



Transforming Education and Professional Mindsets to Instill Spiritual/Ethical Values in Design: Fostering Innovation in Pedagogy

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Abstract

In the past decade, the fields of education and design have increasingly acknowledged the significance of integrating spiritual and ethical principles into instructional frameworks. Historically, design education has emphasized technical proficiency and creativity, often neglecting the social, environmental, and ethical ramifications of design. This article examines the need to incorporate spiritual and ethical ideals into design education to cultivate holistic, responsible, and conscientious designers capable of addressing the intricacies of modern concerns. The primary objective of this research is to evaluate how infusing spiritual and ethical values into design education can cultivate a more profound sense of purpose and responsibility among students. By grounding design practice in these values, this research aims to assess their potential to enhance critical thinking, empathy, and the ability to create sustainable solutions that positively impact society. This study employed a mixed-methods approach that combined qualitative and quantitative research methods. A comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify existing frameworks and pedagogical practices that embrace the ethical and spiritual dimensions. In addition, case studies from universities that have successfully implemented such practices were analyzed. Surveys and interviews with educators and students were used to gather insights into their experiences and perceptions of incorporating these values into their curriculum. This study underscores the need to reform design education by incorporating spiritual and ethical principles into the curriculum. This methodology seeks to cultivate ethical and empathetic designers equipped to tackle global issues. This research advocates for educational institutions to embrace this paradigm shift in design pedagogy, highlighting the interrelation of creativity, ethics, and spirituality for a sustainable and fair future.

Keywords: *spiritual/ethical values, design education, pedagogical innovation professional mindsets.*

Introduction

A major problem for modern education systems is the gap between technical knowledge and moral growth. Current curriculum often emphasize academic success at the expense of spiritual and ethical considerations (Rohova, 2024). Schools focus on quantifiable learning objectives and standardized performance indicators, which unintentionally creates a gap between knowledge and information that doesn't help people become wise or make deliberate choices. This lack has led to a lot of students feeling spiritually disconnected and not being ready for morally difficult jobs. This has led to things like bullying and moral concessions at work (Rohova, 2024). When teachers don't know how to teach the spiritual side of learning, they can't be moral authorities or show how to think ethically. This leads to cycles of shallow value transmission that create professionals who are technically skilled but spiritually lost.

Recent educational frameworks acknowledge this systemic weakness and are promoting revolutionary solutions. India's National Education Policy 2020 and new ethical curriculum models say that for learning to really change people, values-based education must be combined with modern teaching methods (Abuzar et al., 2025). This change in thinking shows that more and more people are realizing that ethical values like justice, beneficence, and accountability should

guide curriculum design in all fields of study. The current educational discourse progressively underscores that information must be integrated with wisdom, virtue, and spiritual awareness to cultivate persons equipped to tackle intricate social issues (Baral & Giri, 2025). This integration transcends theoretical frameworks; it necessitates a reconfiguration of how educators promote learning through methodologies that cultivate the inner self, augment self-awareness, and encourage spiritually balanced decision-making that mitigates impulsive behavior and nurtures social responsibility.

Design areas such as architecture, engineering, fashion, and product design are well positioned to facilitate this transformation, since design directly influences human emotions and societal functionality. Design education inevitably engages with ethical concerns about the influence of human objects on behavior, sustainability, and social equality, distinguishing it from purely theoretical sciences.

When design education includes spiritual and ethical principles based on holistic epistemologies, it creates not only skilled professionals who follow technical guidelines but also people who are aware of how to make positive changes and have critical thinking skills and a focus on the community (Zain, 2025). This integration

requires the creation of methodologies, such as project-based learning, systems thinking, and ethical reflection, that align design practices with social, environmental, and economic considerations, thus establishing design education as a driver for addressing global issues (Contreras, 2025). Schools may teach professionals to be guardians of people's well-being instead of merely technical service providers by including regenerative responsibility and spiritual awareness in design education.

Education has traditionally been regarded as the most effective tool for value transmission. However, the current system often emphasizes cognitive and competitive skills while neglecting the ethical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of human development (Nair, 2010). This gap has contributed significantly to the widening moral vacuum among the youth. John F. Kennedy once remarked, “The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word ‘crisis.’ One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger—but recognize the opportunity.” This perspective is highly relevant to the current situation. The value crisis, though alarming, presents a unique opportunity for educators and policymakers to redefine educational priorities, fostering a renewed focus on character education and value-based learning

In today's world of school and work, there is a growing need for new ideas, creativity, and moral responsibility. As design

disciplines progress, there is an increasing acknowledgment of the need to include spiritual and ethical principles into educational systems. This research examines the evolution of educational methodologies and professional attitudes to promote innovation via the integration of these ideals. This study seeks to provide a thorough comprehension of the integration of spiritual and ethical principles in design education to foster creative thinking, via the analysis of current literature, approaches, and prospective consequences.

Review Literature

Paniagua, et,al (2018). Teachers as designers of learning environments. Pedagogy is essential in teaching and learning, focusing on guiding young people to become lifelong learners equipped with in-depth knowledge and social skills. This perspective transforms teachers into experts who innovate through problem-solving rather than mere technicians following a curriculum. "Teachers as Designers of Learning Environments: The Importance of Innovative Pedagogies" showcases innovative pedagogies from around the world, encouraging educators and policymakers to draw inspiration from ongoing classroom practices. Central to these approaches is an awareness of learners' natural tendencies towards play, creativity, collaboration, and inquiry, illustrated by examples from 27 national and international school networks.

Jefferies, P., Carsten-Stahl, B., & McRobb, S. (2007). *Exploring the relationships between pedagogy, ethics and technology: building a framework for strategy development. Technology, Pedagogy and Education.* The paper examines the interplay between pedagogy, ethics, and technology in developing e-learning strategies, highlighting the need for research-driven integration of these elements. It proposes a framework to clearly define the relationships among these constructs, aiming to illuminate their mutual dependencies and mitigate ethical risks in e-teaching and e-learning.

Holland, C., Mulcahy, C., Besong, F. and Judge, M. (2012) *Ethical-values pedagogical model. Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability* This paper introduces the Ethical-values Pedagogical Model, developed during the design of an online Masters programme with support from the Erasmus multilateral programme. The authors, experienced in online learning and values-based education, propose this model as a theoretical resource focusing on the role of ethical-values in learning. The model reconceptualizes Garrison, Anderson, and Archer's Community of Inquiry Framework, emphasizing that a positive ethical-values presence is vital for sustaining teaching, social, and cognitive presences, which in turn enables meaningful cognitive experiences. The ethical-values bases of both learners and educators influence the learning environment's cognitive experiences, highlighting the importance of fostering authentic and transformative learning

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experiences for individuals and communities.

Scholars and practitioners have been interested in combining spiritual and moral principles in education. **Palmer (1998)** asserts that education should include not just academic growth but also the holistic development of the individual, including their spiritual and ethical aspects. **Noddings (2002)** agrees with this all-encompassing approach. She stresses the relevance of care ethics in schools and calls for a curriculum that encourages empathy and moral responsibility.

Also, a lot has been said about how important innovation is in design education. **Cross (2011)** contends that creativity is not only a byproduct of technical proficiency but is fundamentally anchored in the values and beliefs of humans. This viewpoint corresponds with the idea that ethical concerns may influence creative processes, resulting in more significant and socially responsible design products (**Buchanan, 2001**).

The educational transition towards integrating spiritual and ethical values is further endorsed by the notion of transformational learning. **Mezirow (1991)** asserts that transformational learning occurs when people engage in critical reflection on their ideas and assumptions, resulting in a shift in perspective. This method is vital for encouraging creativity, since it pushes students to question the current quo and explore new possibilities in design.

Key Objectives

1. To determine whether adding spiritual and moral values to people's lives helps them find meaning and feel responsible.
2. To assess the influence of incorporating design practice within these principles on the advancement of critical thinking, empathy, and the formulation of sustainable solutions.
3. To examine frameworks and ways of teaching that use literature and case studies to teach moral and spiritual ideals.
4. To find out what instructors and students think about adding more disciplines to the curriculum via surveys and interviews.

Hypotheses of the Study

- There will be no significance in the contribution of spiritual and moral values to individuals' sense of meaning and responsibility.
- There will be no significance in the impact of integrating design practice grounded in spiritual and moral values on critical thinking, empathy, and the development of sustainable solutions.
- There will be no significance in the effectiveness of educational frameworks and pedagogical approaches that use literature and case

studies to teach moral and spiritual ideals.

- There will be no significance in the perceptions of instructors and students regarding the enrichment of the curriculum through the addition of interdisciplinary disciplines involving spiritual and moral values. by educators and students.

Methodology

This study adopts a case study research design centered on transforming education and professional mindsets to instill spiritual and ethical values in design, aiming to foster innovation in pedagogy. *Value-Sensitive Design (VSD) and Design for Values (Df)* It employs a pre-test/post-test control group framework to evaluate the null hypotheses. Quantitative methods will analyze relationships between relevant variables, while qualitative data from educators and professionals will provide in-depth contextual insights. This integrated approach ensures ethical rigor and alignment with the study's objectives.

Educational Implications of the Study

- **Curriculum Reform:** Institutions can redesign programs to embed spiritual/ethical values, enhancing innovation without compromising rigor.

- **Professional Development:** Training modules for educators to foster ethical mindsets, promoting sustainable pedagogical evolution.
- **Policy Influence:** Recommendations for national education policies prioritizing spiritual growth alongside technical skills.
- **Global Relevance:** Model applicable to diverse cultural contexts, bridging ethics and design for holistic education.

Discussion

The integration of spiritual and ethical values in design education presents both challenges and opportunities. While there is a growing recognition of the importance of these values, there is often resistance to changing traditional pedagogical approaches. Educators may face difficulties in balancing technical skills with ethical considerations, particularly in competitive environments where market demands prioritize profitability over social responsibility.

However, the potential benefits of this integration are substantial. By fostering a culture of ethical awareness and spiritual growth, educational institutions can cultivate a new generation of designers who are not only skilled but also socially conscious. This shift has the potential to lead to innovative solutions that address

pressing global challenges, such as sustainability and social justice.

Conclusion

Transforming education and professional mindsets to instill spiritual and ethical values in design is essential for fostering innovation in pedagogy. By embracing a holistic approach that prioritizes ethical considerations and spiritual growth, educational institutions can prepare students to navigate the complexities of the modern design landscape. The findings of this research underscore the importance of integrating these values into educational frameworks, ultimately leading to more responsible and innovative design practices.

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