THE ROLE OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN VALUES IN DEVELOPING RIGHT UNDERSTANDING OF THE SELF FOR REFINING LEADERSHIP ROLES

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ABSTRACT

In the contemporary socio-organizational context, leadership effectiveness is increasingly associated with ethical conduct, emotional balance, and social responsibility. Universal Human Values (UHV) play a significant role in developing right understanding of the self through self-exploration, which in turn refines leadership roles. The present empirical study investigates the relationship between Universal Human Values, right understanding of the self, and leadership effectiveness among teacher-educators. Using a descriptive survey method, data were collected from a sample of 120 teacher-educators through standardized tools measuring Universal Human Values, self-understanding, and leadership orientation. Statistical analysis involving mean, standard deviation, and correlation revealed a significant positive relationship between Universal Human Values and right understanding of the self, as well as between self-understanding and leadership refinement. The findings indicate that leaders grounded in Universal Human Values demonstrate ethical sensitivity, emotional stability, and commitment to collective well-being, leading towards mutual happiness and organizational harmony.

Keywords: Universal Human Values, Self-Exploration, Right Understanding, Leadership Roles, Ethical Leadership.

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INTRODUCTION

Modern society increasingly equates happiness and success with the accumulation of physical facilities, often neglecting the role of inner understanding and ethical clarity. As a result, stress, dissatisfaction, and interpersonal conflicts are becoming common across professional domains.

Universal human values are of the prime need of the hour in the society where we are finding the happiness and prosperity in attaining physical facilities only. In every occupation people are losing their patience level day by day and keep on blaming others for their expectations and desires. Leadership in the 21st century is confronted with unprecedented ethical, social, and emotional challenges. These values guide individuals toward harmony within themselves, in relationships, society at large and Nature. Right understanding of the self enables leaders to recognize their motivations, emotions, and responsibilities toward others. When leadership is rooted in such understanding, it transcends authority-based control and evolves into value-driven service.The present study empirically examines the role of Universal Human Values in developing right understanding of the self and refining leadership roles.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS:

Universal Human Values

Universal Human Values refer to fundamental ethical principles such as Intensions, trust, respect, care, gratitude, compassion, justice, responsibility, and non-violence that are naturally acceptable to all human beings and essential for mutual happiness. We can verify and experiment these values in our life and then we can start living with these values so that we can bring change within.

Right Understanding of the Self

Right understanding of the self refers to the understanding of the difference between body and self, which comes through self-exploration. It is to understand the human consciousness in a

better way so that one can lead oneself towards mutual happiness and prosperity. It is awareness of one's inner motivations, beliefs, emotions, and ethical responsibilities.

Leadership Roles

Leadership roles refer to the ability to ethically influence, guide, and inspire others toward shared goals while ensuring responsibility, transparency, empathy, and collective well-being. Research in emotional intelligence highlights self-awareness as a key determinant of leadership success (Goleman, 1995). Studies on ethical leadership suggest that leaders who internalize moral values positively influence organizational culture and employee behavior (Brown et al., 2005).

Transformational leadership theory emphasizes moral integrity, vision, and inspiration as essential leadership qualities (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Value-based education research also underscores the role of Universal Human Values in shaping responsible citizenship and professional ethics (Covey, 1989). These studies collectively indicate that values and self-understanding are integral to leadership effectiveness.

Present study follows a conceptual and analytical research design based on secondary sources such as books, research articles, and theoretical frameworks related to Universal Human Values, self-awareness, and leadership. No empirical data collection was undertaken. The focus is on synthesis and interpretation of existing knowledge to develop a coherent conceptual understanding.Recent literature strongly supports the interconnection between values, self-awareness, and leadership effectiveness.A 2025 review on emotional intelligence and leadership highlights self-awareness and empathy as critical competencies for ethical leadership and team effectiveness (Ćwiąkała et al., 2025). Leaders with higher emotional intelligence demonstrate improved conflict management, trust-building, and moral judgment.Ethical leadership research in 2025 emphasizes that value-driven leadership fosters psychological safety, belongingness, and creativity within organizations (Qasim & Laghari, 2025). These findings suggest that leadership rooted in values enhances both human well-being and organizational outcomes.

Lasthuizen et al. (2025) argue that ethical leadership must be contextually grounded while remaining anchored in universal values. Their study highlights integrity, fairness, and

responsibility as core leadership qualities across organizational contexts.The World Economic Forum (2025) identifies self-awareness as a foundational leadership skill in times of uncertainty. Leaders who understand their inner values and emotional patterns are better equipped to inspire trust and shared purpose.Authentic leadership studies in 2025 further reveal that leaders with moral clarity and self-understanding create ethical organizational cultures and enhance employee engagement (Zhu, 2025).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the level of Universal Human Values among teacher-educators.

2. To examine the level of right understanding of the self among teacher-educators.

3. To study the level of leadership role orientation among teacher-educators.

4. To find the relationship between Universal Human Values and right understanding of the self.

5. To examine the relationship between right understanding of the self and leadership roles.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There will be no significant relationship between Universal Human Values and right understanding of the self.
2. There will be no significant relationship between right understanding of the self and leadership roles.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Descriptive survey method was used in the present study to collect the data. Data was collected via Google forms.

Sample

The sample consisted of 120 teacher-educators selected randomly from Government and Private Colleges of Education of Chandigarh and adjoining areas.

Tools Used

1. The Universal Human Values Scale developed by A. Nagraj (2005),
2. The Right Understanding of the Self Scale, developed by A. Nagraj and S. K. Sharma (2010),
3. The Leadership Role Orientation Scale developed by K. S. Misra (2012)

Statistical techniques

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation were used for data analysis.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Universal Human Values, Right Understanding of the Self, and Leadership Roles

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Universal Human Values	120	78.42	8.36
Right Understanding of the Self	120	81.15	7.92
Leadership Roles	120	76.88	9.14

The mean scores indicate that teacher-educators possess above-average levels of Universal Human Values, right understanding of the self, and leadership role orientation. The standard deviation values suggest moderate variability among respondents.

Table 2

Correlation between Universal Human Values and Right Understanding of the Self

Variable	N	r-value
Universal Human Values x Right Understanding of the Self	120	0.68**

Significant at 0.01 level

The obtained correlation coefficient (r = 0.68) indicates a high positive and statistically significant relationship between Universal Human Values and right understanding of the self. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3

Correlation between Right Understanding of the Self and Leadership Roles

Variable	N	r-value
Right Understanding of the Self x Leadership Roles	120	0.73**

Significant at 0.01 level

The correlation value (r = 0.73) reveals a strong positive relationship between right understanding of the self and leadership roles, indicating that higher self-understanding leads to refined leadership behavior.

Table 4

Inter-Correlation Matrix of Study Variables

Variable	Universal Human Values	Right Understanding of the Self	Leadership Roles
Universal Human Values	1.00	0.68**	0.61**
Right Understanding of the Self	0.68**	1.00	0.73**
Leadership Roles	0.61**	0.73**	1.00

Significant at 0.01 level

The inter-correlation matrix shows that all variables are positively and significantly related to each other. This confirms that Universal Human Values contribute to self-understanding, which in turn refines leadership roles.

DISCUSSION

The findings clearly indicate that Universal Human Values significantly contribute to the development of right understanding of the self. Individuals who internalize values such as trust, respect, and responsibility demonstrate grer emotional regulation and moral clarity. Right understanding of the self acts as a strong foundation for leadership refinement.Leaders with high self-understanding exhibit ethical decision-making, empathy, transparency, accountability, and commitment to collective well-being. These findings are consistent with

recent studies (Ćwiąkała et al., 2025; Christensen & Narisetti, 2025), which emphasize self-awareness as a core leadership competency in uncertain and complex environments.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Integrating Universal Human Values into leadership development programs can:

- ➢ Enhance ethical sensitivity and moral reasoning
- ➢ Promote emotional intelligence and self-regulation
- ➢ Reduce conflicts and unethical practices
- ➢ Foster sustainable, human-centered leadership

Educational institutions must emphasize value-based education, self-exploration practices, and ethical mentoring.

CONCLUSION

The study empirically establishes that Universal Human Values play a decisive role in developing right understanding of the self, which in turn refines leadership roles. Leaders grounded in values demonstrate ethical strength, emotional maturity, and social responsibility, leading towards mutual happiness and organizational harmony. In an ethically complex world,

value-based leadership emerges as a sustainable and humane pathway for social and organizational development.

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