

Volume I / Issue I / Year II

tejasvi July
astitva 2018

REGN. NOS:
DELHI POLICE LIC. NO.: F-2(T-15) PRESS/2017
RNI TITLE V/NO.: 1308098 (DELMUL01109)
ISSN NO.: 2456 5598

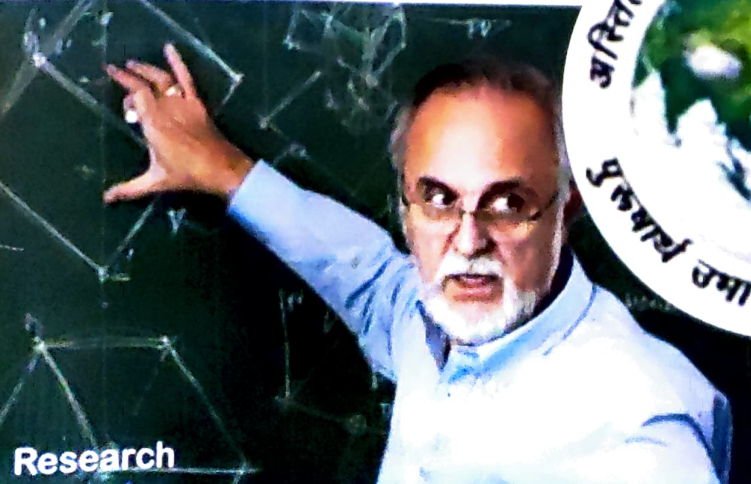
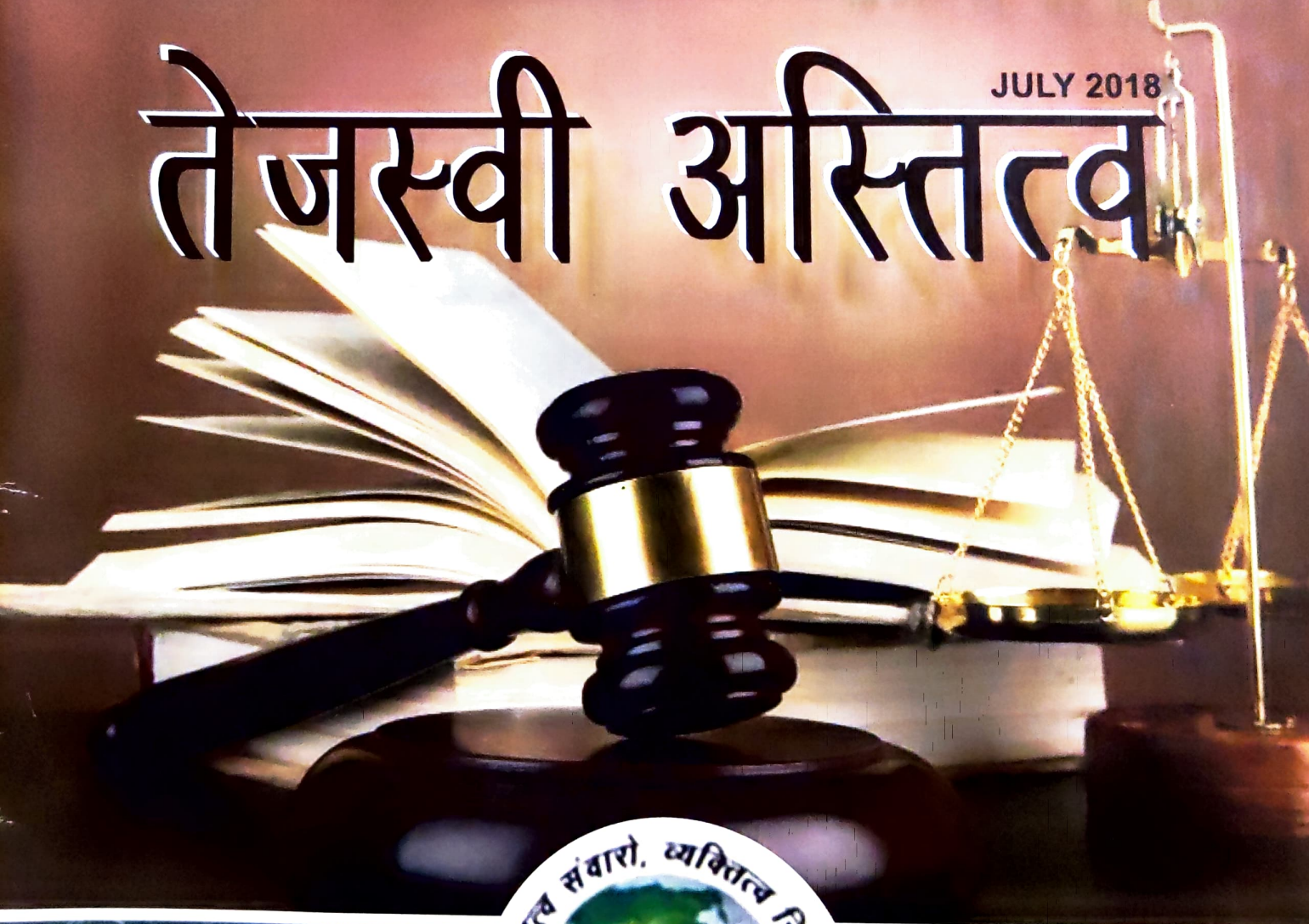
Price : ₹ 100/-

मूल्य : ₹ 100/-

MULTILINGUAL MONTHLY RESEARCH MAGAZINE
(HINDI-ENGLISH-TELEGU-PUNJABI-SANSKRIT)

तेजस्वी अस्तित्व

JULY 2018



Research

Dissemination of Human values through Literature

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Abstract

India is a value based country at the core. Human values are imbibed in the Indian way of life. These values are instilled in the children from the very beginning of the childhood. An Indian child grows in a value oriented environment and imparting human values is a part of Indian family system and education system since ages. Literature plays a key role in the dissemination of moral and ethical values. Since ancient time Indian texts and literature is fruitfully accomplishing this responsibility. Vedas, Upanishads, scriptures and other Hindu texts gives utmost importance to human values like universal brotherhood, love, compassion, kindness, peace, charity, helping the needy, responsibilities towards the society, harmonious co-existence with nature, morality, freedom, justice, tolerance etc.

Key Words: Human values, ethics, cultural differences, Indian family system, ancient Indian texts, Indian writing in English

Introduction:

India is a value based country at the core. Even though India is a multi-religious country human values are imbibed in the Indian way of life, as every religion endorse the same set of moral values. These values are instilled in the children from the very beginning of the childhood. An Indian child grows in a value oriented environment. Imparting human values is a part of Indian family system and education system since ages. Parents and other elder members of the family try to inculcate moral values in children as they can easily be moulded. In most of the Indian households these cherished moral and human values are taught in the established tradition of storytelling since the childhood. The stories fascinate the children and also unconsciously teach the values with an ever lasting impression on them. The texts of Ramayana, Mahabharata which are the reservoirs of human values and ethical code of conduct are narrated to the offspring in the form of simple stories and bed time stories. As "child is the father of man" children who grow up learning these values will become more responsible citizens in later life. Education, literature and society continue to shoulder the uphill task of

instilling values and ethics, next to family. A child gradually learns from education, friends, peer group and society. Literature also plays an important role of imparting the human values and ethics to individuals.

Human and moral values:

"Human values are the principles, standards, convictions and beliefs that people adopt as their guidelines in daily activities. Principal human values are the foundation on which professional ethics are built. They are a set of consistent measures and behaviours that individuals choose to practice in the pursuit of doing what is right or what is expected of them by society. Most laws and legislation are shaped by human values." "Values that are said to be "ethical" are those that command respectful behaviour toward others, that is, towards other human beings, without harming them. These can be applied to animal and plant life as well". Human values are universal which are accepted by people, all over the world irrespective of culture, religion and nationality. Moral values are culture influenced and they describe what is right and what is wrong. Social and cultural background of the region may affect the values. Vedas, Upanishads and Hindu scriptures gives utmost importance to human values like universal brotherhood, love, compassion, kindness, peace, charity, helping the needy, responsibilities towards the society, harmonious co-existence with nature, morality, freedom, justice, trustworthiness, loyalty, civility, respect, empathy, tolerance etc., People with these set of qualities will have high regard in their individual lives as well as social life.

Role of family and society on individual's values:

Family is a unit of society. Family at micro level and society at macro level plays an important role for inculcating human values and ethics. The most formative years of a child are moulded by parents and family members and hence it's the parents who shape the psychological and behavioural patterns, emotions, and the personality of the child. At this age right attitudes are to be sown in the fresh little brain which is like fertile soil, yields abundant results which were accomplished collectively in the joint

Hindu families of the yester years by all the elder members of the family. Family is a big moral support at any given point of time. Moral and ethical values develop positive attitude and help in personality development. Individuals who assimilate these values both at micro and macro levels will become strong people as well as good citizens. They can become good leaders and role models in the society. Negative traits are to be discouraged at the family level as they spend much quality time at home. Parents should be vigilant at adolescent and in the teenage of the offspring.

Role of educational institutions:

Next to family it's the schools and colleges that infuse values in the children. At this level they may learn some negative traits due to peer influence as they hail from various social and cultural back grounds but they should be checked immediately by the teachers. Learning and acquisition of life skills and values are mostly affected by environment. Much socialising takes place during this period where both the positive and negative behaviours are easily assimilated. Teachers, as they are the backbones of building up of the society, shoulder the responsibility of inculcating the moral and human values in the children. Teachers should appreciate the positive behaviour of the students as appreciation is a big motivational factor. In the school education some decades back there was a special instructional class for moral values. There is a paradigm shift and utmost priority is given to the introduction of courses on human values and professional ethics at higher education. Inclusive education is essential to pave way for a good society. Value based education and good parenting may solve many ills like women and child abuse, women trafficking, drug addiction, smuggling and other antisocial activities.

Role of Literature in disseminating human values:

India has produced great Gurus and teachers like Valmiki, Vyasa, to the recent gurus Sadguru Jaggi Vasudev, BK Shivani of Brahma Kumaris, Shri Rvai Sankar of Art of Living. These are torch barriers for the spread of human values. The great Indian epics like Ramayana 400-200 BCE and Mahabharata 400-100 BCE are discourses on human values, ethics and professional code of conduct which are viewed as bench marks for human behaviour. Many corporate houses are learning lessons on management, leadership, strategic management, logistics, strategies of power play, ways and means to reach goals and targets, crisis management, lessons on self-

motivation, personality development from Ramayana and Mahabharata. All these aspects were dwelt at length in these literary texts. One more great work of the time was Bhagavat Geeta, a part of Mahabharata, is a guide to human conduct and spiritual refinement. Holy texts like Bhagavat Geeta, Quran, Bible, Zend Avesta, Guru Bani and many other holy texts influence the psychological, social, ethical and spiritual behavioural patterns of the people.

Humanism in Indian writers in English:

Indian writers in English are following the norms set by our ancient literary texts i.e imparting human values through literature. Rabindranath Tagore, a multi-talented personality is a poet of humanity par excellence. He is the champion of equality among all human beings and appreciates the humanity. In a song (XXXV) in Geetanjali he writes

“where the mind is without fear and head is held high;
Where the knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into
fragments
by narrow domestic walls”

In this poem Tagore envisions a free India, “that heaven of freedom” where his fellow countrymen will live in a fearless environment with self-esteem. Spiritual freedom and human values such as universal love, peace, truth, brotherhood etc. are attributed to “that heaven of freedom”. He dreams of India where caste, creed, region, religion and language will not create strife among his countrymen. Even though Tagore was born in an aristocrat family he found himself amidst the common people and realizes his responsibility as a writer towards the oppressed and the down trodden people in the society.

Let my name be known

That I am a man of yours

In poem XI of Geetanjali Tagore says

Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads;
Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner
Of a temple with doors all shut? Open thine eyes and
See thy God is not before thee;

He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard

Ground and where the path maker is breaking the
stones.

He is with them in sun and dust. Put off thy holy

Mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil

In this poem the poet appeals the people to assimilate with the common man like the tiller and the path maker but not to confine themselves to the temples

and to the telling of beads. Even God is present with the common man. The poet condemns isolation from humanity. Tagore praises humanity in this poem. He glorifies man. It is his humanism, his love for the suffering, exploited and humiliated that has conferred immortality to his poetry. R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao are popularly known as the pioneering trio of Indian writing in English. They tried to bring Indianness in their writing in English by inheriting the Indian literary tradition of imparting values through literary texts. R.K. Narayan depicts traditional values in his novels *The Guide*, *The Vendor of Sweets* etc. Jagan the protagonist of *The Vendor of Sweets* is a follower of traditional Indian values and Mali represents the deteriorating human values in the society. V. Panduranga Rao in his essay titled "The Art of R. K. Narayan" says, Narayan's vision is essentially moral, for the problems he sets himself to resolve in his novels are largely ethical. This is not to underplay the comic irony of an artist much admired by critics in the West; on the contrary it is his comic vitality that humanizes Narayan's grand vision. The elusive charm of his success is the direct result of a rare combination of comic sense and religious sensibility. (99-100) Mulk Raj Anand is an Indian novelist and short story writer. Bakha an eighteen year old untouchable is the protagonist in his celebrated novel *The Untouchable*. He depicted the plight of the untouchables in Hindu society and the deprivation of human values towards him. In the next novel *Coolie*, "Munoo, a young orphan, at an age of 15 dies of tuberculosis brought on by undernourishment. Munoo is exploited not because of his caste but because he is poor". "Two Leaves and a Bud" depict the plight of the labourers in a tea plantation in Assam. "Raja Rao's idea of India does not merely find expression on the closed circle of metaphysical detachment and unworldly ethos, but in an open one in which a penetrating socio-political insight of India continuously inter woven upon the complexities of human nature in order to extend the horizons of the spiritual potential of all humanity". (Mercanti) Kamala das poetry is a passionate and universal expression of love, despair, anguish and failure apprehended through feminine sensibility. The writings of MahaSweta Devi depicts the social oppression of the tribal people of Palamu of Bihar, the slum life and the need of education to the underprivileged children. She used journalism as a medium to express her views. *Night of the scorpion* by Nissim Ezekiel is a beautiful example for the simple life of the villagers and the love and affection

towards the fellow beings as they rushed to mother's house like swarms of flies on a rainy night as she was stung by a scorpion. They chant for the safety of the mother. The poem concludes with an ironic note in the end as the mother, the silent sufferer, breaks her silence when she says, "Thank God the scorpion picked on me and spared my children."

Conclusion:

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts"
As you Like It Act II Scene VII

Shakespeare rightly pointed out that, all the world is a stage and men and women are players and exit when their roles are completed. Hence in this short life span, human beings are expected to live with human and moral values and ultimately life become more beautiful and fruitful. Literature and inclusive education can be effectively used to disseminate the human values and ethical values.

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