



The Role of Short Fiction in Imparting Value Education

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Abstract:

Short fiction, through its brevity, focused narratives, and emotional immediacy, serves as a hub of value education to access diverse cultural and moral frameworks for fostering critical thinking and approach building. Short stories have been studied from the perspectives of elements like theme, plot, characterization, narrative technique, etc. The socio-cultural and religious values have also been explored in earlier literary works. In addition to this, the novels and other longer literary works have been explored as means and medium for value education. However, it's been observed that short fiction and especially the features of short fiction like brevity, accessibility, emotional immediacy, and its potential impact on the audience have been explored much from the viewpoint of value education. The narratives, such as Rabindranath Tagore, R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, and others, discussed how their short stories reflect social concerns. This emphasizes the importance of the short story in individual development. Through short fiction, readers are guided on an introspective journey of morality. Value education is integrated into various academic curricula worldwide and is often taught through stories, discussions, and real-life examples to make it relatable and impactful. It goes beyond mere academic learning and focuses on developing character, respect, social responsibility, and emotional intelligence. When integrated with short stories, value education becomes more effective as stories provide concrete examples of virtues such as honesty, kindness, perseverance, and respect. Virtues like honesty, empathy, courage, and justice are effectively explored through the short fiction genre. Short stories serve as a bridge between knowledge and wisdom, making value education both accessible and impactful.

Keywords: Short fictions, Value Education, Human Ethics, Virtues.

Introduction:

Literature has been defined in many ways. The specific definitions of literature, which are reserved for written works with artistic worth, emphasize aesthetic features, stylistic devices, figures of speech, heightened emotions, and loftiness of thought as definitive qualities of literature. It includes novels, poetry, drama, and short stories. A short story is considered a short fictional narrative prose that describes fictional characters and events as novels but they differ in

size and plot. Therefore, (The Digital Concise Oxford English Dictionary) defines a short story as 'a story with a fully developed theme but significantly shorter and less elaborate than a novel'.

Short stories have always been a fascinating art form; man has loved to cherish them long. There has been an impulse to think and express human feelings in the form of stories. Earlier, there used to be stories about animals, and many folk tales and oral communication

became the means through which such stories were conveyed. Then there was a tradition of beast fables. It grew in scope and gained accuracy. Storytelling flourished in Greece, Italy, France, Egypt, Arabia, Persia and India. There were various short narrative tales. Short stories took a single sitting to teach and to delight. Hence, in the course of time, short fiction has emerged as an effective medium of value education.

There are various types of stories, like legends, anecdotes, parables, and fables. Basically, every story must have a moral, and these short stories, like a fable or anecdotes, also have a moral. These types of stories, like all other literary genres, give us a moral message. Many Roman legends were collected in the *Gestalt Romanum* in the 13th or 14th century. Aesop, a Greek slave, introduced parables or fables, and that is why we call short tales Aesop's fables. Short stories have long been a powerful tool for imparting values and life lessons in an engaging way. Through simple narratives, readers, especially young minds, can absorb important morals, ethical dilemmas, and cultural values. These stories often feature relatable characters and situations that reflect real-life challenges, encouraging empathy, integrity, and problem-solving skills.

Meaning of The Concept 'Values.':

According to Cuber (1962). "Values are the ideas and beliefs which people cherish. These ideas contain or express the judgment which people have of the relative importance of things."

The values cannot be purchased by money. They are to be learnt, practiced willfully, and taught. Education plays a great role in developing a person in the three aspects of physique. Mentals and character. Knowledge gives power, but character gives respect.

Needs of Value-Based Education:

Quality and values are important in any society, and education and values are inseparable; hence, education must be values-based. Education provides knowledge of social conduct, strength, character, self-respect, self-preservation, and a range of behavioral values, as well as cultural awareness. Education is a tool that provides the right knowledge to pursue life value-based education provides to know the purpose of life, to know oneself, and to know oneself as well as to identify oneself with others. Education is the process of nurturing the human spirit as well as a certain outlook on life and the world. Value-based education is an approach to creating a strong learning environment that enhances both academic attainment and students' social and relationship skills. seminar

In our everyday lives, we face a quiet yet urgent crisis—the fading of human values. Values such as kindness, honesty, justice, and truthfulness are very useful in holding society together. We need to learn their importance. People pursue wealth and status, while empathy and humanity are neglected. In this search for material success, humanity's well-being and values lose their significance. However, human values form the foundation of social harmony.

Literature Review:

A. Review of Books:

IHarold Bloom (Ed.), *Classic short Stories :A Critical Collection*

(2009) Contribution –Analyzes canonical Stories **E.g.** Chekhov's „*The Lady with the Dog*' Through moral and existential lenses.

Relevance – Demonstrates how timeless themes (love, sacrifice, mortality) Convey universal values.

Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (2000)

Contribution – Examines how stories borrow and reshape cultural values. Useful for analyzing

postcolonial short fiction (e.g. Chinua Achebe, Alice Munro)

Relevance - Connects value education to cultural contexts in literature.

Harold Bloom (Ed.), *Classic short Stories: A Critical Collection* (2009) Contribution – Analyzes canonical Stories. E.g. Chekhov's „*The Lady with the Dog*’ Through moral and existential lenses.

Relevance – Demonstrates how timeless themes (love, sacrifice, mortality) Convey universal values

Clare Hanson, *Short stories and Short Fictions, 1880-1980* (1985)

Contribution – Traces the evolution of the short story as a vehicle for social critique, including works by Katherine Mansfield and D.H. Lawrence.

Relevance – Highlights how brevity enables sharp moral commentary.

B. Review of Articles

International Journal Of Research And Analytical Reviews (IJRAR)

Title- The Role of Literature in Nurturing Moral Values: An Exploration through Indian English Short Stories

Maruti B Gouda, Assistant Professor of English, Smt. Indira Gandhi Govt. First Grade College Women's College, Sagar.

This article discusses how Indian English short stories serve as powerful tools for transmitting ethical literacy and character education. It highlights the works of authors like Rabindranath Tagore, R.K. Narayan, and Jhumpa Lahiri, emphasizing how their narratives reflect ethical dilemmas and societal concerns.

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Title- The Use of Short Fiction in a Writing Class: Pedagogical Suggestions for Secondary Level Teachers in EFL Settings.

Youngjoo Seo and Changhyun Kim

It provides pedagogical suggestions for integrating short fiction into English writing instruction, particularly in EFL settings. It discusses how literature enhances students' creative writing skills and critical thinking, using examples from Korean and English short stories.

C. Review of Ph.D. Thesis:

TITLE : R.K . NARAYAR'S SHORT FICTIONS: ATHEMATIC STUDY

Researcher: Narayana T. Yea 1994

A close study of Narayan's short fiction reveals many significant aspects of his art. His main aim seems to be only to provide aesthetic satisfaction to his readers. A pure Artist that he is, he interprets Indian life aesthetically with unprejudiced objectivity.

TITLE : CHRISTIAN VALUES AND RECENT HUMANITARIAN TRENDS IN THE SHORT STORIES OF THE ODORRE DREISER

Researcher: Garul Selvi Mariya Year: 2002.

Values are present in all religions. There is no value, which is restricted to one religion alone but it is impossible at the same time to deny the all- pervasive, cosmic values of Jesus Christ and his teachings. Jesus Christ stands apart in many ways. Jesus is believed to be human and divine. He is the Son of God and the son of man. He represents the value of goodness and holiness. Jesus is the only apostle of peace who was born in the world to bring peace and happiness for humanity

TITLE : THEME OF PARTITION IN THE SELECT SHORT FICTION

Researcher: Sheeba Parveen

Year: 2002.

There are some special characteristics

of the partition violence. At first, although it was the outcome of the high – politics game played by the leaders of higher economic and social classes, the people who were victims of the partition violence belonged to the lower classes of the Indian society.

These people behaved with each other like beasts. These innocent common people were neither villains nor criminals. But they became the victims and perpetrators of brutality and vengeance. Lower classes could be provoked very easily by nonchalant politicians.

Short Fictions as A Medium for Value Education:

Short stories have been studied from the perspectives of elements like theme, plot, characterization, narrative technique, etc. The socio-cultural and religious values have also been explored in earlier literary works. In addition to this, the novels and other longer literary works have been explored as means and medium for value education. However, it's been observed that short fiction and especially the features of short fiction like brevity, accessibility, emotional immediacy, and its potential impact on the audience have been explored much from the viewpoint of value education.

The following short fiction writers have contributed unique works to imparting value education

- **Rabindranath Tagore:** "Gitanjali" and "The Home and the World", he has collected short stories that deal with themes of spirituality and human relationships.
eg, '*Kabuliwallah*', empathy, love, and humanity; bonds transcend social and cultural differences. Values / moral lessons are expressed by the story.
- **R.K. Narayan:** R.K. Narayan's "Malgudi Days" is a collection of short stories. set in

the imaginary town of Malgudi. The stories depict the essence of Indian culture, society, and human nature.

e.g., '*An Astrologer's Day*' expressed the values of Truth and redemption; facing one's past is essential for peace, moral is given by the story.

- **Mulk Raj Anand:** Anand's writing is deeply humanistic, emphasizing the struggles of the poor, marginalized, and oppressed in Indian society. He explored themes such as social justice, equality, compassion, the dignity of labour, and a critique of caste discrimination. He brought realism into Indian English fiction, depicting the daily lives of peasants, workers, and outcasts with empathy and moral depth.
eg, '*The Lost Child*', through this story, he expressed the value of family love, contentment, and Empathy
- **Khushwant Singh:** "The Mark of Vishnu" is one of Khushwant Singh's famous short stories. It tells, a poor sweep who understands a divine miracle and struggles with the complexities of fame and superstition. Through this Education and Enlightenment, respect for life values are expressed.
- **Anton Chekhov:** Chekhov's prose was often refined and economical, focusing on developing characters and mood rather than action.
eg, '*The Bet*' is a story that shows the deeper agony of a man who is faced with conflict in life. Values contrast materialism and spirituality, highlight the futility of greed, emphasize the importance of knowledge, and express human pride and ego.
- **O. Henry:** He was considered one of the

best for his twist endings. He crafted lasting stories about everyday people with humor, wit, and realism.

eg, 'After Twenty Years' is a widely anthologised story summing up the quintessential O Henry qualities of writing. Reminding us that values evolve with responsibility. Honesty and Justice.

The Role of Short Fictions in Imparting Value Education:

Value education is integrated into various academic curricula worldwide and is often taught through stories, discussions, and real-life examples to make it relatable and impactful. It plays a vital role in shaping responsible and well-rounded individuals. Value education, on the other hand, is the structured approach to instilling moral and ethical principles in individuals. It goes beyond mere academic learning and focuses on developing character, respect, social responsibility and emotional intelligence. When integrated with short stories, value education becomes more effective as stories provide concrete examples of virtues such as honesty, kindness, perseverance, and respect. Value education, which aims to instill virtues such as honesty, empathy, courage, and justice, finds an effective tool in the short fiction genre. From ancient fables and folktales to modern inspirational narratives, short stories serve as a bridge between knowledge and wisdom, making value education both accessible and impactful. It means short fiction uses brief, powerful stories to teach values by highlighting society's flaws and moral issues through humor, sarcasm, or hidden meanings, encouraging readers to think about right and wrong and grow kindness, understanding, and a wish to improve the world with the help of value education.

Conclusion:

Short fiction is a powerful tool in imparting value education because it blends imagination with moral clarity. Writers like Tagore, O. Henry, and Chekhov ect. show that values such as honesty, empathy, and sacrifice are timeless and essential for personal and social growth.

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