Vajubhai Vala**, The Governor of Karnataka **inaugurated** the conference
- Rev. **Swami Atmapriyanandaji Maharaj** gave the **keynote address** for the program
- **Sri.Anant Kumar**, Hon. Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers sent a message for the conference to be successful
- **12 Vice Chancellors** were an active part of the Conference
- **Sri.M.N.Venkatachalaiah**, Former Chief Justice of India was the **Chief Guest for the Valedictory Program**
- **Padma Bhushan Awardee Dr.M.B.Athreya** gave the **concluding remarks** for the program
- **Over 300 educationists** from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and other parts of the nation participated along with **delegates from the USA**.
- **Over 800 participants** were a part of the **2nd day of the National Conference**.

DAY 1

Inauguration



The conference was inaugurated on 3rd February 2015 at MLACW by His Excellency Sri Vajubhai R. Vala, the Hon. Governor of Karnataka. Speaking on this occasion, the Hon. Governor said, “If there are attempts to bring in Indian values in education, then a section of people will criticize it as Saffronisation of education. If it is Saffronisation of education, then there is nothing wrong in it.”

He also said, “The student today has information from all corners, but from where will he imbibe values? Therefore, there is a need for value education to be a part of the modern-day education system which currently focuses only on bestowing literacy and knowledge of technology. It is important to inculcate the eternal values of universal love and brotherhood as enunciated in the concept of ancient sayings such as ‘Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Krunvanto Vishwamaryam or Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.’”



The Hon. Governor lauded the power of youth and exhorted them to focus on character building and inculcating values of courage and integrity instead of spending time and money on cosmetics, fashion items and unnecessary luxuries. He stressed on the need to read about the life and teachings of inspiring leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhai Patel and Bhagat Singh who sacrificed their lives in the service of the nation. “Today we all have to understand and practice the sentence Satyam Vada-Dharmam

Chara, which means one must speak the truth and follow the path of righteousness. Simple living and high thinking is the need of the hour,” added the Hon. Governor.

On this occasion, the Hon. Governor also released a compendium on the conference theme.

Prof. N. V. Raghuram, President, S-VYASA and President, Yoga-Bharati, USA and President, DISHA, delivered the presidential address. He pointed out that the entire world is looking towards India for moral and spiritual guidance and underscored the role of organizations like DISHA in this endeavour.



The keynote address was delivered by Swami Atmapriyanandaji Maharaj, the Vice Chancellor of Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University, Kolkata. Quoting examples and verses from the scriptures, Swamiji drew attention to the fact that self-enquiry and a scientific spirit have always been the edifice of all ancient wisdom. He underscored the need for education to be directed towards understanding the purpose of human life.

Technical Sessions

This was followed by technical sessions that saw presentations and a lively discussion on themes such as

- Holistic approach and policy initiatives to content development focusing on Indian values in the global context
- Traditional versus modern approaches towards delivering value education and their effectiveness and impact
- Use of information and communication technology in value education
- Subjective and objective methods of assessment and quality of value education
- New paradigms in assessing quality of value education

Eminent resource persons chaired and participated in these technical sessions. Notable among these were

- Dr. Jagmeet Bava, Head, Department of Human Values, Punjab Technical University, Jalandhar
- Sri Ramkrishna Rao, Vice President, Vidya Bharathi
- Dr. B. P. Sharma, President, Pacific University, Udaipur
- Dr. B. K. Kuthiala, Vice Chancellor, Makhnallal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication, Bhopal
- Smt. Meena Chandavarkar, Vice Chancellor, Karnataka State Women's University, Vijayapura, Karnataka
- Dr. Gururaja Karajagi, Director, Academy for Creative Teaching, Bengaluru
- Teams from NIMHANS and S-VYASA (Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana)



Paper Presentations

This was followed by paper presentations in 4 parallel sessions by 21 faculty members and Ph. D research



scholars representing reputed higher education institutions and non-governmental organizations across the country along with one paper from the USA. The chairpersons included Dr.Balakrishna Shetty(Vice Chancellor, Siddhaganga University),



Dr.S.C.Sharma(VC, Chattisgarh University), Dr.Ganesh Bhatta(Principal, MES Teachers Training College), Dr.K.S.Kannan(Ex-Director, Sanskrit University) who are eminent educationists.



Paper Presentation included papers from

- Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru
- M.S. Ramaiah Institute of Technology, Bengaluru
- KLE Society's Law College, Bengaluru
- PES College of Pharmacy, Bengaluru
- BMS College for Women, Bengaluru
- Presidency College, Bengaluru
- RV Institute of Management Sciences, Bengaluru
- Seshadripuram College, Bengaluru
- Manipal University
- Mysore University
- Jain College, Belagavi
- Swami Vivekananda Study Centre, Udupi
- Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Anantapur
- Sri Krishna Arts and Science College, Coimbatore
- Theivanai Ammal College for Women, Villupuram
- Sri Malolan College of Arts and Science, Madurantakam
- SCSVMV University, Kanchipuram
- PSGR Krishnammal College for Women, Coimbatore
- Essae Chandran Institute, Bengaluru
- Tribhuvan Holistic Healing Centre, Bengaluru
- Dharma Civilization Foundation, USA

The papers covered a wide spectrum of profound ideas and sought to highlight vital areas such as

- The pressing need for value education in institutions of higher learning
- Role of teachers in this endeavour
- Practical ideas to implement such value education given the present-day scenario in the education sector.

DAY 2

The programme on 4th February at the J N Tata Auditorium, Indian Institute of Science campus began with paper presentations continued over from the previous day's session. This was followed by a **Sharing of Best Practices session** during which selected academic institutions presented the value education models that they were following and discussed the impact of these on students. Reputed institutions that made a presentation included:

- Ramakrishna Mission, Hyderabad
- Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Anantapur
- Punjab Technical University, Jalandhar
- Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham (Amrita University), Coimbatore
- Rani Chennamma University, Belagavi
- Maharani Lakshmi Ammani College for Women, Bengaluru

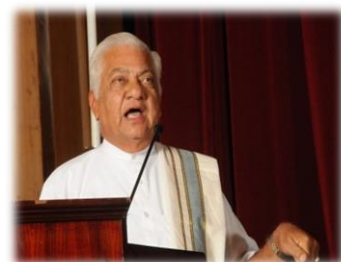


This presentation was followed by a session called **“Value Initiatives: Students Perspectives”** during which selected students presented their viewpoints on how value education empowers the youth.



The next session titled **“Value Initiatives in the 21st Century”** saw Dr. K. B. Akhilesh, Professor, Department of Management Studies at IISc, presenting the analysis of the survey titled “Enhancing Professional Excellence – Survey 2015” conducted by DISHA. Dr. K. B. Akhilesh highlighted the values that are important for professional excellence, but not perceived to be present in new entrants into the professions. He said that DISHA and others in value education must focus on these grey areas to have a meaningful impact.

Collating the results of this poll analysis, Dr. K. Subrahmanyam, Pro-Vice Chancellor of S-VYASA Yoga University Bangalore and former Principal, National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla addressed the gathering on “The Way Forward.” In his talk, Dr. K. Subrahmanyam stressed on the different types of education as useful, useless, nuisance and dangerous and said it is important for the education system to be modified so as to identify the talent hidden in students, give them appropriate training and then direct them to work for the welfare of society.



The **valedictory function** was graced by the presence of former Chief Justice of India, Justice M. N. Venkatachaliah as the Chief Guest. Speaking to a jam-packed auditorium, Justice M. N. Venkatachaliah pondered on the current dismal state of education in India. He expressed remorse that his generation was responsible for much of the current mess. However, he was hopeful that with more than 60 % of the population today being youth, better times are around the corner.

Justice Venkatachaliah spoke of the need for balance when attempting any form of social change. He also highlighted that today's globalized era is an age of technological singularity. He regretted that along with the collapse of feudal society, unfortunately, the rules of conventional morality also collapsed;

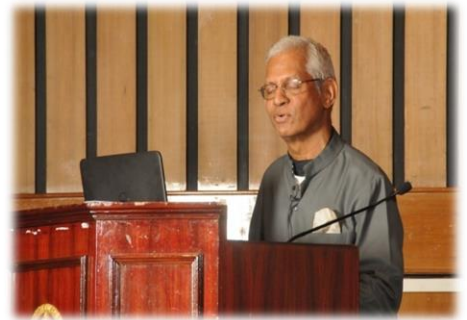


however, it is now pertinent that they are rejuvenated in a purified way.

“The hope of the nation is on the present youth population. Minds of the youth should be ignited with values. The values are demonstrated but not taught,” he added.



Dr.Mrityunjay B. Athreya , the Guest of Honour, Padma Bhushan awardee and Management Guru, emphasized on values such as patriotism, humanism, contribution, dharma and self-realization. “Dharma, which is righteous conduct to uphold all, is the single most needed value today. It encompasses various aspects like Rashtradharm, Rajadharma, Samajadharma etc.” He reiterated that Dharma protects those who uphold it. He also remarked that if present-day politicians put Rashtra dharma above Raja dharma (national interest above party interest), many of our national issues could be easily addressed.



Stressing the need of the value of Contribution, Prof. Athreya said “Contribution should be according to one's strength and not interests. It is essential to take an interest and contribute where necessary, enable others to contribute and to develop competencies for owning contributions. If every member in a team contributes at their best, then collective contributions will lead to victory.”

“Self realization; physical fitness through Yoga, Psychological maturity through *Satva*, Intellectual depth by learning, aesthetic taste by Kalaa, material wellbeing by artha, mental wellness by spirituality can take a person to great heights,” concluded Prof Athreya.



The presidential address was delivered by Sri. S. Naganand, Vice-Chairman, MLACW Trust.

The suggestions provided and deliberations during the entire conference were aimed at evolving an integrated approach to value education to allow learners to achieve personal growth as well as national development.

Overall, the conference highlighted the need for value education to equip the youth with skills for life. More importantly, it sought to lay down a blueprint for the way ahead to ensure a dynamic and comprehensive approach to value education.

Outcome of Conference

The outcome of the 2-day national conference is a policy report drafted by eminent persons including



- Former Chief Justice Dr. Rama Jois
- Dr. B. K. Kuthiala, Vice Chancellor, Makhn Lal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication, Bhopal
- Dr. Jagmeet Bava, Head, Department of Human Values, Punjab Technical University, Jalandhar
- Prof. B. Mahadevan, Indian Institute of Management, Bengaluru
- Dr. Sushant Joshi, Dean, RCU
- Dr. B. P. Sharma, President, Pacific University, Udaipur
- Prof. N. V. Raghuram, International Co-ordinator, S-VYASA University and President, Yoga-Bharati, USA and President, DISHA
- Prof. T. L. Shantha, Director, Maharani Lakshmi Ammanni College for Women
- Prof. Venkataram, S-VYASA University

Some of the recommendations include:

1. Setting up national mission for value education
2. Setting up 5 nodal centres in India, governed by Ministry of Human Resource Development focusing on Content development, Capacity building, ICT, Research and Development and Content Dissemination and
3. Pilot study in 5 states to collect data from selected 20 institutions.

This report will be presented to the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India for further action.

The panel and the organizers of the conference hoped that through this, in the next 10 years, there would be a transformation of the education system from the Macaulay model to the Maharshi model.

Vivekananda Jayanthi : Inter Collegiate Competitions – 2015



MLACW in association with DISHA conducted Inter-Collegiate competitions for students of UG and PG courses. There was an overwhelming response from the student community with **36 students** from over 20 colleges participating in the **speech competition** and **65 teams(130 students)** from 20 colleges participating in the **collage** contest.



Speaking on the topic **“What it means to be a Hero?”** students exhibited a remarkable ability to articulate their thoughts with clarity and creativity. The whole audience felt that the youth have the right heroes in their mind amidst the celebrities.

The collage contest saw myriad ideas presented on the topic **“INDIA – TODAY AND TOMORROW”** The judges and the whole committee felt that the students have a great vision for future India in all aspects – infrastructure, technology, science retaining its spirituality, culture, traditions etc.

The Program was inaugurated by Sri Jagadish Maiyya, Director, CISCO who also delivered a keynote address on **“Rejuvenation of India through Youth”**.

The competitions were judged by eminent personalities from different walks of life like journalism, social workers, educationists and corporate background.



Judge Name	Designation
Trupti Hegde	Journalist, Hosadigantha
Parimala Murthy	Coordinator, Viveka Vikasa
Swathi Ram	National Coordinator, YFS
Anusuya Kashi	Asst. Professor, Vivekananda College of Pharmacy
Belur Sudarshana	Senior Journalist
Jagadeesh Maiya	Director, CISCO

The students, judges, coordinators and the management felt very happy with the response that the program evoked. The prizes for the winners were distributed on the day of the national conference.