

LECTURE-10

CONFLICTING VALUE SYSTEMS IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN SOCIETY

Values are important and lasting beliefs or ideals shared by the members of a culture about what is good or bad and desirable or undesirable. Values have major influence on person's behaviour and attitude and serve as broad guidelines in all situations.

Value system is a set of consistent values and measures considered as desirable by the society as a whole.

Conflict is a disagreement through which the parties involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns.

Three value systems simultaneously existing in India:

- Traditional value system
- Modern value system
- Post- modern value system

Traditional values	Modern values	Post- modern values
Hierarchy	Equality	Materialism
Holism	Individuality	Networking
Transcendence	Rationality	Consumerism
Dependence	Independence	Interdependence
Karma	Scientific	Para scientific

1. TRADITIONAL VALUES

- **Hierarchy:** Societal hierarchy is evident in caste groups, amongst individuals, and in family and kinship groups. In the traditional society of India the caste system was a system of social stratification. The tradition of the caste system has created a culture that emphasizes established hierarchical relationships. Indians are always conscious of social order and their status relative to other people, be they family, friends, or strangers. (<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/india-country-profile.html>). All relationships involve hierarchies. The hierarchical structure is first learned within the family unit. Men ranked higher than women of similar ages, older relatives hold a higher position than younger members of the family, younger siblings hold a lower position than older ones and daughters-in-law come below the husband. In schools, teachers are called gurus and are viewed as the source of all knowledge. The patriarch, usually the father, is considered the leader of the family. Every relationship has a clear- cut hierarchy that was observed for maintaining the social order .

- **Holism:** In India people typically define themselves by the groups to which they belong rather than by their status as individuals. Someone is deemed to be affiliated to a specific state, region, city, family, career path, religion, etc. In all circumstances an individual is subordinate to the caste, village and religious congregations. If the individual violates the community, caste or village traditions, he is subjected to severe exclusion or separations, exile and penalty. This group orientation stems from the close personal ties Indians maintain with their family, including the extended family. The extended family creates a myriad of interrelationships, rules, and structures. Along with these mutual obligations comes a deep-rooted trust among relatives.
- **Transcendence:** It is beyond the limits of experience or knowledge. The legitimacy of traditional values can never be challenged. According to Kant he term *transcendent*, the latter meaning "that, which goes beyond" (transcends) any possible knowledge of a human being.
- **Dependence:** Dependence on superior's approval for social, economic and religious purposes is considered as of higher value as compare to individuality.
- **Karma:** The crucial element of Hinduism is the theory of transmigration of soul. It is the theory of rebirth which explains the continuity of Hindu society. According to this value, the present state of an individual is due to his previous birth and he/she has to pay for his/her present deeds in his/her next birth.

2. MODERN VALUES

- (i) **Equality:** means realization of the fact that all are equal. The work and results of the work done should be according to the ability of an individual irrespective of caste, class, age and gender.
- (ii) **Individuality:** Individuality means having your own way of seeing things and showing things. It's living life or anything else in your own individual way, which makes you different from everyone else. Standing up for what you believe in and accepting the simple differences that someone has, which makes them an individual.
- (iii) **Rationality:** Rationality is the habit of acting by reason, which means in accordance with the facts of reality. Rationality is free of any kind of biasedness. Rationality is particularly based on cause- effect relationship. It is believed by some philosophers (A.C. Grayling) that a good rationale must be independent of emotions, personal feelings or any kind of instincts. Any process of evaluation or analysis, that may be called rational, is expected to be highly objective, logical and "mechanical". If these minimum requirements are not satisfied i.e. if a person has been, even slightly, influenced by personal emotions, feelings, instincts or culturally specific, moral codes and norms, then the analysis may be termed irrational, due to the injection of subjective bias.
- (iv) **Independence:** Independence means the freedom to separate ourselves from personal ideologies and intellectually challenge ourselves to see the full scope of an issue in order to find real solutions for the good of the whole. Independence means we must not depend on the opinions of others, but on the factual issues and actions of individuals and on governments.

- (v) **Scientific Temper** : Science is a systematic description and explanation of facts. Scientific attitude/value is belief is empirically tested facts based on observations rather than blindly accepting them.

3. POST MODERN VALUES

- (i) **Materialism** : Preoccupation with or emphasis on material, objects, comforts and considerations with a disinterest in or rejection of spiritual, intellectual or cultural values.
- (ii) **Networking**: Networking is socioeconomic activity by which groups of likeminded people recognize, create or act upon business opportunities. Creating a vast network of acquaintances is considered as a virtue.
- (iii) **Consumerism**: Consumerism is a social and economic order that encourages the purchase of goods and services in ever greater amounts without considering the need aspect.
- (iv) **Interdependence**: Interdependence is a relationship in which each member is mutually dependent on the other. This concept differs from a dependence relationship where some members are dependent and some are not. In an interdependent relationship, participants may be emotionally, economically, ecologically or morally reliant on and responsible to each other.
- (v) **Para scientific temper** (Spirituality, New Age, Astrology and Self help/Alternative belief systems) is the study of subjects that are outside the scope of traditional science because that cannot be explained by accepted scientific theory or tested by conventional scientific methods. It is the study of extrasensory perception, such as telepathy, psycho kinesis and clairvoyance.

UNIVERSAL VALUES: Stephen Covey's Principle based Universal Value System

Stephen Covey's principle is based on paradigm 'SHIFT'. Paradigm is a word which means "a pattern or model; the generally accepted perspective." According to Covey " What we see isn't a completely accurate reflection of reality, it is shaped by our attitudes and perceptions. Paradigms are natural and inevitable, and they are useful to us in many ways. However, sometimes our paradigms become so far removed from reality that they become dysfunctional". A "paradigm shift" occurs when our paradigms change, allowing us to see the world in a new light. Sometimes this happens suddenly, and sometimes very gradually. Paradigms are part of what Stephen Covey describes, in The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Shift Model

- **S**- Service
- **H**- Human Dignity
- **I**- Integrity
- **F**-Fairness
- **T**-Tolerance

- **Service:** Helping others if one is physically able to do so.
- **Human dignity:** The dignity of the human person is not only a fundamental right in itself but constitutes the real basis of fundamental rights. It means that the dignity of the human person is part of the substance of the human rights and must therefore be respected, even where a right is restricted.
- **Integrity:** Integrity means that you adhere to a moral conviction, or code of honour that will not allow you to do certain things that you feel would debase you.
- **Fairness:** means consistent with rules, logic or ethics. It means maintaining impartiality in judgment.
- **Tolerance:** means recognizing and respecting the beliefs or practices of others. Tolerating others point of view.