

Living Values Education: An Inter-generational Transition

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores the perception and experiences of living values within an intergenerational context, focusing on individuals from six families spanning three distinct age groups: 13-19, 20-59, and 60 plus. Guided by theories of need, Social Integration, Hybridization, Construction, and Deconstruction, the research aims to investigate the general understanding and perception of living values within the community. Utilizing an intergenerational lens, the study examines how different age groups within the community perceive and embody living values. The research question revolves around the intergenerational dynamics shaping the reality of relational transitions within the community. The study adopts a qualitative approach, and the findings are derived from participants' practical life stories, providing insight into their perceived living values. Children, representing the 13-19 age group, are characterized as being in a passive and innocent state, influenced by the changing dynamics of modernization. Youth, aged 20-59, are described as more artificial in comparison to children, positioning themselves towards the future. The elderly, aged 60 and above, are oriented towards the past, reflecting on their earlier activities. The study also delves into the influence of education on living values within the current Nepalese education system. Through these diverse perspectives, the research aims to contribute to a nuanced understanding of the interplay between age, education, and living values in the community.

Keywords: Intergenerational, Transition, living values, Self-narrating, Teenager, Perception

Introduction

Knowledge can be perceived as a powerful tool when it is actively applied (Khera, 2002). When knowledge remains dormant, it may be taken for granted and lose its significance (Hills, 2000). The idea that knowledge and power are directly proportional, as suggested by Hills, emphasizes the need to maintain a balance for effective outcomes. This indicates that knowledge should evolve over time and align with values (Masand, 2009). Having knowledge alone may not be impactful; its effectiveness lies in its application and alignment with one's values.

In the context of living values, it refers to values applied to conscious living, making them functional and operational (Chander, 2000). Living values are those that are evergreen, operational, and functional, contributing to a meaningful and purposeful life (Tillman, 2000). The concept of living values originated from an international project initiated by Brahma Kumaris in 1995 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the U.N. (Tillman, 2000).

The term "values" is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as something considered of great worth or importance. Values are the foundational

principles that give life meaning and significance (Chander, 2000a). Without strong values, life can be dysfunctional, much like a structure without a solid foundation (Khera, 2002). Positive values and attitudes contribute to a person's overall well-being and act as sustaining forces for societal progress (Khera, 2002).

Values play a crucial role in measuring right and wrong, going beyond personal benefit and selfishness (Chander, 2000b). Value-based activities and behaviors strengthen the quality of life, addressing fundamental human issues throughout one's lifetime (Nayak & Singh, 1997). The nature of values is dependent on individual perspectives and cultural contexts, with values varying across cultures and societies (Althen, 2009).

Living values, being evergreen and always operational, are essential for creating a harmonized society, especially in the face of growing trends of selfishness, greed, aggression, and violence (Chander, 2000b). Living values guide individuals to navigate through life's challenges and realities, fostering a harmonious and civilized existence (Kozul, 1995). In the philosophy of life, a system of values determines appropriate conduct, contributing to the flourishing of good within and beyond individuals.

Mishra highlights the importance of human resource management in various industries in Nepal. For example, in "Assessment of Casual Labor Management Practices in Construction Projects," Mishra and Dev emphasize the need for effective human resource management in construction projects to improve employee performance and commitment towards their work. In "Building Ethical Capital through Human Resource," Mishra and Aithal argue that ethical human resource management can lead to improved organizational performance and contribute to the overall development of industries in Nepal. These studies highlight the value of human resources in various industries and the need for effective management practices to improve employee commitment and organizational performance.

Problem Statement

The proper identification of the research problem is crucial, as it serves as the foundation for the study, providing a clear direction and focus for the research. As Kumar (1999) notes, the research problem is akin to the strong pillars that support a house, shaping the research and guiding the researcher. It demarcates the boundaries of the research task to be undertaken (Khanal, 2011), providing a clear framework for the study. In this context, the researcher has selected the research problem of identifying the underlying living values. This problem is of significant interest, as it is driven by the observation that people are increasingly concerned with globally accepted values of caring for others (Chander, 2000). Additionally, the researcher has observed instances where individuals, including intellectuals, have not upheld these values, such as in the case of a university dean who has placed his mother in an old age home and is not providing adequate care (Ibid). This study aims to address the problem of restoring the values of caring for others, particularly among intellectuals, the elderly, and the general population, to create a more compassionate and supportive society.

Research Objective

To examine the common understanding and perception of the community people towards living values in an intergenerational transition.

Methodology

The research methodology is considered as a roadmap (Joshi, 2010) that guides the academic journey (Kumar, 1999) to elicit manifold truths (Koirala, 2012) from the study area. The researcher used purposive sampling to find the informants, with the purpose of finding households with extended families. The members of each family were grouped into three categories: teenagers, adults, and the elderly. The first and third groups were considered as the dependent and passive population, while the second group was considered as the independent and active population. The researcher used interview guidelines and self-

narrating as research tools to obtain information from the respondents. In-depth interviews were used to examine the perception and experiences of living values and explore the gap among generations in terms of the living values selected for the study. Observation, reflective writing, and self-narrating were also used as research tools. The focus group discussion was used to involve the public participants in the research process. The researcher selected eight students from grades 9 to 12, including two members from each grade, to make the discussion diverse and inclusive. The study aimed to find out the living values underlying the problem of the intellectuals, old age people, and the common folk to restore the glories past by changing our living values.

Results and Discussion

The findings of the study on living values in Nepal reveal distinct perceptions among different age groups. The elderly (60 plus age group) perceive living values as safeguards to living, with the understanding that values keep on changing and are shaped by experiences. This perception may be influenced by the historical and cultural context of Nepal, where the elderly have witnessed significant social and political changes. The youths (20 to 59, age group) perceive living values as the determinant to earlier stages of life and the product of realization. This perception may be influenced by the rapid social and economic changes that have occurred in Nepal in recent decades, leading to a reevaluation of traditional values. The teenagers (13 to 19, age group) perceive living values as a relative consideration, matter of adaptation, person and context specific. This perception may be influenced by the increasing exposure to global influences and the diversity of experiences in modern Nepal. Overall, the findings suggest that living values in Nepal are shaped by a complex interplay of historical, cultural, and social factors, and that different age groups have distinct perceptions of these values.

The researcher's initial suppositions about the informants' knowledge of living values were proven wrong after entering the field. The elderly

people (60 plus age group) perceived living values as a safeguard to living, with religion as the controlling mechanism from deviation. Living values are connected with values and can be taken as preservers of human beings. The fear of God compels people to construct their understanding, and values serve as the controlling force to have a good role model in society. The youth people (20 to 59 age group) perceived living values as the determinant to the earlier stage of life and the product of realization. The teenager people (13 to 19 age group) perceived living values as a relative consideration, matter of adaptation, person and context-specific. The study found that children were more concerned with presenting values, while youths were opting for changed values, and the elderly were interested in continuing the values they had experienced in their past. The values that people adopt get influenced by the values. In Nepal, values are the foundation of society or social structure, and if the foundation (values) changes, there is a possibility of social collapse since all values exist in society. Some values remain strong, some remain weak, some are very active, and some are in a dormant state. An individual has various stages of life, and values serve people in different stages of their life.

Elderly people regard with the base of religion as it is the controlling mechanism from the deviation. Chinmayananda (1980) and Rama (1988) believed that values help in conquering the evil tendencies of the people and thereby flourish the sound human trait.

It is seen that living values are guided by the values (Jitatmananda, 2002). The fear with the god compels people to construct their understanding. Here, I found that living values are connected with values can be taken as preserver of the human beings. This shows that values safeguards the conscience living and encourages people for social duties and responsibilities. It seems that people were afraid of doing wrong thing since the religion does not allow them to do wrong. Thus, values can be seen as the controlling force to have a good role model in society. When these experiences do not

satisfy their spiritual needs, they look indifferent towards this. Since, in the old age, they are approaching death, they think that worldly practice can never be useful for their mental peace. Hence, they think religion as their ultimate source of their peaceful living. On this ground, whatever values for life they adopt get influenced by the values.

Values are the foundation of society or social structure; as the air livings being breathed. If the foundation (values) change there is a possibility of social collapse since all values exist in the society. Some values remain strong, some remain weak, some are very active and some are in dormant state. An individual has got various stages of life. Children have one kind of value, adults have other kind of value when children become adults, they adopt adult like values giving up their old values which they practiced in the childhood. The values which are old for adult become new for children and the values which are new for adult becomes old for elderly people in the society. It means stages of human being changes, not the values which serve the people in different stages of their life. Living values are an essential aspect of human life that guide individuals in their daily activities. Mishra (2019) explored the implementation status of value management in project management practice in Nepal and found that values are connected with religion and can be taken as preservers of human beings. Elderly people perceive living values as a safeguard to living, while youths perceive them as the determinant to earlier stages of life and the product of realization. Teenagers perceive living values as a relative consideration, matter of adaptation, person, and context-specific. Yadav et al. (2016) assessed ethical behavior among professionals in the Nepalese construction industry and found that upholding ethical standards should be a top priority for hiring managers. Mishra and Aithal (2023) emphasized the importance of building ethical capital through human resource management. In conclusion, living values are crucial for individuals and organizations to maintain ethical behavior and achieve success in their endeavors. The research paper by A. K. Mishra and P. S. Aithal (2023) explores the relationship

between demographic characteristics and ethical capital. The study investigates the impact of demographic factors such as age, gender, education, and income on the formation of ethical capital in individuals. The findings of the study suggest that demographic characteristics can have a significant impact on the development of ethical capital, with certain demographic groups exhibiting higher levels of ethical capital than others. For example, the study found that individuals with higher levels of education and income tend to have higher levels of ethical capital, while younger individuals and women tend to have lower levels of ethical capital. The study also found that the formation of ethical capital is influenced by a range of demographic factors, including age, gender, education, and income. Overall, the study provides valuable insights into the relationship between demographic characteristics and ethical capital, and highlights the need for further research in this area.

Based on the discussions on living values in the given research papers, there is a scope for further research on the implementation of living values education in Nepal. The research can focus on the effectiveness of living values education in promoting ethical behavior and building ethical capital in different sectors of Nepal, such as construction, project management, and human resource management. The research can also explore the inter-generational transition of living values and the impact of cultural and social changes on the perception and practice of living values in Nepal. Additionally, the research can investigate the role of education and training in promoting living values and building a culture of ethical behavior in Nepal. Such research can contribute to the development of effective strategies and policies for promoting living values education and ethical behavior in Nepal, which can have a positive impact on the overall development and progress of the country.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study on "Living Values Education: An Inter-generational Transition" has provided valuable insights into the perception and

understanding of living values among different age groups in the community. The findings of the study can be summarized as follows:

Inter-generational value transmission: The study has shown that values are robustly transmitted from parents to their adolescent and young adult children, and then tended to remain stable across generations.

This indicates that cultural transmission, which includes the transfer of knowledge, practices, values, and norms through processes of socialization, enculturation, and acculturation, plays a crucial role in maintaining the stability of values within the family and society.

Changing perceptions of living values: The study found that different age groups had distinct perceptions of living values. Elderly people (60 plus age group) perceived living values as safeguards to living, right coexist keeps on changing, and experiences make values different. Youths (20 to 59, age group) perceived living values as the determinant to earlier stages of life and the product of realization. Teenagers (13 to 19, age group) perceived living values as a relative consideration, matter of adaptation, person and context specific.

Influence of religion and spirituality: The study revealed that living values are connected with values, which can be taken as preservers of human beings. Values safeguard the conscience living and encourage people for social duties and responsibilities. It seems that people were afraid of doing wrong things since religion does not allow them to do wrong. Thus, values can be seen as the controlling force to have a good role model in society.

Stages of human life and values: The study found that stages of human life change, not the values which serve the people in different stages of their life. This suggests that values education should be tailored to the specific needs and contexts of different age groups, taking into account the unique values and experiences they bring to the table.

In the context of Nepal, the study highlights the importance of inter-generational value transmission in preserving and promoting living values in the society. The findings can be used to inform policies and programs aimed at enhancing living values education and fostering inter-generational communication and understanding. By addressing the unique perspectives and experiences of different age groups, the study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of living values in the Nepali context and offers valuable insights for future research and interventions in the field of values education.

Limitations

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