*Importance and function of values in Organisations--*

Generally, value has been taken to mean moral ideas, general conceptions or orientations towards the world or sometimes simply interests, attitudes, preferences, needs, sentiments and dispositions. But sociologists use this term in a more precise sense to mean “the generalised end which has the connotations of rightness, goodness or inherent desirability”.

These ends are regarded legitimate and binding by society. They define what is important worthwhile and worth striving for. Sometimes, values have been interpreted to mean “such standards by means of which the ends of action are selected”. Thus, values are collective conceptions of what is considered good, desirable, and proper or bad, undesirable, and improper in a culture.

### Importance and functions of values:

Values are general principles to regulate our day-to-day behaviour. They not only give direction to our behaviour but are also ideals and objectives in themselves. Values deal not so much with what is, but with what ought to be; in other words, they express moral impera­tives. They are the expression of the ultimate ends, goals or purposes of social action. Our values are the basis of our judgments about what is desirable, beautiful, proper, correct, important, worthwhile and good as well as what is undesirable, ugly, incorrect, improper and bad. Pioneer sociologist Durkheim emphasised the importance of values (though he used the term ‘morals’) in controlling disruptive individual passions.

* **They help employees work towards a purpose** – Engaged employees more often than not have values that are aligned to their organization’s values. These values give employees a purpose to work towards and help them achieve goals in a manner that not only benefits them but also the organization.
* **They help organizations set standards** – Organization values set standards that organizations and employees can aspire too. When organizations fall behind in terms of profit or quality, or employees fall behind in terms of work or goals, they know that they are not living up to their organizational values.
* **Good organization values can attract the right customer** – Customers too tend to choose organizations based on the values they embody and how they identify with them. Good organization values will attract exactly the kind of customers an organization might envision having. And living up to those organization values will ensure that customers remain loyal despite the appearance of new products  on the market.
* **They attract the right employees** – Good organization values are a great way of weeding employees who will fit in and employees who don’t. Because the ones who fit probably share the same values and therefore are more invested in seeing an organization succeed.
* Values help organizations determine a range of acceptable behaviors, defining for leaders and employees alike which actions are encouraged and which are unacceptable. Values tell staff what is good for the organization and what is unhealthy. For example, in our own organization we have defined “receptivity to feedback” as a value that is core to our identity. Our collective clarity about this value allows us to more willingly cut ties with contractors or employees who have been unreceptive to feedback even if there are other things we like about them. As a result, we are surrounded by people who are not only easier to work with, but who are also committed to improvement and personal growth.
* When organizations explicitly define their true values, they provide immediate clarity for decision making. They provide a reference point in the hiring processes, performance reviews, and any disciplinary actions. An organization’s values create helpful boundaries that show staff and clients where the organization will go and where it won’t go.

He also stressed that values enable individuals to feel that they are part of something bigger than themselves. Modem sociologist E. Shils (1972) also makes the same point and calls ‘the central value system’ (the main values of society) are seen as essential in creating conformity and order. Indian sociologist R.K. Mukerjee (1949) writes: “By their nature, all human relations and behaviour are imbedded in values.”

**The main functions of values are as follows:**

1. Values play an important role in the integration and fulfillment of man’s basic impulses and desires in a stable and consistent manner appropriate for his living.

2. They are generic experiences in social action made up of both individual and social responses and attitudes.

3. They build up societies, integrate social relations.

4. They mould the ideal dimensions of personality and range and depth of culture.

5. They influence people’s behaviour and serve as criteria for evaluating the actions of others.

6. They have a great role to play in the conduct of social life.

7. They help in creating norms to guide day-to-day behaviours

8. Values provide goals or ends for the members to aim for.

9. Values provide for stabilities and uniformities in group interaction. They hold the society together because they are shared in common. Some sociologists argue that shared values form the basis for social unity. Since they share the same values with others, the members of society are likely to see others as “people like themselves”. They will therefore, have a sense of belonging to a social group. They will feel a part of the wider society.

10. Values bring legitimacy to the rules that govern specific activities. The rule are accepted as rules and followed mainly because they embody the values that most people accept. The Americans for example, believe that the capitalist organization is the best one because it allows people to seek success in life.

11.Values help to bring about some kind of adjustment between different sets of rules. The people seek the same kinds of ends or goals in different field of their life. Hence, it is possible for them to modify the rules to help the pursuit of this end.

For example, if the Indian people cherish the value of “the principle of equality”, then they will have to modify the rules governing the interpersonal relationship of husband and wife; and man and woman. As and when new activities emerge, people create rules in the light of their beliefs about what is ‘good’ and ‘right’.