

# Human Value And Soft Skill In Diploma Level Architectural Education

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**Abstract:** In today's economic scenario, the rising incomes and expectations in the wake of rapid urbanization has created a crying need for creation of value concept in the appropriate climate which will encourage emergence of good human-beings, a band of worthy as well as socially responsible professionals and will eventually lead to the creation of a good society. So, this paper has been designed to look at the present status of Architectural Education at Diploma level in a dynamic society. To meet the demands of the changing needs of the changing society, the future architectural education should address some pertinent issues regarding soft skills, which has been discussed in this paper. A little measure has been taken to explain that the innovations and practices in architectural education will impose new demands on the teachers who are mainly responsible for the rectification of the foundation at root level to cultivate the human values as a part of their teachings. The paper has also talked about the outcome of evaluation that necessitates the change in education to express the qualitative significance to human consciousness.

**Index Terms:** architecture, consciousness, dynamic, evaluation, status, technical, urbanization.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

TECHNICAL education emphasizes the understanding and practical application of basic principles of science and mathematics and aims at preparation of graduates for occupation that classed above the skilled craft. It is a dynamic instrument of change in technical skill acquisition. 'Architecture', mother of all arts and synthesis of all sciences, known for its peculiarities and complexities, has critical role to play in defining the built spaces and urban vocabulary. It is a unique blend of aesthetics, technology and humanities to meet the basic needs of human living, working and care of body and spirits. So, its role and importance in creating appropriate and supportive environment assumes importance. Value is an essential attribute to human consciousness. Truth, Goodness and Beauty are the ultimate values. Desire of achievement of exceptional accomplishments or success becomes so important, at times fair or foul means are adopted exploiting the others. So, value education is particularly important for students in technical courses like architecture. Today success is defined in terms of materialistic achievement. Business mind, intelligence, hard work are mostly practiced, where moral values are kept aside. Certificates pertaining to knowledge of different aspects of architecture is achieved but, neither any certificate nor any care is given to honesty, truthfulness, trust, mercy etc. So, in today's world, values are neither precious nor desired. The modern architectural education and human values follow an inverse relationship. With the advancement in technology, the emotions are getting washed away. Teachers as well as the students are becoming unable to feel the intensity and need of emotions like love, affection, care, respect, honesty, simplicity, happiness etc., which are the basic criteria to classify humanity and to differentiate one from devilish attitude. Soft skills that include cognitive elements associated with non-academic skills are becoming critical in a fast moved era of initiating an individual into norms and values of a sustainable dynamic society. So, the re-orientation of education for sustainability relates the importance of human value as well as soft skills.

## 2 PRESENT STATUS OF DIPLOMA LEVEL ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION FOR VALUES

Architecture is art and science of built environment which reflects the artistic, socio-political and cultural environment of a particular society in space and time. A holistic architectural education, therefore, is a combination of skills, information as well as human values. Being multidisciplinary in nature, architectural education has always been a complicated issue. Equipping the students to meet the complex demands of the profession, the diploma degree's focus and curriculum must facilitate the relationship between the need of this profession and human values. There was a system on ground before 19th century in India, many communities and traditional cultures had developed their own informal, formal architectural design education. Today's economic scenario with rising incomes and expectations in the wake of rapid urbanization has created a crying need for aesthetically pleasing and efficient designs, which also incorporate today's technical advances. The schools of Art and Architecture started during the period of British in India from mid 19th century to mid 20th century. Sir J.J. College of fine arts was the first school to introduce a formal structured curriculum of architectural education in India in 1913. With the time passing on, lots of emphasis was laid on the course through eminent faculty members considering the technological advancements. Keeping in view the current status and socio-economic development, architecture education is offered at Technical colleges, Polytechnics, ITI, Vocational schools for a great potential of self employment in this field. The present curriculum in architecture at diploma level has been formulated to train the students in the areas that will provide a fair level of competence in the areas of analysis, design, construction, services, costing, structure, graphics, landscaping, town planning, surveying, implementation and supervision of architectural projects. The realization of better architecture is also picking up in small towns in course of time, it is expected that demand of such professionally trained persons will rise. Majority of students coming out this course find wage and self employment as architects with promotion of entrepreneurship. A number of hotels, offices, hospitals, housing complexes, commercial establishments such as shops, show rooms, department of tourism, art galleries, large scale exhibitions etc. also require the services of such professionals for planning, designing and managing structures including maintenance in these organizations. Interior Design is the area, where diploma holders in architecture have a great poten-

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tial for self-employment by setting up their own manufacturing units with interior related accessories. Some % of diploma holders also find their employments as teachers, as educational opportunities are on the increase. Today's education at diploma of architecture at diploma level are preparing the students technically skilled, but the human qualities and soft skills in them are missing. They are facing the consequences of valueless existence. They are just planting a tree, whose root may be selfishness, stem may be indifference, branches may be mercilessness, mistrust, greed, pride, anger, intolerance and fruits may be violence, terrorism, wars, dissatisfaction, alienation etc. So, the things made by them can not be sustained for long. There is nothing wrong on the part of students, teachers, parents and Government in wanting the next generation to be successful architects, but in our quest for successful living we can not afford to forget the very values which make us human. Value education should be made a compulsory part of architecture curriculum and it should be given due weightage. Polytechnics should not only focus on a 100% pass percentage and 99.9% marks by its toppers, but also see the quality of human-beings they produce. The National Policy on education looks at technical education from a functional view point as a tool for developing National consciousness, inculcating the right type of values, developing soft skills, equipping the mind to think objectively and enabling people to live in harmony with one another in a dynamic and sustainable society. So, the education of human values and soft skills in Architecture curriculum content and new changes in behavioral pattern of the learners as well as societal values and disposition would definitely demand new skills from the teachers.

### 3 TYPES OF VALUE EDUCATION FOR DYNAMIC SOCIETY

Human values are the most precious for the survival. In the modern architecture education system, human values are losing their essence and getting vanished into the darkness of modernization. Students are becoming unable to think of all the abstracts required for a lively living. In polytechnics practical education through laboratories and computers provides more independence to the students loosening the hold of parents and intensifying the interaction with the peer group, which paves way to over socialization, westernization, intermixing with opposite genders leading to the increase in crime index. Superiority complex due to ego are making them to lose their respect for the elders. Their minds are getting adulterated due to internet and they are following the short-cut path available for a speedy success at any and every cost. Hardly are they thinking of any loss with respect to human values. Psychological competence plays an important role in the promotion of physical, mental and social well-being. Human values and soft skills are behaviors that enable the individuals to adopt and deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life. According to Psychologist William James, "The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human-being can alter his life by altering his attitudes." Right attitude can be achieved by understanding the truth, positive learning, thoughts, meditation, forgiveness, assertiveness and habits as follows:-

#### 3.1 Understanding the Truth

Along with the study of built environment for healthy and sustainable living, the students of architecture should be educated to reorganize themselves, their strengths and weakness, their desires and dislikes. For this, they have to develop their interpersonal relations with society by which they will be able to

understand to other's needs, desires and feelings. They should be directed to do the right things and not the wrong things right by trusting God and His laws as God is equal for all of us and his laws do not make mistakes, but our perceptions, being selfish, make mistakes in analyzing it. Realization should be made on their part that they are responsible for their actions and their actions are responsible for the kind of life, they deal. They get what they deserve and not what they desire.

#### 3.2 Positive Learning

Regarding positive learning, the students have to be prepared to struggle. Also their passion should be so high that they should be ready to even sacrifice their life for it. Discouragement should be imparted to them about negative learning which compels them to take the shortest route to their ambition without being sensitive to those who would suffer in the process because of it. Intensity of honesty and implementation of integrity should be cultivated within themselves.

#### 3.3 Thoughts

There is a story – Once a lioness died and her cub was looked after by the sheep. After a few years, he was a full grown lion, but he was behaving like a sheep convinced by his thoughts. One day, another lion came in search of prey and was surprised to see a lion in the flock of sheep, fleeing like the sheep at the approach of danger. He attempted to get near the fleeing lion, trying to tell him about his strength and power. But, the fleeing lion was thinking himself very weak like a sheep. And one day, this lion caught the fleeing lion and took him to a lake and compared their images by reflections in lake water and convinced him that he is not looking like sheep. Suddenly, the thought of fleeing lion being a sheep disappeared and he started roaring. So, it was a thought that made a lion, a sheep and a thought that made him a lion again. Hence, the students while studying should realize the importance of thoughts in controlling their behavior assertively or aggressively. Mind is the source of all thoughts which are implemented into actions giving corresponding results. Therefore, they should work on mind with sincerity as the route of success and failure is determined by the mind.

#### 3.4 Gaining Confidence

To increase self confidence, methods should be adopted to convince the students to be true to themselves and their ideas through experience, observation, sixth sense etc. They should have the courage to tell the world how they think and should not succumb to the pressure of world to give up their ideas and thoughts and concepts.

#### 3.5 Meditation

Meditation has been a magical thought of controlling & regulating the mind & body on which our success depends. It unfolds inexplicable experiences within oneself and is highly relaxing, joyful giving opportunity to know the unknown. As the immediate result, an individual starts feeling from stress. So, the students should be guided to concentrate on a mantra, a medium to the destination called stress-reliever as they are highly stressed during the submission of portfolios by dead line.

#### 3.6 Concentration, Focus & Solace

Now-a days, the students for studying architecture are concentrating on a good college or being with friends rather than con-

concentrating on subjects. As a result, the area of focus is diminishing and not more than 20% are succeeding in getting what they want. Concentration is the key to success giving solace, peace and satisfaction. Emotional Quotient (EQ) effectively transmits & communicates Intelligence Quotient (IQ) helps to achieve concentration. So, the students, even with good architectural knowledge should be guided to be extrovert, a team player to show their knowledge rather than having it. They should not loose their focus and concentrate joyfully, not forcefully.

### 3.7 Forgiveness

Forgive has a very beautiful meaning 'To Give'. The best way to forgive is to start "Forgetting". But, it is difficult in the parts of students to forgive, because one student normally wants the other student to undergo the same pain and anguish, which he has gone through. So, they should learn to forgive someone after attempting to make him realize his mistake and the aftermath that could have been harmful to him. They should not speak negatively and get into backbiting, as it is as bad as a sin. Relation injects anger and hatred in mind. So, it is very important in their part to forgive with full satisfaction overtly rather than cursing the other covertly.

### 3.8 Assertiveness

Assertiveness is 'listening to and taking out small or big genuine feelings about others from time to time', which helps to keep a healthy & positive relationship with people around. More often than not the architecture students tend to feel so strongly about their designs but are unable to communicate 80% of them. Moreover, they then tend to punish themselves for not communicating what they felt. This is the place, where assertiveness comes in. They should express themselves with pride & dignity so that they do not have to be ashamed and embarrassed with themselves. Aggressive students are seen as rowdy, ruffians, dominating, introvert, violent, short tempered, naughty, scheming, boasting etc. Also, contradiction in their behavior is observed. For instance, on one side, they assume to be an introvert and on the other side, they keep boasting. This paradox occurs because they become self-proclaimed leaders and struggle in life as they become way behind others academically and take people around them for granted. So, the students should be guided to listen to their feelings always and not to forget to express them which will make them more sensitive, responsible, conscious and successful.

### 3.9 Habits

Habits makes a man weak and only strong persons can change them. Constructive habit is consciously formed keeping in mind the well-being, the desire to evolve and get success out of life. But, destructive habits are formed unconsciously when control is lost over thoughts. Now-a-days, the students of architecture are becoming over or under ambitious having manifold objectives, by which many unwanted habits are manifested within themselves. So, at first they should be guided to accept that they want to change the unwanted habit for good. They should control their emotions or negative habits and try to punish themselves, if unable to do this. They should not believe that life will take its own turn. Rather, they should practice to reap good habits.

## 4 EVALUATION

Education is a dynamic process and for it to continue with the changing needs of the changing society, the curriculum of architecture at diploma level should undergo innovation and change with the inclusion of human value education, which can pose new demands on the teachers. In this regard, the future curriculum should address some pertinent issues and the goals should aim at:-

### 4.1 Manpower

Providing value-based trained man power in the field of architecture to assist the learners to acquire knowledge of human values, soft skills, attitudes that will enable them to play effective roles in their societies. The world of tomorrow depends to a great extent on the approach of the architecture educators and the society to the curriculum programme. If effective value-based man power is provided and produced at various levels, the contents of human value education in the curriculum and their implementation at those levels will be performance based, comprehensive and forward looking.

### 4.2 Value Knowledge

Providing human value knowledge necessary for economic & sustainable development to keep up with progressive changes in the society. The learners should be helped to relate the soft skills to development predisposition, personal construct and should be encouraged to put the skills into the practice.

### 4.3 Soft Skills

Imparting necessary soft skill to the individuals to become a good human-being, for which, the technical education 'architecture' educators should be provided with the environment that will enable them to impart such type of education and soft skills. The selection of the educational contents at various levels should be performance based, comprehensive & forward looking. (Please refer Fig. 1.)

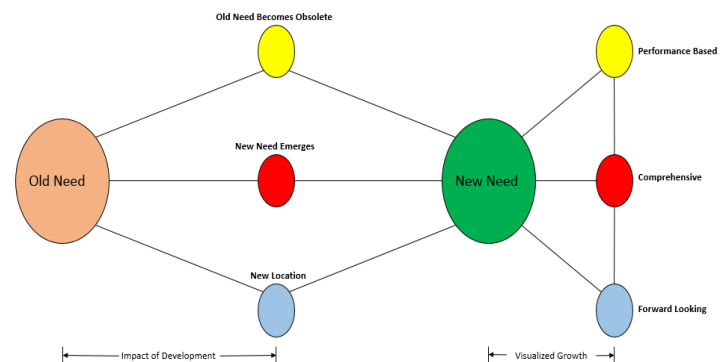


Fig. 1. Goal of Future Curriculum

Architecture is a purposeful learning activity undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge and value. Soft skills and competencies acquired can be demonstrated without presenting the certificate. It is a kind of education acquired without emphasis on white collar jobs.

## 5 SOFT SKILLS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VALUE EDUCATION

Soft skill can be said to in-corporate all aspects of generic skills that include the cognitive elements associated with non-academic skills. Again, skill comprises two general compo-

nents (i) knowledge (ii) activity. Both knowledge & activity combine in different proportions for different skills. Activity component of skill relate to those areas of knowledge that pertain to the mode of doing. Vast research and expert opinions have been sought in the effort to determine the specific soft skills to be implemented in diploma level architectural education such as:-

### 5.1 Communication Skills

The communication skill involves effective communication in both the national language & English language in different contexts & with different people. The students should acquire ability to deliver their ideas clearly, effectively and with confidence either orally or in writing. They should use technology during presentation, discuss and arrive at a consensus.

### 5.2 Critical Thinking

This skill includes to think critically, innovatively, analytically and to apply knowledge as well as understanding new & different problems. The students should identify and analyze the problems in difficult situation and make justifiable evaluation. They should make conclusion based on valid proof and accommodate themselves to the varied working environment.

### 5.3 Team work

The ability to work with people from different social cultural backgrounds to achieve a common goal is the "team work". Students should be encouraged to play their role in the group and to respect opinions and attitudes of others in the group. They should develop abilities to give contribution to the planning and co-ordinate group work feeling responsible towards the group decision.

### 5.4 Information Management Skills

This skill involves an effort to learn to be independent or self-regulated which will enable individuals to accumulate as much knowledge, distinguish between good & bad, to adopt the best practices and to make sound decisions. So, the students should find and manage relevant information from various sources to develop an inquiry mind and seek knowledge.

### 5.5 Entrepreneur Skills

It involves being creative & innovative in designing & planning business propositions to be self employed. So, the students should have the abilities to identify the job opportunities in architecture field and to propose business opportunity to be self-reliant.

### 5.6 Leadership Skills

This skill is very important to lead in discussion and make decision for implementing ideas in a group. The students should have the knowledge of basic theories of leadership and they should develop the ability to lead a project by supervising members of the group.

### 5.7 Moral and Professional Skills

This skill includes a sense of responsibility towards society practicing a high moral standard in professional task, analyzing ethical problems & making problem solving decisions. The students should be able to understand the economy crisis, environmental & social aspects professionally and should practice ethical attitudes. The above soft skills are essential for the development of intrinsic potential in an architect, which can

enable him to develop his intellectual, moral, social and economic capacities, by which he can become aware of challenges that are associated with a worthwhile life to boost his career, stability and fulfilment in a world of competitive industry. Most of the technical institutions in India furnish the architecture students with adequate training in academic skill to fit them productive work. The student with requisite education and soft skills are quickly absorbed into jobs while the students who possess neither sufficient academic nor soft skills live in subsistence level and out of desperation & frustration continue a nuisance to the society. So, for the development of the society, there is need for emphasis to be placed on the acquisition of soft skills in architecture in the prevailing society.

## 6 EVALUATION OF SOFT SKILLS IN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION

A holistic approach should be used to evaluate the soft skills among students of architectural education, which involves the collection of data concerning value education implementation, the teacher, facilities, methods and other related activities in the class room during implementation. The collected data are then used to assess the quality of performance and to determine the extent to which the purpose of the programme are being achieved. Outcome of evaluation determines the necessary elements that can be added or deleted from the architecture education to meet & satisfy the objectives of changing society which can judge the worth, usefulness, effectiveness of the programme. For a dynamic society, the programme evaluation can perform the following functions:-

1. Evaluation will inspire the development of curriculum & teaching activities in architectural education in Polytechnics which fosters the creativity and provides a way of articulating & evidencing the value of creativity.
2. This will help the students in bringing them into line with work places where assessment of human-values are practiced and will help the teachers to be more precise in their understanding of simplistic interpretations of human-values.
3. Evaluation will also instruct "balanced approach" for producing diploma-holders with both rigorous content knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge successfully as architecture is mainly "project-based learning", where the students can be directly assessed in relation to soft skill development.
4. This will also help the students in extra-curricular settings such as after institution programme, athletics, clubs, social activities etc. with some clear expectations from them.
5. Timely, transparent and systematic evaluation will provide the student outcomes with zest, self-control, hope or optimism, curiosity, gratitude and social intelligence. The students, those are strong and weak in performances can be identified and the weak students may be retrained to enable them to fit into the changing society.
6. Evaluation can lead to improvement as huge money is spent by the Govt. on good architectural education and the expenditure can be justified by the favorable outcomes known as "accountability", which will ensure alternative methods of procuring teaching instructions and to actualize the set goals in the programme.

## 7 GUIDELINES

1. Diploma level architectural education must be given the necessary evaluation and appraisal to meet up with global status in a dynamic society.
2. Architecture educators responsible for the implementation of the value education and soft skills must train & retrain to meet up with social changes.
3. To effectively implement the programme in classroom, the Govt. should effectively change the current architectural education status relating to provision of tools and facilities for teachers.
4. Architecture teachers should be given opportunity to embark on value education training to afford the time to acquire soft skills for improvement in a dynamic society.
5. The Govt. should provide in-service training for the teachers to update their soft skills with respect to new technologies for a dynamic society.

## 8 CONCLUSION

One is on earth, because there is something to be done and this something is not anything egoistic. Life is a perpetual choice between truth & falsehood, light & darkness, progress & regression, the ascent towards the height or a fall into the abyss. The various subjects of study at each level of present architectural educational system has deteriorated the human emotions and humanitarian grounds to further level down than previous. However, well-conceived, well-designed, planned & articulated, without effective implementation by the teachers, the aim of value education can not yield good fruits and it will remain an affair on paper documentation.

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