

# VALUES IN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS: WHOSE VALUES, WHAT VALUES AND HOW IMPARTED?

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## ABSTRACT

In this article the authors try to locate the place of values (as life-skills) in Further Education and Training institutions in South Africa. They emphasise the fact that education is a value-based and value-driven activity and that it is impossible to exclude values from education. The problem is whether such a claim would also include institutions of Further Education and Training attended by mainly adults. Reviewing the critical cross-field outcomes formulated for education and training in this country, it could be argued that values are embedded in these outcomes. This then gives rise to the questions:

- Whose values?
- What values?
- How should these be included?

Based on doctoral research conducted at selected FET institutions by one of the authors, the article reports on the values identified by people involved in FET and, based on the findings of the research, suggests some guidelines for how values should be integrated in education.

## INTRODUCTION

If we accept that values should be integrated within institutions of Further Education and Training as part of the education of good citizens, then we must confront questions

regarding the values that ought to be included and how should they be imparted. The answer to these questions is not simple in a culturally diverse country like South Africa and could be linked to Nucci's (1997) concern when he says:

Arguments surrounding the aims of values education capture the essential quandary for any pluralist democracy attempting to construct a shared civil society without privileging the particular values of any one group. At the heart of the matter is whether we can point to a set of moral values that would form the basis of an 'overlapping consensus' that would permit approaches to moral education that appeal to more than local or particularistic values. Without such consensus the incommensurable qualities of local values would render shared notions of a moral community impossible.

Secondly, once we have found such a set of consensual values, we must decide whether values are taught or caught. The position that this article takes regarding the aforementioned is that values are caught and not taught; therefore educators present agreed upon values to learners for discussion and elicit responses as to how these may be practiced and thereby 'unfolded'.<sup>42</sup>

Very often values are treated in a 'programme', curriculum or group of interventions approach. In this article, we will argue that a curriculum or programme approach is too restrictive. It is proposed that we should approach values in education more holistically and from a systemic perspective where we are able to understand the social force field of contestations impacting on education and influencing the realisation of the goals to be achieved through values education (see Nieuwenhuis, 2003).

The purpose of this article is therefore to debate what values are, the values to be included in FET institutions and to offer some suggestions on how values education could be dealt with in FET institutions. In part, this article is based on research done by Maharaj (2002) in FET institutions where the specific aim was to identify the consensual values of people involved in FET institutions. As with all work in this field, the article does not attempt to resolve the variety of enduring dilemmas, but rather to contribute to the ongoing debate about values in education.

## **CLARIFYING SOME VALUE-RELATED CONCEPTS**

Literature on values is commonly tied to specific intervention programmes such as:

- values education
- character education
- moral education
- democratic education (Nucci, 1997; Berkowitz, 1998; Nieuwenhuis, 2003).

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<sup>42</sup> The authors prefer to use the word 'unfold' rather than 'teach' or 'cultivate'. Two reasons motivate this view. The first is that the word 'cultivate' implies the traditional 'banking education' concept: learners memorise values to pass tests and examinations but do not internalise and practise the values. Coles (1992: viii) brings home this fact when he quotes one of his students, who said he 'saw people get A's in moral reasoning courses, and still behave very badly'. The second reason is that the researcher agrees with Dewey (1916: 67), who feels that education develops the self of the individual. Using Dewey's words, the concept 'develop' refers to '... the gradual making explicit and outward of what is wrapped up.' That which is 'wrapped up' is in the researcher's view the innate potential of the human being, namely the self. Through the process of purification, the self gradually reveals itself. The word 'purification' refers to the mind of the individual that is but a reflection of the inner self. Inter alia, by disciplining the mind through the practice rather than the mere memorising of human values, these values unfold, forming good character through habit formation. This equates to the 'drawing out' principle suggested by the Latin word 'educare', the root word for the concept 'education'.

The literature creates the impression that value-related concepts are interchangeable or synonymous. The terms 'values', 'morals', 'character' and 'ethics' are not the same, and they are not equivalent forms, but they do share certain common elements. It is therefore important to clarify briefly the distinctive but interrelated nature of these concepts.

## Values

The concept 'value' is a fundamental concept in philosophy, education, psychology, and the social 'sciences' generally. The concept is rooted in its Latin word '*valere*' and the French '*valoir*' which first and foremost carry the meaning to that which is worth striving or living for. Nieuwenhuis (2003) claims that when the individual is confronted with a situation to which he/she must respond, values place an imperative on the individual to act in a manner consistent with that which he/she regards as worth striving or living for and that the individual sees as worth protecting, honouring and desiring. Similarly, Rokeach (1973:5) defines a value as:

... an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence.

From axiology, the study of the nature, types and criteria of values and of value judgments especially in ethics (Merriam-Webster, 2008) we know that values and valuing are unique to humans, thus making it possible to qualify values as *human* values (Maharaj, 2002). Being human therefore implies imparting meaning to and attaching value to a phenomenon and using that to judge the value of other similar or different phenomena, thus making the human being a 'valuing-being'. We could deduce from this analysis that values appear twice in the life of a person (Nieuwenhuis, 2003):

- when the individual must impart meaning to an object, person, idea, feeling and organise the meaning attached into his/her own personal value system, which may be described as the act of valuing
- when a value has become part of a person's value structure, and that value and the importance attached to it guides and influences his/her choices and actions in life, which may be described as the act of applying value judgements.

Therefore, once values are developed they provide an important filter for selecting input and connecting thoughts and feelings to action and culminate in the personality, character traits, individual perceptions and decisions of that person (Hartman, 1973).

Accepting then that the act of imparting meaning to a value is a personal act, we may infer that we cannot really give values to others as if they were objects that can be handed down to others. We can demonstrate, clarify and interpret a value for others, but each individual must redefine, attach and impart meaning to a value to be able to internalise the value as an abstract concept. The value must become 'value for me'. This is possible only through personal insight into the value and the impartation of meaning. Imparting meaning to a value opens the possibility of creating a personal value system within which each value has a particular valence (strength) that will act as force in any given situation where a value judgement and choice must be made.

All meaningful human behaviour, moral and ethical conduct thus becomes a manifestation of the value system at work.

## Virtues, values and character

One of the misconceptions often found in the literature is that values and virtues are synonymous. Consider Kurtus (2002), who lists the following virtues:

- honesty
- morality
- ethics
- integrity
- fortitude
- reliability
- responsibility.

In this case, morality and ethical conduct are included as virtues. Often people who follow a 'virtues' approach to teaching are actively trying to inculcate such a predetermined list of virtues in the learners and this, as Kohlberg (1987) correctly points out, smacks of a 'bag of virtues' approach, where the principles that underpin the virtue are never internalised by the learner. Nucci (1997) claims that if an individual's moral actions are guided by choices and not simply as the result of unreflective habit, the issue for education rests not with inculcation and habit-formation, but in understanding how it is that people judge the worth of their own actions in relation to their world view and sense of themselves as moral beings.

Character is clearly related to both values and behaviour. As Wynne (1991:139) notes, '[t]he roots of the word character are taken from the Greek "to mark". It suggests a focus on observable conduct'. In the literature, character is used in two different, but closely related, ways:

- It refers to the way of acting. If one acts dishonestly, cruelly, or selfishly, one manifests bad character.
- Character refers to personality: 'One is a person of character'. Lickona (1991:68) defines character as '... stable dispositions to respond to situations in moral ways – manifested in observable patterns (character traits) of kindness, honesty, responsibility, and a generalized respect for others'.

This notion of character is also closely tied to behaviour because virtue is believed to originate in habitual behaviours and to lead to moral behaviour. Sarbin (1986) indicated that we need to move away from the notion of character as a set of externally provided traits and habits to a view of the moral self as constructed rather than absorbed and as being updated and reconstructed continuously. The virtuous behaviour that a person exhibits over time therefore informs us about the type of action that person is most likely to take.

Character then becomes a function of the moral judgement pronounced by others in terms of what they perceive a person to be in relation to what they perceive good moral behaviour to be. I can therefore not claim that I am a person of character; this is rather an attribute given to me by others based on how they perceive me to be and act. We therefore tend to pass moral judgement on a person (whether our judgement is right or wrong) simply on the basis of the virtues or character traits exhibited by or lacking in him/her.

## DEALING WITH VALUES IN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

The act of educating another is a moral act based on values. Given then that values will always form part of what education is all about, a programmatic approach or specific curriculum intervention aimed at promoting values can only be part of a larger concern and may always be limited in terms of achieving its objectives. In this regard Nucci (1997) stated that if we have learned anything over the past 30 years, it is that moral education cannot be isolated to one part of the school day, or to one context, but must be integrated within the total school experience. That is why a focus on *values in education* is needed that will enable us embrace both the overt and covert aspects of values in schools and enable us to develop a more comprehensive approach to deal with values.

Furthermore, our analysis of what values are and how they function within the lives of individuals clearly reveals that the development of a values structure is a dynamic life-long process that will make value-based Further Education and Training just as important as in any other level of education. The question then arises as to whether those involved in FET institutions (FETIs) are of the same opinion. In a research project undertaken in 2001, Maharaj (2002) found that all the respondents (the population for this study consisting of all the managers, educators, administrators and learners at FETIs in KwaZulu and Gauteng) involved in the research agreed that the inclusion of values or values-based education is not only needed in FET institutions but also an essential part of what needs to be included in the curriculum.

### What values should be included in FET institutions?

Within a modern multi-cultural society there should be at least some form of consensual agreement as to a common core of values that will constitute the mirror that society would like education to reflect to the upcoming generation. In South African education policy the aforementioned is exemplified in the Ministry of Education's Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (DoE, 2001). The Manifesto proposes ten key values derived from the Constitution and sixteen strategies for teaching them in schools to prepare young people for citizenship. Concomitantly, society must agree on the type of morality that society will accept, endorse and actively promote. These two aspects (common value system and its promotion) are probably the single most difficult challenge for the modern pluralist society, as specific interest groups (whether political, religious or economic) may attempt to misuse such an endeavour to promote their own hidden agendas.

Although such a broadly agreed-upon framework could provide the parameters within which values in education must be effected, it cannot (should not) be legislated to the point that all members of a multi-cultural society are coerced into slavishly following it (see DoE, 2001). The parameters set should allow each community to infuse its own values into the broad framework so as to enable them to accommodate social conventions and particularistic values that they regard as important for the education of the upcoming generation. Here the greatest challenge will be for the community to live and advance these values in all spheres of communal life.

The research undertaken by Maharaj (2002) provides a framework of values for learners at Further Education and Training Colleges to interact with in a reflective manner. In arriving at the framework of values, the researcher conducted focus group interviews with FET learners, lecturers, administrators and managers. In this research, focus group interviews (held in two

provinces, namely KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng) were used to explore, from a philosophical hermeneutical (Gadamer, 1986) standpoint, the experiences and ideas of educators, administrators, education managers and learners who volunteered participation in the study.

Additionally, based inter alia on the ideas of Gadamer, the researcher developed the 'DNA' approach (Maharaj, 2002). DNA is an acronym for *Dual Neo-hermeneutic Analysis*. DNA in a genetic sense is a reference to the '*programme*' and '*syllabus*' each one of us is given to explore the possibility of becoming more than what our parents were. As an integral part of the DNA approach, the research design employed a qualitative research strategy that was also explorative in nature, embodying a partial methodical approach. In this way the scientific validity of the research was enhanced. This research design facilitated the creation and description of the aforementioned Framework of Human Values to be achieved as critical cross-field and developmental outcomes in Further Education and Training.

The aim of the previously mentioned focus group interviews was to explore the full range of views and opinions as to all the possible values that could serve as guiding values in the FET sector. In all focus group interviews the basic premise was the saturation of research data by affording all respondents the opportunity to generate as many values as they wished to bring to the fore, without any value judgement from the researcher or other participants.

After the respondents had generated the values which they regarded as relevant to the FET sector, the study took on a rich descriptive focus where respondents were allowed to discuss, clarify and describe the values generated in terms of their own meaning attached to each value.

In consolidating the research data, the meanings as envisaged by the focus group participants, those obtained from the literature on values education, as well as dictionary meanings were used in the data analysis. The analysis resulted in a values framework that was categorised under five of the values as reflected in the Constitution of South Africa and as embraced in the Manifesto (DoE, 2001), namely:

- openness
- accountability
- tolerance
- honour
- equality.

Table 1 lists the values identified in the study. It is important to note that the values overlap and are simply classified to aid discussion.

### **Interacting with the framework of values**

The framework of values distilled from the research should not be viewed as a 'bag of virtues' (see Kohlberg, 1971), but it could serve as a possible guide for educators, learners and others within FET institutions to interact with when determining the values that they as a community would want to act upon. In determining the values to be included in any FET institution, a bottom-up approach (as outlined by Knight, 2000) is advised. This implies that role players should negotiate, debate and clarify those values to be included, rather than try to impose them from the top. Imposed values, no matter how important they may be, are viewed with suspicion and resistance.

**Table 1: Values identified by respondents working or studying at FET Colleges in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal**

<b>OPENNESS</b>	<b>EQUITY</b>	<b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	<b>TOLERANCE</b>	<b>HONOUR</b>
<b>INTEGRITY</b> Honesty Unimpaired moral principles (1981:500) <i>Reliability</i>	<b>RESPECT</b> Regard or reverence (1981:817) <i>To value</i>	<b>DISCIPLINE</b> To bring to a state of order and obedience by training and control (1981:284) <i>Restraint</i>	<b>HAPPINESS</b> The state or quality of being content (1981:439) <i>Cheerfulness</i>	<b>DIRECTION</b> A trend of thought or action (1981:283) <i>Path</i>
<b>OPENNESS</b> Open ~ to lay bare or expose to view (1981:663) <i>Honesty</i>	<b>SELF RESPECT</b> Self refers to a person, individuality (1981:872) <i>Confidence</i>	<b>HONOUR</b> An exemplary sense of moral standards and conduct; high respect (1981:461) <i>Revere</i>	<b>TOLERANCE</b> The act of or capacity to endure (1981:1035) <i>Forbearing Patience</i>	<b>SOCIAL AWARENESS</b> Aware-conscious; informed (1981:70) <i>Responsiveness</i>
<b>TRUST</b> Reliance on the integrity or justice of a person or confidence in some quality, feature or attribute of a thing (1981)	<b>HARD WORK</b> Carrying on with great energy or persistence (1981:438] <i>Drudgery</i>	<b>LISTEN TO OTHERS</b>	<b>LOVE</b> <i>Care for</i>	<b>UNDERSTANDING</b> A state of mutually friendly relations between two persons (1981:1077) <i>Tolerant</i>
<b>SELF-CONFIDENCE</b> Confidence – full belief in the trust-worthiness of a person (1981:212) <i>Poise Self assured</i>	<b>CONSISTENCY</b>	<b>DIGNITY</b> Self respect (1981:280)] <i>Decorum</i>	<b>COMPLIMENTS</b> Acts implying respect (1981:207)] <i>Good wishes</i>	<b>HUMOUR</b> That quality in speech, writing or action which tends to excite laughter (1981:467) <i>Go along with</i>

**Notes**

The respondents generated the values as seen in **bold** print, while the definitions given are from sources dealing with values. Those given in *italics* are synonyms as obtained from various Thesaurus sources.

## Creating a learning environment that will facilitate values in education

Once such an agreed-upon set of values has been developed, it must permeate every single aspect of FET institutional life. That is, the institution should have a clear statement of its purpose and values, what it is trying to achieve, why those are its goals, and how it intends to go about reaching its stated goals (Berkowitz, 1998).

The general institutional climate should foster fairness and respect for others. Rules should protect student safety, fairness and tolerance. Enforcement of institutional policies should be characterised by firmness, fairness, and flexibility. Educators should live the agreed upon values and set an example that learners could model. Williams (1993), Nucci (1997), Lickona (1993) and Berkowitz (1998) all indicate that model teachers earn respect by being fair, genuine, hard working, caring, and by being good listeners. They communicate through their actions clear, consistent, and sincere messages and high expectations. For learners, actions clearly speak more loudly than words.

School and FET institutions where the sense of community in the school increases are also institutions that promote social competency, critical thinking, democratic values, pro-social

motivation and reduced violence and substance use (Berkowitz, 1998). How people treat each other in the educational institution is critical to the effectiveness of helping learners to acquire desirable values. Interactions between parents and educators, educators and educators, educators and management, and educators and learners should thus reflect how the agreed-upon values are lived.

### 'Teaching' and learning about values

A priority for both national and provincial education departments is the creation of a transformative, democratic, open learning system, fostering in all its users a strong commitment to lifelong learning and development (DoE, 1997: unnumbered; DoE, 2001). Hoppers (1997:12) refers to the transition from the three Rs (Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic) to the three Ls (Life-Long-Learning). Lifelong learning requires '... that unique fusion of vision, insight, knowledge and wisdom ...' and is not for learners alone. Hoppers (Ibid:12) is of the view that educators themselves must not only be value-oriented role models, but must learn how to acquire new knowledge and 'unshape' the old roles. Further, the new education must unite '... intellect and feelings, progress and caring, vision and substance ...' for the creation of a creative spiral.

Feelings are as important as facts when it comes to values, and learners need to be educated (psychologically, emotionally, and physically) in a safe and non-threatening environment. Maharaj (2002) and Nieuwenhuis (2003) suggest that what is often missing in many value education programmes is a focus on the development of the whole person: a focus on the mind, multiple intelligences as postulated by Gardner,<sup>43</sup> emotions, body, spirit synergism. Lickona (1993) points out that character education which is strictly intellectual misses the crucial emotional side of character which acts as a bridge between judgement and action.

The holistic development of the individual is necessary, both from an educational and corporate perspective. Horwitz (1998:viii) identified a number of corporate values, among them 'Holistic Development'. Subsequent to the study by Maharaj (2002), he developed an approach to value practice for Corporates, hence Adult Education, based on the acronym, WATCH – where one is sensitised to watch one's Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character and Heart. By practising this, the practitioner develops holistically (Maharaj, 2000). Lickona (1993:6-11) and McLaughlin (1996:14) also support the notion of holistic development. According to Phenix (1961), Samay (1992) and Ryan (1991), the development of the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of the individual suggest holistic development. Furthermore, it seems that holistic development is alluded to in the focus group participant's listed values (see Table 1).

Values should not be imparted directly through values education curricula; rather they should be integrated into subjects (Maharaj, 2002). Outcomes Based Education (OBE) is concerned with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, specifically in terms of the value component of critical cross-field outcomes as it pertains to the FET sector. The challenge faced is how one of the intended results of learning, namely values, could be achieved as an integral part of critical cross-field and developmental outcomes. The central assumption of the research by Maharaj (2002) was that critical cross-field outcomes may be used as

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<sup>43</sup> Gardner in Weiss (2002:1) suggests that the theory of multiple intelligences is a *psychological* theory about the *mind*. It is in direct *contrast* of the *notion* that people are *born* with a *single* intelligence that *cannot* be changed, and which psychologists can accurately measure. Further, he suggests that MI is based on 'a lot of scientific research in fields ranging from psychology to anthropology to biology.' However, it is *not* based on *test* correlations, on which most other intelligence theories are dependent.



vehicles for values, and that a common framework of values could be constructed to aid FET in the achievement of developmental and critical cross-field outcomes.

Embedded in typical academic programs are many elements of values, especially, but not limited to:

- literature
- social science
- history classes.

For example, the celebration of certain holidays (eg Freedom Day) that highlight values and expectations for students to work hard, act responsibly and respect others are all ways of imparting values. These examples clearly reflect how values permeate everything that schools involve themselves with and highlight the opportunities available to schools to teach components that encourage students to practice values such as initiative, diligence, loyalty, tact, generosity, altruism, and courage (Wynne, 1989).

Traditionally, much of school life (and also technical college life) requires little more of students than passive obedience. Opportunities for students to build a sense of themselves as moral beings, such as actively participating in meeting the needs of their own school and local community if coupled with opportunities for meaningful reflection can provide content for students to construct a moral sense of self. Opportunities should thus be created for class discussions on values to debate, reason, clarify, and launch actions where learners could practise actions stemming from value-based discussions. Actions flowing from value-based discussions should be directed at enabling learners to impart meaning to the values and to learn how to act consistently in terms of their values. Nucci (1997) claims that moral development is fostered by moral discussion and moral problem solving. Moral reasoning develops when students recognise inconsistencies and inadequacies in their moral positions. Knowledge of conflict resolution and social problem solving allows students greater ability to engage in non-confrontational peer interactions which allow for dialogue and construction of moral orientations toward others (Berkowitz, 1998).

In order for value education to be phased in successfully as discussed above, a value education committee consisting of senior management and other role players could be set up within each FET college. This body may be expected to ensure that policy regarding value education is upheld via the normal hierarchical structures. Further, the aforementioned committee needs to provide a support function in that those having difficulty with value education may air their views via this forum and share ideas with other educators.

A further recommendation is that the values statement (as implied earlier) be readily available and communicated college wide. It is important that the core values be 'internalised' by all role-players. To achieve this, posters and electronic notice boards should display the core values. Furthermore, the code of conduct of an institution should reflect the unique value framework of the institution.

In the research undertaken (Maharaj, 2002), it was found that expertise in value education appears to exist at FET institutions, as there are educators who carry out value education as a matter of course. Others, such as some of the business studies' educators, have to abide by the needs of the different syllabi in terms of value education. Subjects such as Hospitality and Tourism and Business English come to mind in the aforementioned regard. Similarly, other educational institutions are likely to have the necessary expertise and possible subjects that are readily value-friendly. Consequently, educators should revisit their approach to value education and, if necessary, implement the holistic approach as indicated using critical cross field and developmental outcomes.

## CONCLUSION

From our analysis of values it is clear that FET institutions should be involved with values education. Education is a value-based and value-driven human endeavour and treating values as if it is not relevant to young adults would be a serious omission. The important question for all institutions will be whose values and what values are under consideration. This article critically reflected on this question and came to the conclusion that most values identified by people involved in FET institutions could be grouped or categorised under those values identified as essential building blocks of the Constitution. What is important is that all role-players in FET institutions should actively debate and negotiate the values that they would regard as essential to their institution. This should be a bottom-up approach rather than the imposition of a ready-made set of values from the top.

Integrating these values with the life of the institution so that it permeates all spheres of institutional life will be an important step. The judicious mix of values and learning techniques is necessary in order to further the all-round development of the learner in FET institutions. The all-round development of learners may be brought to the fore using, wherever possible, holistic outcomes that incorporate learning experiences from all the previously mentioned commonly accepted domains of the human being, namely, the cognitive (thinking), affective (feeling), conative (action-oriented, but from a mental perspective) and psychomotor (physical skill). In this way FET institutions could play a major role in contributing to a society in which morals and ethical behaviour are valued and advanced.

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