



Integrating Spiritual and Moral Values in Education for Holistic Development: Insights from Madan Mohan Malaviya and NEP 2020

Dr. Rimmi Datta¹

Prof. Jayanta Mete²

¹Resource Person, Department of Education, Murshidabad Maharaja Krishnanath University, Berhampore, Murshidabad, West Bengal

²Former Professor and Dean, Department of Education, Faculty of Education, University of Kalyani, West Bengal

Abstract

The age of fast-paced technological changes, social fragmentation and increased performance pressure has brought the question of the purpose of education back into focus. This paper revisits the vision of value-centred education through the lens of Madan Mohan Malaviya and its relevance in the context of the policy framework of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and other relevant documents. The study is a qualitative document analysis and incorporates the conceptual argument in the article with recent evidence of SEL, life skills, and mindfulness in education, as well as current official policy documents and education statistics. The analysis reveals significant overlap between Malaviya's focus on character development, moral self-control, service, and cultural foundations and the policy priorities of today—holistic development, constitutional values, interdisciplinary learning, and socio-emotional skills. The magnitude and urgency of this agenda is highlighted by the following system indicators: India has approximately 24.69 crore students in the school system, 14.71 lakh schools, and more than 1.01 crore teachers; the Higher Education system is one of the largest in the world. In addition to this, recent policy initiatives like NCF-SE 2023, Mulya Pravah 2.0, Aadharshila, and Navchetana, push the value-based conversation beyond higher education to school and early childhood education levels. The paper concludes that a contemporary understanding of Malaviya cannot only be construed as moral sermonizing but also can be used to create a pedagogic approach that is inclusive, based on dialogue, service learning, reflective practice, multilingual cultural literacy and ethical reasoning. It ends with an implementation matrix for schools and higher education institutions and claims that value-based education is only credible when it is integrated into the institutional culture, the education of teachers, the reform of assessment, and the involvement of the community, instead of being an add-on subject.

Keywords: Madan Mohan Malaviya; Spiritual Education; Holistic Development; NEP 2020; Value-Based Education; Social-Emotional Learning

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Introduction

The modern education system is expected to equip students for a world beset by uncertainty, automation, environmental crisis, social polarization and rapid rate of knowledge turnover. In this context the academy itself cannot be a sufficient indicator. Learners must also be able to make

judgments, feel empathy, regulate themselves, demonstrate social responsibility and have ethical reasoning. NEP 2020 puts this question right at the heart of the educational reform process: Education must build character and develop social, ethical and emotional capacities along with cognition (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020). NCF-SE 2023 builds on this by conceptualizing the education in schools based on values, dispositions, capacities, and cross-cutting themes instead of content accumulation. UGC's Mulya Pravah 2.0 also connects the human values, professional ethics, constitutional obligations, service, etc. to the common culture of higher education institutions (University Grants Commission, 2023).

Looking at Indian education, the importance of this orientation becomes apparent. As per recent government reporting, India's school education system has approximately 24.8 crore students in 14.72 lakh schools with 98 lakh teachers during UDISE+ 2023-24 and later, the figures have been revised to 24.69 crore students and 14.71 lakh schools supported by 1.01 crore teachers as per the UDISE+ 2024-25 report (Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2025, 2026b). While the same official reporting documents improvements in access to digital, reductions in dropout rates and ongoing progress towards universal enrollment, it is also the case that these quantitative achievements have raised questions about the quality, purpose and institutional ethos (Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2025, 2026b). Education must address human development in addition to intellectual development and not leave values to the periphery, if it is to have a social meaning in a technologically over-saturated age.

This article is a revisit to that problem and delves into the educational thoughts of Madan Mohan Malaviya. Malaviya's significance is, of course, historical, but also the lasting framework of his educational vision. The official BHU material still uses the founding goal of BHU – to promote character in the youth through religion and ethics as an integral part of learning by modern scientific methods (Banaras Hindu University, 2025). This vision is a strong framework for rethinking holistic education in India in the present times, when reading is critically and inclusively looked upon. In the present paper Malaviya is discussed in the context of NEP 2020 and related frameworks and a practical institutional mechanism for the inclusion of spiritual and moral values in teaching-learning without any violation of pluralism, academic rigor and constitutional commitments is proposed. What makes the present paper special is that it does not view value education as a moral lesson that is to be taught, but rather as an institutional process that is affected by curriculum, pedagogy, teacher education, assessment, leadership, and community engagement.

The objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

- 1] To analyze the educational philosophy of Madan Mohan Malaviya, specifically in developing the character, service, cultural identity, moral discipline and responsible citizenship in the educational system.
- 2] To identify provisions in NEP 2020 that could help in the implementation of a holistic, value-based, socio-emotionally rich and ethically sound educational system, and post-2020 policy context.
- 3] To trace out the intersections and continuities in Malaviya's value centered vision and the current educational policy in India.

- 4] To compile a set of key documents and research on social-emotional learning, life skills, mindfulness, and institutional value culture to bolster the educational case.
- 5] To suggest a feasible structure for the practical implementation of the integration of spiritual and moral values in a inclusive, constitutional and pedagogically meaningful way through which schools and higher education institutions can do so.

Methodology

Research design

The study uses Qualitative, Conceptual Design and Document Analysis Design. It does not undertake primary survey work, but instead uses a selected set of philosophical, policy, institutional and research documents to make an argument for the role of spiritual and moral values in a holistic approach to education. This design is suitable because the focus of the paper is analytical and interpretative, which involves the linkages between Malaviya's educational philosophy and NEP 2020 and other recent related concepts.

Sources of data

The paper has been based on four types of secondary sources, including: (a) selected conceptual / literature papers on Malaviya's educational thought; (b) official documents including NEP 2020, NCF-SE 2023, Mulya Pravah 2.0 and policy releases related to ECCE; (c) official statistical and institutional sources such as UDISE+, Economic Survey and higher education reporting; and (d) selected international literature and literature from the field of other research peer groups on social-emotional learning, life skills, mindfulness and value-based education (Banaras Hindu University, 2025; Cipriano et al., 2024; Durlak et al., 2011; Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 2024; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; Phan et al., 2022; Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2023, 2025, 2026a, 2026b; UNESCO, 2024; UNICEF India, 2019; University Grants Commission, 2023; World Health Organization, 1994).

The selection and inclusion criteria are outlined in this section. Those documents that directly addressed one or more of the following themes: holistic development, value-based education, character formation, socio-emotional learning, Indian knowledge traditions, constitutional values, early childhood foundations, higher education ethics or institutional culture were selected. Official policy documents, authoritative institutional sources, recent government data and peer-reviewed research evidence were prioritized.

Procedure of analysis

The analysis was carried out in the following 4 steps. The main themes present in Malaviya's educational thinking were identified from institutional and scholarly sources, first. Second, the themes have been juxtaposed with NEP 2020 and the post-2020 policy plans to identify convergence, extension, and contemporary relevance. Third, the educational value of value-oriented pedagogy was supported by research evidence on SEL, life skills and mindfulness. Fourthly, the results were presented in a practical action plan for schools and higher education institutions.

Analytical framework

Thematic synthesis is the predominant method of analysis in this paper. The themes that are used in the synthesis are character, service, cultural rootedness, holistic development, citizenship,

institutional ethos, teacher preparation, assessment reform, and inclusion. The themes provide a way for the paper to progress from a philosophical reflection to a policy alignment to a practical application to education.

Trustworthiness and ethics

The use of source triangulation, cross reading of philosophical and policy documents, and careful selection of recent empirical evidence helped to enhance the trustworthiness of the study. There are no human subjects, personal data, or field-level ethical issues involved when reading the study, as it is conducted using only secondary documents that are readily available publicly and an author-produced conceptual manuscript. It takes, however, a conscious effort to avoid sectarian or exclusionary interpretations of spirituality and to reframe value education in principles of constitutional, inclusive and developmental values.

Scope and limitations

This research is only conceptual and document-based analysis. It is not a measure of the direct impact of value education in the classroom nor does it carry out field observation. Hence, it is important to view the proposed framework as a policy-informed and pedagogical one, which needs to be further validated through empirical studies in classrooms, teacher interviews, learner feedback, and institutional studies in the future.

The impact of Malaviya's Educational Thought on the Present scenario

Malaviya's approach to education came at a period when colonial education was being blamed for the lack of moral substance and confidence in culture among its graduates. He did not reject modern knowledge, but he tried to construct the science, professional education and national regeneration in a wider civilizational and ethical context. This synthesis still comes across in the official institutional memory of BHU: modern scientific education to be merged with spirituality, culture, and character building (Banaras Hindu University, 2025). Historical in nature, but conceptually sharp. Malaviya's vision is based on four related concepts: education as character formation, education as service, education as cultural rootedness without the intellectual isolation, and education as preparation for responsible citizenship.

The first of these, the formation of character, should be understood in a general pedagogic and not sectarian manner today. It contains behaviors of honesty, self-control, respect, responsibility, empathy and self-reflection. The second idea, service, is also vital. Malaviya never envisioned education being just a private good; he believed it had the power to lift people up and to reconstruct the nation's development. It has a very direct connection with current discussions about civic duty, civic engagement, and the ethical use of knowledge. The third concept – cultural rootedness – does not necessitate a closed or an exclusionary identity model. Rather, it calls for an awareness of the languages, literatures, moral traditions and intellectual assets of the community of which they are a part. Responsible citizenship comes naturally with respect to the values of a modern constitution and democratic education.

The Savior needs to be careful, though, if it is a modern remake of Malaviya. Education in the spiritual and moral sense in a constitutional democracy may not turn into doctrinal teaching or into the imposition of the majority culture. Such is its legitimacy because of universalizable educational goods (self-knowledge, ethical judgement, mutual respect, concern for others, commitment to truth, responsibility towards society). In this context, the significance of Malaviya for the present

paper is not so much in terms of institutional replication — indeed, there is no attempt to do this — as it is in the normative disclosures to be found in his emphasis on professionalism and moral purpose. This observation is in line with the current policy in the direction (Banaras Hindu University, 2025; Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; University Grants Commission, 2023).

Clarification of concept: Spiritual values in this paper are in the sense of learning in an educational setting without any sectarian implication. It is a concept of inner discipline, self-knowledge, ethical sensitivity and respect for others, reflective living, and commitment to the common good. Moral values are norms that are shared within society, including principles of empathy, justice, being responsible, care, cooperation, and honesty. This clarification is important since value-based education in a plural classroom should be inclusive, dialogic, and constitutionally based.

The NEP 2020 and the Post-2020 Policy Architecture of Holistic Education is the fifth topic of discussion. The fifth topic of discussion is 5. NEP 2020 and the Post-2020 Policy Architecture of Holistic Education.

NEP 2020 is a turning point in the paradigm of educational reform in India in terms of the language of reform. It's opening principles which clear state that training must be built on the development of creative potential, building character and fostering social, ethical and emotional capacities in addition to the higher order cognitive skills (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020). This is a significant policy change as it does not accept the 'one size fits all' idea of quality being measured by examination results only. The policy expresses the importance of education as a multidisciplinary activity, Indian knowledge systems, constitutional values, experiential education, multilingualism, and foundational literacy, which are all part of a broader vision of holistic human development (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020).

This orientation has since been extended and has been translated into related frameworks. NCF-SE 2023 embeds values and dispositions in the structure of curriculum and pedagogy and considers the issues of rootedness in India, inclusion and environmental awareness as cross-cutting concerns that are not optional (National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; Phan et al., 2022). In higher education, Mulya Pravah 2.0 moves towards implementation of this ideal of holism through the following recommendations: to establish the values of truth, righteous conduct, peace, love, non-violence, scientific temper, citizenship values, life skills, and service in the institutional culture and curriculum (University Grants Commission, 2023). It is important because it takes the discussion from moral aspiration to stakeholder-oriented implementation, monitoring, and reinforcement (University Grants Commission, 2023).

There has also been a strengthening of the policy architecture at the early childhood level. The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) introduced two programmes, namely Navchetana (0-3) and Aadharshila (3-6), for children aged birth to 3 years and 3-6 years respectively, directly connecting the competency-based ECCE approach with early stimulation and responsive care giving (Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 2024; Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2023, 2026a). Co-location of nearly 2,99,544 Anganwadi Centres in schools is also mentioned in the recent government reporting which highlights the efforts made to strengthen the ECCE system (Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2026b). These developments are of relevance to the present discussion since

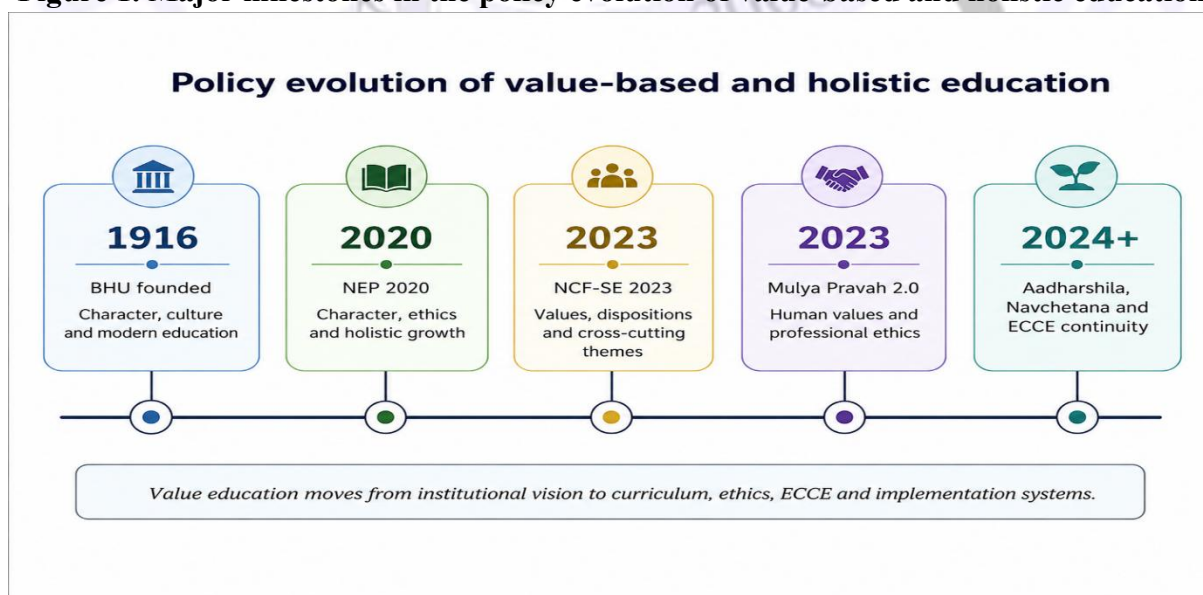
they demonstrate that the holistic and value-based education is no longer limited to the policy language. It is being translated across the curriculum, pedagogy, teacher preparation, and delivery structures at increasing levels at all educational stages.

Table 1. Selected current indicators relevant to a holistic and value-based education agenda

Indicator	Latest figure	Interpretive relevance	Source
School students	24.69 crore (UDISE+ 2024–25)	Shows the scale at which holistic and ethical education must be operationalized	PIB (2026b)
Schools	14.71 lakh	Institutional reach of the value agenda across the school system	PIB (2026b)
Teachers	Over 1.01 crore	Teacher preparation is central to implementation	PIB (2026b)
Schools with computers	57.2% (UDISE+ 2023–24)	Digital expansion heightens the need for human and ethical capacities	PIB (2025)
Schools with internet	53.9% (UDISE+ 2023–24)	Technology-rich education requires parallel value-rich education	PIB (2025)
Higher education enrolment	4.33 crore	Holistic development remains relevant beyond schooling	PIB (2025)
Higher education GER (18–23 years)	28.4%	Ethics and values must be embedded in expanding HE participation	PIB (2025)
AWCs co-located in schools	2,99,544	Strengthens holistic learning continuity from ECCE onward	PIB (2026b)

Source: Compiled from recent official reporting on UDISE+, the Economic Survey, and school infrastructure updates (Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2025, 2026b).

Figure 1. Major milestones in the policy evolution of value-based and holistic education



Source: Compiled by the authors from BHU, NEP 2020, NCF-SE 2023, Mulya Pravah 2.0, and

ECCE policy updates (Banaras Hindu University, 2025; Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 2024; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2023, 2026a; University Grants Commission, 2023).

Why Value-Based Education Matters: What Recent Evidence Suggests

Discussions of the importance of spiritual and moral values in education frequently follow a philosophical argument, but are also backed by a rapidly expanding empirical literature on social-emotional learning, life skills and mindfulness. UNESCO's 2024 policy guide on Mainstreaming SEL makes the case that SEL is essential to all peace, human rights, sustainable development, and long-term education reforms, and should be implemented systemically, not as a standalone programme (UNESCO, 2024). The Comprehensive Life Skills Framework of UNICEF India also correlates educational empowerment with self-awareness, empathy, decision making, citizenship and resilience particularly in the context of children and adolescents exposed to structures vulnerabilities (UNICEF India, 2019). These frameworks facilitate the conversion of the language of value-education into domains which can be taught and assessed.

The overall evidence base is good. Durlak et al. (2011), in a widely cited meta-analysis of the effect of school-based universal SEL programmes published in 2011, reported positive impact of SEL programmes on social-emotional skills, attitudes, behaviours and academic outcomes in 213 interventions with over 270,000 students. Again, a more recent meta-analysis by Cipriano et al. (2024) included 90 studies and more than 20,000 K–12 students in the United States and found similar results to the previous analysis, with significant improvements seen across domains of academic achievement, school functioning, social and emotional skills, attitudes, behaviour, and perceptions of school climate and safety. These studies are not about spirituality like it is traditionally understood in India, but they do lend support to a basic premise of this paper, namely that education will be more effective if it brings to the fore the moral, relational and emotional aspects of development rather than content alone.

There is some evidence that relates to life skills and contemplative practices. WHO's approach for the education of life skills many years ago focused on psychosocial competence, decision making, interpersonal skills and emotional management as key educational outcomes (World Health Organization, 1994). UNICEF applied this principle to the Indian context using a rights and a life-cycle approach (UNICEF India, 2019). Regarding mindfulness, there is evidence from systematic reviews that this holds promise, but with some uncertainty. Phan and colleagues conducted a review of 77 studies in 12,358 students from five continents, and found that school-based mindfulness interventions hold potential for enhancing some youth outcomes but that evidence quality was not uniform and implementation was highly relevant (Phan et al., 2022). This is a very important warning. It's important to not romanticize or see values education as a panacea. It has effects based on curricular coherence, teacher preparation, institutional culture, and culturally appropriate pedagogy.

Political Discrimination in the Faroe Islands

If Malaviya's notion of education is read in conjunction with the existing policy framework, at least four points of convergence emerge. The first of these is the emphasis on character. The

principle of ethics and character building which Malaviya has laid while founding the institute, can well be seen in the emphasis of NEP 2020 on education as a process of developing ethical, rational, caring, and compassionate persons (Banaras Hindu University, 2025; Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020). The second, the concept of service in education. Malaviya's focus on social responsibility fits in with the idea of seva, helping the community and the constitutional responsibility of Mulya Pravah 2.0 (University Grants Commission, 2023). The third one is holistic development. Malaviya's opposition to the distinction between intellectual and moral and cultural development is echoed in the current focus on social-emotional learning, multidisciplinary education, and well-being (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; UNESCO, 2024; University Grants Commission, 2023). The fourth is rootedness, openness. While rejecting modern science, Malaviya was searching for a cultural foundation, and now so do the policies, for which cultural rootedness in India along with global competence and contemporary knowledge systems (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023) are also present.

Meanwhile, modern policy builds on Malaviya in significant respects. First, the post-2020 framework is constitutional in nature. It emphasizes more on the issue of inclusion, diversity, rights, gender sensitivity, and democratic citizenship than the previous versions of moral education (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; University Grants Commission, 2023). Second, it is more developmental and wide-ranging. The concepts of value education now being propagated from ECCE level to higher education have been packaged in different initiatives such as Aadharshila, Navchetana, NCF-SE 2023, and Mulya Pravah 2.0 (Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 2024; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2026a; University Grants Commission, 2023). Third, recent international evidence makes it possible to make the argument about values in educational-development terms, not just in civilizational or nationalist terms (Cipriano et al., 2024; Durlak et al., 2011; Phan et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2024; UNICEF India, 2019; World Health Organization, 1994). Such changes are significant in that they create a more plural, research-supported and more responsive approach to value-based education that is enabled by a diverse democratic society.

Table 2. Convergence between Malaviya's educational thought and the contemporary policy framework

Theme	Malaviya's emphasis	Contemporary policy expression	Illustrative institutional response
Character	Ethics and character as integral to education	NEP 2020 calls for ethical, rational, compassionate learners	Ethics across subjects; reflective assessment
Service	Education for social uplift and responsibility	Mulya Pravah 2.0 includes seva and community service	Service-learning credits and local projects

Theme	Malaviya's emphasis	Contemporary policy expression	Illustrative institutional response
Cultural rootedness	Indian culture and moral inheritance alongside modern knowledge	NEP 2020 and NCF-SE 2023 stress rootedness in India and multilingual learning	Local literature, biographies, arts and multilingual pedagogy
Holistic development	No separation between intellect and moral formation	NCF-SE 2023 and ECCE frameworks integrate socio-emotional, cultural and cognitive domains	Whole-school well-being and interdisciplinary curriculum
Citizenship	Education for responsible national life	Constitutional values, duties, inclusion and democratic participation	Student forums, inclusive campus culture, dialogue spaces

Source: Synthesized from institutional and policy documents (Banaras Hindu University, 2025; Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2023; University Grants Commission, 2023).

Practical Framework for Institutional Implementation

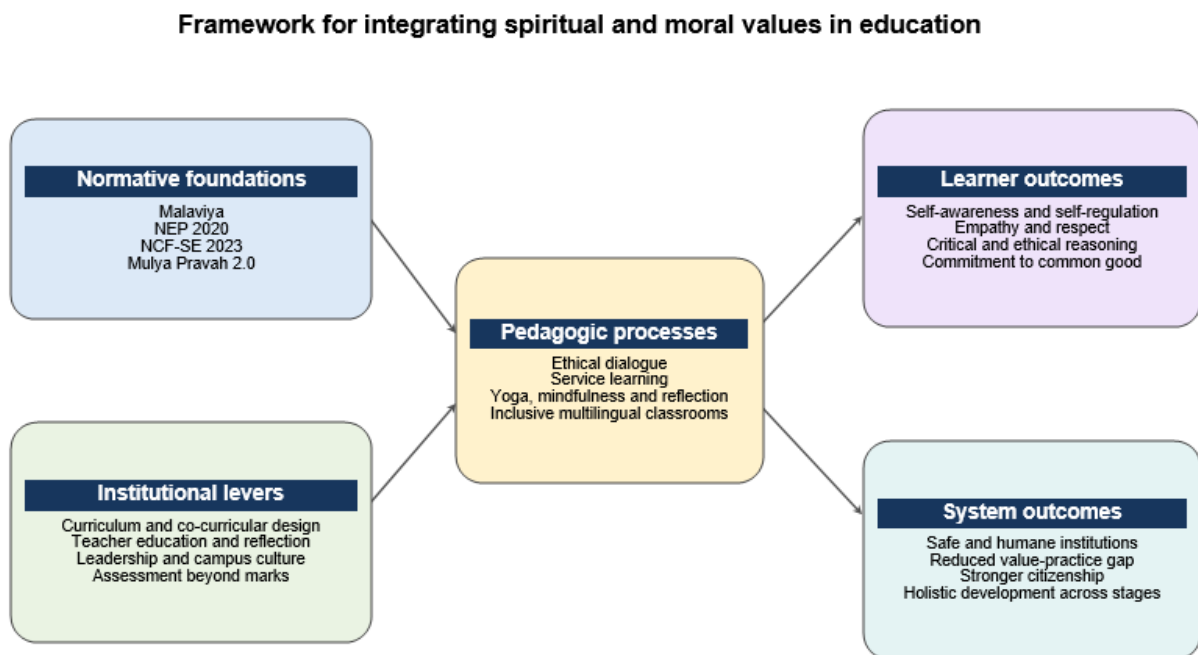
Value based education cannot be a mere ritualistic space nor a moralistic teaching of the books. Integration is the most effective institutional road to take instead of segregation. Values must be integrated into the school learning process through classroom discussion, group work, language learning, arts education, environmental involvement, community service and reflection. A story from everyday life can be used in any of the social science, literature, science or vocational contexts to present ethical dilemmas. It's possible to tell stories that resonate with students while addressing moral questions without simplifying values into slogans, by using multilingual storytelling, local biographies, and culturally diverse narratives. Sensitively and non-intrusively, brief reflective practices such as age-appropriate mindfulness practices, breathing exercises, yoga, journaling or quiet reflection can be supportive to self-regulation (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; Phan et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2024).

The model pivots on teacher preparation. To achieve the vision of Malaviya and NEP 2020, teachers themselves need to be supported to adopt the reflective, ethical and inclusive approach to pedagogy. Education institutes need to embody values comprehensively and not only ideologies, as Mulya Pravah 2.0 rightly points out (University Grants Commission, 2023). This means training in dialogue facilitation, conflict sensitivity, inclusive language, reflective assessment, service learning and social-emotional classroom practice before and during service. It is also a call for not to become a moral policeman. They exist to foster caring learning atmosphere with a commitment

to living values in relationship, equity and intellectual honesty. This is also supported by recent research by Datta and Mete, in which they revealed that moral and ethical values in pre-service teacher education cannot be addressed by a single value-education course, but must be integrated into the curriculum, faculty development and quality-assurance processes (Datta & Mete, 2026).

The same needs to be done with assessment reform. A marks-only culture dulls any robust attempt on holistic education. It does not mean that values should be translated into numerical scores, but institutions can expand the range of evidence of student growth by allowing reflective writing, student portfolios, collaborative activities, community service projects, peer and self-evaluations. At the institutional level, leadership needs to be in touch with timetables, co-curricular spaces, counselling supports, and community partnerships with the value agenda. For higher education, this can encompass ethics modules in various disciplines, structured service-learning credits, campus dialogue forums, faculty development based on Mulya Pravah 2.0 (University Grants Commission, 2023) and student mentoring.

Figure 2. A multi-level framework for implementing spiritual and moral values in education



Implementation works best when values are lived through pedagogy, institutional culture and community practice.

Source: Researcher’s conceptualization based on the synthesis developed in this paper (Banaras Hindu University, 2025; Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; UNESCO, 2024; UNICEF India, 2019; University Grants Commission, 2023; World Health Organization, 1994).

Table 3. Key implementation challenges and corresponding response strategies

Challenge	Why it matters	Practical response
Conceptual ambiguity	Confusion between moral, spiritual, ethical and socio-emotional learning weakens implementation	Use clear operational definitions linked to constitutional and developmental goals
Pluralism and inclusion	Values work can become exclusionary if tied to sectarian instruction	Anchor practice in universal human values, dialogue and constitutional morality
Curricular overload	Add-on moral teaching often turns symbolic	Integrate values into existing subjects, projects and campus routines
Teacher preparedness	Implementation quality depends on reflective and inclusive pedagogy	Strengthen pre-service and in-service teacher education
Assessment bias toward marks	Holistic aims remain invisible when only examination scores count	Use portfolios, reflection, peer feedback and service-based evidence
Institutional tokenism	Ceremonies without culture change produce little effect	Align leadership, timetables, mentoring and community partnerships with the value agenda

Source: Developed by the authors from the policy and research synthesis in this paper (Cipriano et al., 2024; Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; Phan et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2024; University Grants Commission, 2023).

Challenges and Cautions

While value education is desired, it has its own challenges. The first is conceptual ambiguity. Spiritual, moral, ethical, and socio-emotional are not synonymous but are used interchangeably. Without concepts there will be implementation that is shallow or susceptible to ideology. Pluralism is the second challenge. In multicultural classrooms, any bid for one culture or religion is likely to create exclusion. In order to resolve this, it is necessary to see spiritual and moral education within a universal education model, based on the constitutional values, and not on confessional teaching (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; University Grants Commission, 2023).

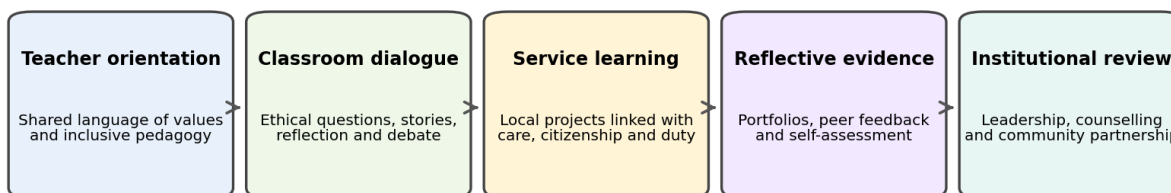
The third one is curricular overload. There are already significant academic and administrative stresses on schools and universities. An additional moral program not integrated into time, pedagogy and assessment can frequently result in tokenism. The uneven capacity of teachers is a fourth challenge. Research on SEL and mindfulness indicates that fidelity, appropriateness, and support for implementation are key factors of programme quality (Cipriano et al., 2024; Phan et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2024). The fifth challenge is that of symbolic compliance. Value education can be perceived as happening, but it does not change institutional behaviour, if

it is limited to morning assemblies, slogans or single day observation. That is why value-education is truly known as it changes the relationship, campus culture, decision-making and students' participation.

One helpful approach is to take a gradual model approach. These can be started with teacher orientation, classroom dialogue, reflective writing, service-learning activities, among others, prior to formal assessment indicators, as well as peer collaboration and counselling support. A staged process can make sure value education does not end up being a 'tick the box' topic and can help create an 'ethical way of doing things' culture within the institution.

Figure 3. Phased pathway for implementing value-based education

Phased pathway for value-based education implementation



The model begins with teacher capacity and ends with institutional accountability, preventing value education from becoming tokenistic.

Source: Researcher-developed pathway based on the implementation discussion in this paper (Cipriano et al., 2024; Datta & Mete, 2026; Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; Phan et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2024; University Grants Commission, 2023).

Conclusion

The revival of the discussion of spiritual and moral values in education is not a throwback. It is a reaction to the modern educational problem in which the expansion and growth of knowledge has not necessarily led to judgement, empathy, or social responsibility. Malaviya's educational philosophy continues to be relevant as it emphasizes that the goal of education is not only to receive a certificate but to develop character and services. The vision is not repeated in his words and phrases exactly as he envisioned them, but it is crystal clear that there is a strong alignment with the vision: holistic development, values, ethical capacity, well-being, and rootedness are once again put at the heart of educational discourse (Banaras Hindu University, 2025; Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2023; University Grants Commission, 2023).

From the evidence presented in this paper, it is clear that the current case for value-based education is stronger if it is joined by philosophical insight and institutional evidence. On the policy side, an enabling framework was created; on the empirical research side, there is research on SEL, life skills, and mindful self-regulation; on the side of school education, recent reforms; and on the side of higher education, recent reforms (Cipriano et al., 2024; Durlak et al., 2011;

Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 2024; Phan et al., 2022; Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2023, 2025, 2026a, 2026b; UNESCO, 2024; UNICEF India, 2019; World Health Organization, 1994). The question now is how, rather than if, values can be incorporated in inclusive, intellectually rigorous and educationally relevant ways. It is, therefore, a rather straightforward, yet bold conclusion, that a modern understanding of Malaviya in the context of NEP 2020 suggests that the education can be truly holistic only if knowledge, character, responsibility and humane institutional culture are nurtured together. The framework could be explored further with classroom observation, teacher education interventions, student well-being measures, and comparative institutional case studies in the future.

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