ANALYSIS OF DATA

“The analysis and interpretation of data involves the objective material in possession of the researcher and his or her subjective reactions and desires to derive from the data, the inherent meanings in their relation to the problems”. - Frances Rummel

The data may be adequate, valid and reliable to any extent, but it does not have any worthwhile purpose unless it is carefully edited, systematically classified, scientifically analyzed, intelligently interpreted, and rationally concluded. For the present study the researcher has gathered all the content, from several available sources, both primary and secondary. It was processed and analyzed to draw proper inferences using deductive and inductive logic to the research process. A critical examination of the content analyzed was done avoiding subjectivity. In this chapter, an attempt is made to analyze and interpret the content objective wise.

Objective I : To Draw the Bio Sketch of Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1926-2011)

Peculiar Birth

Sathyanarayana was born on 23rd November, 1926, to Pedavenkama Raju and Eswaramma as their fourth child in Puttaparthi, Andhra Pradesh. They belong to the clan of ‘Ratnakara Rajus’, who were well-known for preserving classical traditions. His grandfather, the venerable Kondama Raju had the Lepakshi Ramayana, on his finger tips.
and had the distinction of building a temple for Goddess Sathyabhama. Shortly before Sathyia’s birth musical instruments in the family played by themselves. Another unusual incident occurred shortly after the baby was born; there found a deadly cobra, under the blanket, which miraculously disappeared. The baby had a halo of splendor around its head, that its smile had another-worldly beauty and a heavenly power to captivate the heart.

References to Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba in ancient Treatises

- Agasthya Nadi said, “Sathya Sai Baba will heal diseases of people with lightning speed. By his mere will, he will bestow health. Many educational institutions will be established by him and he will publish numerous books on spiritual subjects. He will develop spirituality in humanity. In his earlier incarnation he was Shirdi Sai Baba. He will be the embodiment of kindness and compassion.

- Shukra Nadi said, “His residence will be called Prashanthi Nilayam. By emphasizing the principles of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, he will establish and spread peace all over the world. He always delights in serving humanity. He will derive immense joy in the service of mankind”.

- In Padma Puran, authored by the great Rishi Parasara, it is written, “In the village named Parthi, there will be born a person called Sathyam. He will be 5 feet 3 inches high. He will act like a powerful magnet capable of drawing to himself the whole world”. Baba himself informed devotees that Padma Puran was translated into English by an Englishman called Wilson.
In Vishnu Puran, it was mentioned that he will display great superhuman powers in establishing the new age of truth. His parents will be devotees of Lord Vishnu and will reside in a village worshipping the cowherd form of Sri Krishna.

Prophet Mohammed’s discourses were published in 25 volumes, seven centuries after his death. The collection of those volumes is named the ocean of light. Several symbolic features by which the coming master of the world could be identified have been mentioned in the volume - 13, Mehedi Moud, meaning in Arabic ‘the great teacher who was promised’. They are: “he will have very thick hair on his head. His forehead will be broad. He will have a birthmark on his cheek. His face will always look clean-shaven. His dress will be of flaming red colour. The colour of his face will look sometimes like copper, sometimes golden, sometimes brownish, and sometimes like the moon. His physical form will be small with delicate feet. Right from the moment of his birth, he will carry all knowledge in his head. So also the entire corpus of the world’s religions and precepts will be in him right from his birth. He will go amidst his devotees, move among them and touch their heads with his palm. Whosoever sets eyes on him will experience supreme bliss. He will take residence on a hill. He will fill the world with peace and tranquility. In this manner, as many as 27 references have been made which clearly and unmistakably apply to Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Nostradamus, the French futurist of the 16th Century, wrote a book called “Centuries” in which he wrote, the coming ruler of the world
will appear in Asia. The triplicity of waters will give birth to him. From all parts of the world people will come to honour him.

- The Book of revelations in the Bible describes the advent of the great master. An angel appears before John and reveals, “…behold a white horse; and he that sat upon it was called faithful and true…. His eyes were as a flame of fire and on his head are many crowns…. He was clothed with vesture dipped in blood and his name is called the word of God.…”

- Sage Sri Aurobindo, on 24th November 1926, emerged out of his Samadhi (spiritual trance) and announced, “Yesterday, God incarnated himself on the earth. With his boundless divine powers, he will direct humanity’s mind towards higher, nobler goals. In every heart, he will light a spiritual lamp. His godly voice will ring in the ears of the whole of humanity”. It is clear from the date of incarnation mentioned by Maharshi Aurobindo that he was referring to Sri Sathya Sai. (Thapovanam p.130-134)

Sri Satya Sai Baba had been described like this in numerous religious treatises.

**Childhood**

From the tender age of three and four, Sathya behaved as if he had a heart that melted at sufferings. Sathya used to pet the birds and had aversion to violent acts against animals. In Puttaparthi, there was always the risk of unruly animals trampling passers-by. Sathya used to catch hold of some rogue animals and under his gentle touch the animal would become docile, lower its head and move away harmlessly. Such incidents
used to leave onlookers baffled. His heart melted at the very sight of suffering. Sathya, even as a child was against all sports and games that caused cruelty and pain. He would not allow his companions to witness the bullock-cart race, bear-baiting, cock fighting and such other village entertainments. As ‘Guru’ of his group he used to condemn all these activities.

Another unusual feature of Sathya was that he never used to ask for any particular thing to eat nor for any particular clothes to wear. When he saw the other children in happiness, Sathyam’s face would bloom with pleasure and satisfaction. He was full of pity, compassion, love and sympathy for any living being subjected to hardship and grief. Even as a little boy Sathya was fond of natural beauty. He spent much time contemplating nature. Mountain peaks, stars and sky gave him profound happiness as he contemplated on them spellbound. At such times he appeared serene and serious, much beyond his tender age. The women of Puttaparthi used to refer him as “Brahma Jnani” (one who had attained supreme realization).

**Sathya at School**

There was a small primary school in the village of Puttaparthi and Sathya used to go there with his contemporaries for something nobler than learning to spell and scribe. Sathya was a precious child, learning more things than anyone could teach him and much quicker than most. He could sing all the songs that were rehearsed at home and even composed at the tender age of seven or eight which were accepted for public presentation.
After finishing school in Puttaparthi, Sathya went to the nearby town Bukkapatnam and enrolled in the middle school. His fellow pupils at school were envious of Sathya. He was evidently the cynosure of all because of his excellent sense of cleanliness and immaculate orderliness. As soon as the boys stepped out of the village, they would catch hold of Sathya and duck him in the river Chitravathi to make his spotless white clothes dirtier than theirs. But Sathya never complained to his beloved mother against them.

Sri B. Subbannachary (2001), a teacher for the VIII standard said about Sathya, “As a student, he was a simple, unostentatious, honest and well-behaved boy.” Sri V.C. Kondappa, another teacher, also said, “He was very obedient and simple. He never spoke more than the minimum necessary. Coming a little early to school, he used to install some image or picture of God and performs prayers at that picture along with other children of the school.” (p. 22)

When Sathya was about ten years of age, he formed ‘Pandhari Bhajan’ group in Puttaparthi and it consisted of about sixteen to eighteen boys, dressed uniformly in gerua clothes, holding each a flag in the hand and wearing jingle-bell-anklets. They all danced to the tune of picturesque folk-songs and ballads. Sathya taught the children other songs also. This became a great attraction in the village. Sathya himself played the role of either the mother or the child and his dance, dialogue and music added to the charm of the Bhajan. Sathya was the central figure of the group as organizer, treasurer, teacher, composer and leading singer in all group activities, bhajans and village operas etc. He did every role so wonderfully that the village could see before their eyes, Mathura and Brindavan
reproduced, and Balagopala with his flute enchanting the Gopis, the cows and calves, the trees and even the river Yamuna.

Sathya came first in the final exam and the people of Penugonda town took out a grand procession in honour of this brilliant boy. The physical education instructor of the school at Kamalapur organized a scout troop for doing service during the annual festival at Pushpagiri. As Sathya had no money he started fasting and he never mentioned his fasting during those days to his teacher or to his companions. He cheerfully participated in all the social service activities of his troop like restoring missing children to their parents, providing drinking water to the pilgrims, looking after their medical requirements and rendering first aid etc. By his dedication and assiduousness, Sathya set a fine example as a social worker. Sathya went to Kamalapur in Cuddapah District for higher classes. He was ‘a quiet well-behaved boy,’ the favourite of his teachers. He used to sing in the school assembly.

Sathya was admitted in grade VIII in the high school at Uravakonda. He lived with his brother, Seshama Raju. To meet the daily needs, Sathya would bring drinking water both in the morning and evening every day from a well a mile away, even making two or three trips each time. This service was extended to the neighbours also whenever they asked. Sathya was encouraged and inspired to write a short play dealing with human values, “Do Deeds Match Words?” in which he has taken the main role. He conveyed, through that role, to the world that hypocrisy should be eschewed, and everyone should live up to his word. Once, his headmaster arranged a benefit programme for raising funds for the school. Rishyendramani, a celebrated dancer of those days, was to dance. But
due to some unexpected developments, when she could not keep her appointment in the last minute, Sathyam offered to do it and performed excellently well.

**Transformation of Sathyam**

Sathya was stung by a big black scorpion on 8th March 1940. Consequently, his body lost sensation and sank into unconsciousness. This incident spread like wildfire and agitated many people. In those days, a belief in that region is that a sting of a scorpion often meant death. Sathyam was administered several injections and medicines but none availed. He seemed to have undergone a total transformation, both mentally and physically. It was as though a spiritual spark dormant in his inner being suddenly came to life and began to glow. Sathya was often seen lost in his own thoughts; he recited Sanskrit slokas, sang songs and gave religious discourses. His behaviour was strange and inscrutable. Seshama Raju and his parents were deeply concerned and confused. He was shown to well-known doctors of nearby towns Bellary and Dharmavaram, but none of them could diagnose his problem.

Little Sathya pin pointed the mistakes of well versed persons while reciting the stanzas in Maha Bhagavatha, Puranas, sacred scriptures etc. Sathya appeared deeply lost in himself. By seeing his unusual knowledge and deeds by such utterances the family members got distressed. To bring out Sathya from melancholy, he was inhumanly tortured by exorcists. Sathya was gradually preparing people for the new era of Sathya Sai. His unconcerned coolness during that torture at the hands of the exorcists made everyone feel that he was not an ordinary boy and he has some
superior manifestation. From occasional glimpses of his divinity through extraordinary precocity in song and dance, music and poetry, he had demonstrated his power of journeying outside his body, his freedom from pain and suffering and he had resolved to announce to the world his reality.

**Avatar Declaration as Sathya Sai Baba**

On the 23rd May, 1940, Sathya rose from bed as usual, but after some time, he called the members of the household around him and gave them sugar candy and flowers taken from ‘nowhere’. At this, the neighbours too rushed in. He gave them a ball each of rice cooked in milk and also the flowers and sugar candy, concretized by a mere wave of the hand. Sathya seemed to be in a very jovial mood. One Thursday, some people challenged Sathya and asked Sathya to show the proof if he were Sai Baba. Sathya replied yes and threw some Jasmine flowers on the floor. They saw that the flowers had formed into Telugu letters ‘Sai Baba’!

Having declared himself as Sai Baba, of the Bharadwaja Gothram and the Apasthamba Suthram, Sathyanarayana Raju was thereafter commonly known as Sathya Sai Baba, an appellation which he himself accepted.

Seshama Raju took Sathya back to Uravakonda and admitted him to school. He attracted the attention of everyone, for they had all heard of the madness and of the frantic efforts of the parents to ‘cure’ the melancholy; the boy was acclaimed as a mysterious prodigy, a tiny prophet, or watched as a rare curiosity. On Thursdays, the house used to be full of pilgrims till the late hours of the night and they used to make him sit and offer flowers and sweets.
Renunciation and Spiritual life

An event happened at Uravakonda, where Sathya had been sent for high school studies under his brother’s guardianship. The day was Monday, 20th October 1940. On that day Sathya cast away his school books in an instantaneous, irrevocable gesture of detachment and cried out loudly, “I am no longer your Sathya. I am Sai”. Addressing his sister-in-law, who saw a blinding halo of light around him, he affirmed, “I am going. I no longer belong to you. Maya (delusion) has left and the work I have come here for has to be initiated.” He refused to go back home and moved to the garden of the then inspector of excise, Sri Anjaneyulu. There sitting on a boulder, amidst trees, Sathya began singing a bhajan song, the first in the vast body of bhajan songs, which is now resounding all over the world.

“Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam,
Dusthara Bhava Sagara Tharanam”

It means “Oh mind! To cross the turbulent ocean of life, surrender at the feet of the Divine preceptor and sing His glory; sing in praise of the Master’s Lotus Feet with all your heart; it enables you to cross the difficult-to-cross ocean of the birth-death cycle.” He composed a number of songs and stothras to be used in bhajans. Many of them are sung even today, at Prashanthi Nilayam and in all bhajans at Sai centres.

This was the beginning of his spiritual mission, which as he explained in a historic letter to his brother in 1947, was the moral and upliftment of the masses, with a focus on nurturing and caring for the poorest of the poor in society. Sathya Sai Baba himself said many times that in his life, the first sixteen years will be marked mainly by Leelas, the
next sixteen by Mahimas or Miracles and the subsequent years by Upadesam i.e. discourses. He has assured that Leela, Mahima and Upadesam will be the main notes. When one is in practice the other two will not be absent. True to this statement, Sri Sathya Sai Baba vouchsafed to the devotees who attended these evening Bhajans various miracles. In later years too, Sri Sathya Sai Baba has granted visions of Ishtadevathas (Gods who they love) and of his own manifold forms to many. Miracles and materializations were merely the means to elevate the collective consciousness of people, grabbing their attention away from worldly ways. His most important task was the transformation of mankind, so that they realized their innate reality.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba constantly emphasized the need for dhyana (meditation) with japam (recitation), as an essential discipline for everyone, to be taken up as early in life as possible. Baba gave to everyone hope and courage, contentment and faith, assurance and solace, because he said, “why fear when I am here?”, “put all your faith in me; I shall guide you and guard you”.

On the festival days the poor were fed and clothes were distributed to the maimed and the destitute. He examined the cooking and items prepared. He himself served the sweet to almost every one. He walked along the lane of misery and selected to whom clothes had to be given. He treated the blind, the maimed, and the very old and faltering with special consideration asking the volunteers to hold them and guide them. He advised them to be careful and cautious in the dark and made kind enquiries about them. He said that every devotee has to adopt an attitude
while serving the poor that they are the most distinguished guests and the
Mandir should appear bright and cheerful when they come.

Mahasivarathri is an important festival for the devotees. On this day,
the devotees perform all night bhajan. Every year since the declaration as
Sai Baba, sivalingams have materialized within his body on sivarathri day.
Baba said almost every time he finds it very difficult to postpone or prevent
the formation of the lingams, which concretize within him. In the evening,
Baba used to give a discourse to the devotees.

**Revitalization of Temples**

Sri Sathya Sai Baba has often proclaimed that one of the important
purposes of his incarnation was the revitalization of the divine potency of
deities in ancient temples. As a part of the programme, Sri Sathya Sai Baba
revitalized the important ancient temples all over India like Badarinath
temple in the Himalayas and Viswanatha Temple at Varanasi in Uttar
Pradesh, Somanath Temple and Dwaraka Temple in Gujarat, Temple of
Lord Mallikarjuna at Srisailam in Andhra Pradesh, Temple of Lord Krishna
at Pandaripur in Maharashtra.

**Resuscitation of Vedic Dharma**

After returning from Badrinath, Sri Sathya Sai Baba decided to
perform, a yajna (any self-denying act of serve in the name of God) at
Prashanthi Nilayam. In this context Sri Sathya Sai Baba announced (2000)
“As a part of the mission of my incarnation, I am laying the foundation for
the proper care and sustenance of the Vedas and through them, for the
resuscitation of Vedic Dharma itself. The purpose of my incarnation is to
establish dharma and thereby secure peace and equanimity and happiness
to all people in every land” (p. 142). He added that the ultimate goal of any Yajna performed in Prashanthi Nilayam is sacrifice, in other words, spiritual bliss which takes shape out of total renunciation. Such Yajna was not meant to benefit merely any single individual or country. Its purpose was to bring about universal well-being. In October 1961, the planned yajna which was named as ‘Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna’ conducted during the Dasara Festival at Prashanthi Nilayam. Vedic scholars from across India discoursed on the universality of the Sanathana Dharma as a harmonious way of life. From that year Sri Sathya Sai Baba had conducted this Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna often for the welfare of the society and world peace.

The Discourses of Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Sri Sathya Sai Baba gave many discourses to his devotees and students and the discourse used to start off with a question raised by a devotee on general issues affecting social conduct. Initially, these discourses were given at Prashanthi Nilayam or on the sands of the river Chitravathi which is nearby. Sri Sathya Sai Baba delivered his first-ever public speech at Karur in Tamilnadu starting the tradition of instructing through discourses in 1947. From then he delivered over a thousand public discourses over the next 63 years all over the world. The discourses given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba used to shed light mainly on the universality of the Sanathana Dharma as a harmonious way of life. Sri Sathya Sai Baba spoke on the Upanishads, giving very lucid analysis of the dialectics of each, emphasizing the practical steps of sadhana. He spoke on Karma marga, Gnana marga and Bhakthi marga relating that ‘Karma marga leads
to the intensification of bhakthi (devotion) and bhakthi marga leads ultimately to gnana (wisdom).

Sri Sathya Sai Baba gave discourses on the significance of festivals like Christmas, Ramzan, Buddhapurnima, Vijayadasami, Sivarathri, Uttarayanam, Gurupournami, etc., and on the most profitable method of celebrating them. He spoke on Sri Krishna and Bhagavad Gita and said that unless the nectar of the Gita is drunk and assimilated, one cannot get any result.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba showed two paths and stressed that everyone must tread the dharma marga relating to the physical world, the social world and the community to which one belongs, and the brahma marga, relating to oneself alone, the soul, and the disciplines connected with its fulfillment. Man must grasp God with the right hand and the world with the left. The right hand must not be allowed to loosen its grip for it is right that it should grip tight; that is why it is called ‘right’!’ Statements like these stick in the memory of the listeners who will long ponder over them and thus derive sustenance and joy there from. Sri Sathya Sai Baba spoke of discrimination and the need for faith based on inquiry and reason. He spoke of the magical influence of love between all classes and grades of people as love brings peace based on truth which is the dharma of all.

Very often, Sri Sathya Sai Baba used to reveal the aspect of his reality through discourses. He said (2001) “My task is the spiritual regeneration of humanity through Truth and Love. I have come to show you both Dharma marga and Brahma marga” (p. 296). He said on many
occasions that his mission was to grant courage and joy, and to drive away weakness and fear of the people.

**Publications of Messages of Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

In 1958 Sri Sathya Sai Baba started the publication of the Ashram’s monthly magazine ‘Sanathana Sarathi’. Through this, he started spreading his message of universal love and selfless service. This magazine has a subscription base spread across many states in India, many countries in different languages. For quarter century, Sri Sathya Sai Baba himself wrote articles for the magazine. These series of articles were later published as the vahini series, which consisted Bhagavatha Vahini (The story of the Glory of the Lord), Dharma Vahini (The path of virtue and morality), Dhyana Vahini (The practice of meditation), Geetha Vahini (The divine gospel), Jnana Vahini (The stream of eternal wisdom), Leela Kaivalya Vahini (The cosmic play of God), Prashanthi Vahini (The supreme bliss of the divine), Prasnothara Vahini (Answers to spiritual questions), Prema Vahini (The stream of divine love), Rama Katha Rasa Vahini (The sweet story of Rama’s glory), Sandeha Nivarini (Clearance of spiritual doubts), Sathya Sai Vahini (Spiritual message of Sri Sathya Sai), Sutra Vahini (Analytical aphorism on supreme reality), Upanishad Vahini (Essence of vedic knowledge) and Vidya Vahini (Flow of spiritual education). Sri Sathya Sai Baba devoted a considerable part of his contributions to dhyana, japa, namasmarana and prayer. For about thirteen months, his articles dwelt on dhyana and its modus operandi, what he called, “The planned routine”.

In 1972, one month summer courses on Indian culture and spirituality were started and conducted by Sri Sathya Sai Baba at the Sai
College at Whitefield, Bangalore. These were continued every year till 1979 and after a gap of a decade again from 1990 onwards to 2000. These discourses were summed up in 12 volumes known as Summer Shower Series and another volume Summer Shower on the Blue mountains, Ooty in 1976. There were books for children known as Chinna Katha on moral stories which were narrated by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. There are number of books which were written by so many devotees from India and abroad. In 1960 the first volume of Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s biography ‘Sathyam Sivam Sundaram’ was published with a comprehensive account of Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s life. Over the next 50 years, 6 more volumes of his biography were published, covering his life from 1960 to 2001. There is also the series of ‘Sathya Sai speaks’ during the last few decades on the discourses of Sri Sathya Sai Baba at Prashanthi Nilayam and at many other places visited by him.

Dr. John Hislop’s book ‘Conversations with Sai Baba’ was published in California. This has been an introductory book to Baba’s philosophy for most of the western devotees. Howard Murphet, world war II veteran from Australia, penned the book ‘Sai Baba: Man of Miracles’ which was published by Macmillan Publishers. This book introduced Sri Sathya Sai Baba, his life, miracles and message to the western world. In 1976, after a two and half hour long interaction with Baba at Puttaparthi, R.K. Karanjia, editor of Blitz, a popular news magazine from Bombay, published an extended interview with Sri Sathya Sai Baba on his miracles, massage and avatarhood. Sri Sathya Sai books and publications trust was established in 1983. The trust took up the task of publishing books on Baba’s life, mission and message. Sri Sathya Sai Baba released a number of books which were
written by devotees. In 2011, on March 1st Sri Sathya Sai Baba released a special volume on the eve of Mahashivaratri festival - a compilation on his life and journeys over the past 8 decades titled - ‘Sri Sathya Sai Digvijayam’ (1926-2005). This was the last book released by Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

**Sri Sathya Sai as an Educationist**

Right from the beginning, Sri Sathya Sai Baba was dissatisfied with the present educational system. He started schools, colleges, skill based courses, and universities to give value based integral education. Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL) with its headquarters in Prashanthi Nilayam (Andhra Pradesh) in India was a visible manifestation of Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s vision of education for human transformation. The institute was recognized as a Deemed University by the Government of India in 1981. The objective of the University is to provide the youth with an education, which while cultivating their intelligence, will also purify their impulses and emotions, and equip them with the physical and mental disciplines needed for drawing upon the springs of calmness and joy that lie in their own hearts.

The mission of the Sri Sathya Sai University is to provide value-based integral education that aims at achieving excellence at all levels of human personality – physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, psychological and spiritual; through a blend of secular and spiritual education; with the objective of moulding professionally sound, socially responsible and spiritually aware citizens.
The seeds of the educational mission of Sri Sathya Sai Baba were sown way back in the 1960s in the form of the Balvikas Programme of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization. In 1979, the role of the Balvikas was extended to cover a wider population of student community and was referred to as Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSSEHV). SSSEHV did not limit itself to any specific spiritual or religious principle. It was a secular programme that gave equal respect to all faiths and religions, promoted character development and sought to instill in the student, respect and reverence for nature and for the rights of others. The teacher as an example encourages students to grow in self-confidence and to strive to realize their full potential as human beings.

As the number of Sathya Sai Schools and SSSEHV classes increased in India and around the world, there was a need for more standardization and quality assurance with respect to teacher training and certification. This led to the establishment of the Institutes of Sathya Sai Education (ISSE) starting with the first institute in Denmark in 1987. The network now expanded to 20 Countries and the Indian head quarters is located in the City of Mumbai. The Institutes offer Diploma and Advanced Diploma Courses in training of teachers, assist in the establishment of Sathya Sai Schools and supported the establishment of existing schools. There is also Sri Sathya Sai college of Education for Women at Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh.

**Sri Sathya Sai Medical Services**

The six general hospitals and two super speciality hospitals, established by Sri Sathya Sai Baba have set an example of service to
humanity is like service to God by doing absolutely at free of cost. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that it was more due to the spirit of love and service with which every stone and brick of the building was saturated. Sri Sathya Sai Baba himself visited the hospitals by going round the wards, persuading the villagers to swallow the medicines or undergo the prick or cut and by the sweetness of his words and the healing influence of his looks, hastening recovery. Sri Sathya Sai Baba also often taught many things to the doctors. While advocating that one must shed body-consciousness, Sri Sathya Sai Baba also advised that one must take proper care of the body.

All these hospitals provide free medical care. Everything is absolutely free - i.e. consultancy, check-ups, surgery as well as post-operative care, no matter how sophisticated and expensive it is; everyone who comes to the hospital rich or poor is treated free. Rooted in Baba’s teaching of ‘Help Ever, Hurt Never’, the Sathya Sai health care system is propelled by the currency of unconditional love. This has now expanded into a network of general hospitals, super-specialty hospitals, mobile medical hospitals, medical camps, virtual hospitals and charitable beds in city hospitals, all at no cost to the patients.

The Super speciality hospital, more formally known as the Sri Sathya Sai Institute for Higher Medical Sciences (SSSIHMS), made a mark not only on the National but also on the International scene. There are doctors who fly in from America, United Kingdom, Australia or whatever, wanting to contribute their expertise in some manner or the other. Devotees from Singapore find fulfillment in decorating the place while others donate blood
whenever possible. In fact, devotees from over a hundred countries have
donated blood as a token of Love for Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Many number of leading doctors and specialists from all over the
world come as volunteers to serve in Baba’s hospitals, just to experience
the joy of selfless service. Some devotees come as sevadal volunteers.
Though the volunteers may hold a high position as company executives,
they would not hesitate to push the wheel chair carrying a poor cobbler
who come for cardiac treatment. These hospitals hold a cumulative
capacity of more than 500 beds, 19 operating rooms, 11 ICUs, 4 Cardiac
Cath Labs and specialty departments of Cardiac sciences, Urology,
Ophthalmology, Orthopedics, Gastroenterology, Plastic surgery and
Neurosciences. Till March 2011, Puttaparthi and Whitefield super specialty
hospitals had conducted over 95,000 cardiac surgeries, over 56,000
urology and plastic surgeries, 55,000 eye surgeries, nearly 13,000
neurological surgeries and over 6,000 orthopedic surgeries since inception.
The hospitals have also provided free consultation to lakhs of patients
every year. The hospitals are supported by an inspired staff of 1,500
people that includes doctors, nurses, paramedical staff, nutritionists, several
volunteers and other support services. At any given time, there are about
500 volunteers, from India and all over the world, serving in various
capacities in these hospitals.

What distinguishes the Sathya Sai hospitals from others is, here the
aim is not to merely treat the diseases but to heal the patient. In a discourse
to doctors in 1995, Baba said, “You may receive fee from the rich patients,
but treat the poor free. Dedicate at least one day in a week to render free
medical service to people, irrespective of creed or nationality. Such service
will give you spontaneous joy and enable you to experience the Divine” (p. 35).

In 2009, Sri Sathya Sai International Centre for Medical Services (SSICMS) was established with its main hub in Los Angeles, U.S.A. SSICMS is a consortium of International surgeons, physicians, pharmacists, nurses and medical technicians. It runs world class International medical camps around the globe completely free of charge. It has grown into a vast global system delivering free health care around the world.

Taking health care to a new level, in March 2006, Baba launched the Sathya Sai Mobile Hospital Services in Andhra Pradesh. The Mobile hospital comprises a diagnostic bus equipped with an ultra-sonogram, X-ray plant with automatic processor, pharmacy and a laboratory that can perform most of the pathological and bio-chemical investigations. Additionally, patients who need urgent care, advanced medical needs, and further follow-up are promptly referred to the local Sri Sathya Sai Hospitals for continued treatment. A unique health care outreach initiative, the mobile hospital service does the noble job of serving medical care to desolated communities. This grass root organization was started in Andhra Pradesh, and has now expanded to other states. The mobile clinic with its team of 500 doctors, from twelve different medical fields, and volunteers visit several villages offering medical, dental, and surgical services. The hospital operates from 1st to 12th of every month, travelling to 12 nodal points or base villages, to each of which are attached 6 villages. Seventy two villages are thus serviced by the mobile hospital, though in practice, patients are drawn from nearly 400 villages.
As directed by Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the beneficiaries are also provided nutritious meals. This ongoing programme serves several thousand villagers, satiating their hunger and providing health care. This initiative has treated more than 95,000 patients and benefitted nearly 400 villages in Andhra Pradesh. Following Andhra Pradesh, the state of Maharashtra too has a fleet of 29 such mobile hospitals that serve remote and neglected areas.

The impact of the medical service has been phenomenal. They have also created a huge wave of awareness among the poor on major health issues and are slowly getting translated into changed habits for entire communities. The spiritual component of the service has strengthened community bonds and demonstrated how practicing human values leads to positive health and happiness. As Dr. K. Narasimhan (2011), Director, Sathya Sai Mobile Hospital Project said, “This service is yet another of Bhagawan Baba’s loving and innovative initiatives that is proving to be a silent vehicle for not only providing holistic health but also for percolating the ideals which he has set for the human race” (p. 37).

Disease prevention has been a major focus of the Sai Organization in all its medical work. Sai Organizations in Africa, Indonesia, Laos and India have distributed mosquito nets impregnated with insecticide in malaria endemic areas. Over 85,000 nets have been distributed in Kenya alone, reducing the incidence of malaria by more than 50 percent. Also, mass immunization, environmental hygiene and education in healthy living through lifestyle changes are an integral part of such preventive health programmes.
Sri Sathya Sai Drinking Water Project

For over a hundred years, every day, the people of Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh state had walked long distances just to procure a few pots of drinking water every day. The arid region, comprising of Anantapur, Bellary, Kadapa and Kurnool districts, hardly received rainfall and people depended on the fluorine-saturated bore-well water for daily use that caused severe bone deformities and dental fluorosis.

In November 1994, Sri Sathya Sai Baba asked the Government to solve the water woes of the people and assured all help. When it was of no use, Sri Sathya Sai Baba declared to take up the project himself. A year later, on 18 November, 1995, Summer Storage Tank Scheme in Anantapur was opened by the, then Prime Minister p.V. Narasimha Rao. Expressing deep admiration, Sri p.V. Narasimha Rao said that having served earlier as a minister in Andhra Pradesh with special responsibility for Anantapur District, he was familiar with the obstacles in the region and yet, Sri Sathya Sai Baba had accomplished a massive drinking water project under one year.

Eighteen months after Baba’s first announcement, safe drinking water flowed out of water taps in 730 villages in the parched district of Anantapur, a district that had suffered 11 famines in the past. The Sri Sathya Sai Water Project had provided water to over a million people who had lived all their lives at the edge of drought and despair. Nearly 5,020 Kms of pipeline was laid across 1,500 villages to provide pure drinking water to 10 million people. Sri Sathya Sai Baba provided drinking water scheme for Medak and Mahaboobnagar Districts, in November 2000,
benefitting over 320 villages. In recognition of Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s contribution in addressing the drinking water problems of Rayalaseema, the department of Posts, Government of India released a special postal stamp in 1999.

In April 2002, Sri Sathya Sai Baba initiated the complete overhaul of the Kandaleru-Poondi Canal to make drinking water available to the people of Chennai City. Sri Sathya Sai Baba commenced the Godavari Drinking Water Scheme to quench the thirst of the neglected tribal population in the region. The project was completed in May 2006, and benefitted to over 500 villages.

The four Herculean Water Projects were executed in a span of 12 years (1994-2006) totally benefitting over 10 million people, equivalent to the entire population of Belgium. All the projects, after a year of management by Sri Sathya Sai Baba, were handed over to the respective State Governments.

The highlights of Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s projects are swiftness and efficiency in action and timely completion of projects. Once Sri Sathya Sai Baba announces, the Sathya Sai Central Trust moves fast to bring safe drinking water to as many people as possible in as many villages as possible, in the shortest possible time, no matter the cost. Over the years, the Sathya Sai Organisation has completed water projects in El Salvador in Central America providing safe drinking water for about 2,000 families. The Sai Centre of Yogyakarta, Indonesia has built 90 wells to provide clean water to more than 300 families in the community of Gunung Kidul where the wells are called ‘Yayasan Sri Sathya Sai Baba’.
Presenting the Sathya Sai Water Project at the third world water forum at Osaka, a spokesman described it as not just a case study, but a story and that too a love story. At the fourth world water forum in Mexico, the project was adjudged as one of the 10 best local action programmes in the world contributing to the millennium development goals set by the United Nations.

In October 2011, the Lee Kuan Yew School of public Policy, University of Singapore, adopted the Anantapur Water Project as a case study on the beneficial role of public-private partnership in alleviating poverty. The project is being taught to students as a case study in public policy and managerial motivation at leading business schools across the world.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s philosophy that every individual has equal right to essential resources has inspired many international agencies to raise the water project as a role model. As part of its efforts to combat the serious water shortage in Africa and parts of Asia, the United Nations adopted a Human value based Water Education Approach’ proposed by the International Sathya Sai Organization. This initiative imparts vital information on water conservation, sanitation and hygiene.

**Other Service Activities**

**Deena Janoddharana Pathakam (DJP)**

Deena Janoddharana Pathakam is a very important and most useful social oriented activity wherein orphan boys - mostly parentless children and single parent children are adopted by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization and in total there are 300+ children in Andhra Pradesh in
different districts. These small children are picked up from villages and after their parent’s death due to various reasons, the children stay with the grandparents and in some cases stay with uncles from their late mother or father. Naturally these tiny tots lack basic education and good living conditions and look very weak due to absence of healthy food and if unattended their childhood would go waste and in some cases they end up with evil habits and pose a dangerous threat to civilized World.

Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization in various places adopted these children aged from 6 to 9 years and were admitted in English medium school and they were provided reasonable accommodation, food and a caretaker was appointed to supervise these children. Initially when they arrive at Seva Samithi locations they look at very innocent and some boys were very naughty in character and used to speak slang language but after few months the same boys who were thought of street stones, display such a well behaviour and do wonderful performance in academic and sports. Even spiritual base at this tender age goes straight into the little minds and form a solid foundation for their future life.

Deena Janoddharana Pathakam is one of the permanent activities about which Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization is proud of. These boys, once unfortunate, today stand tall in society and claim equal share in nation building. To write a real incident of a boy who was admitted at the age of 13 in this scheme at Hyderabad, after successful matriculation and 10+ education secured very high rank in Andhra Pradesh State EAMCET exam and secured an Engineering seat in one of the reputed Engineering colleges in Hyderabad. There are many such success stories in different districts and these boys were chosen by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization.
Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme (SSSVIP)

Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme was initiated in 2007 after Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s call to serve the villages in a more active way and in real terms and take up the services in all the wings of the organization. Thus all state organizations have mobilized all the district and samithi level office bearers to select the villages and start working on the guidelines given by the organization. In Andhra Pradesh among all the 23 districts 116 villages were selected and Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme (SSSVIP) activity was started by visiting the village every week.

A close interaction has developed with the villages and they felt the organization is serious about helping them in whatever the possible way the village deserves. Sevadal studies the entire village households and take records of people with respect to the number of family members, lands, education, health and hygiene condition and agricultural knowledge.

Experts from all the fields are involved and plans chalked out for the overall development of the village and the following activities are taken up.

1) Individual care
2) Providing Employment Opportunities
3) Educational aid / providing material and conducting Balvikas
4) Medical care-camps, follow up
5) Agricare - Farmers meet and suggestions
6) Social care - Removing evil and bad habits
7) Providing Pure Drinking Water, Water Plants setup
8) Setting up Village Roads / Water tanks / School facilities
9) Spiritual care - Educating the worship of their choice in name, form and religion etc

Sri Sathya Sai Grama Seva Project was launched in 2000 by Sri Sathya Sai Baba for serving food and clothing to over 3,00,000 villagers in 150 neighbouring villages of Puttaparthy. This project becomes an annual service project for the students and staff of the University.

Old Age Homes

Sri Sathya Sai Baba constantly reminded all devotees and particularly students, that they should never forget the debt they owe to their parents. As old people are getting abandoned in increasingly large number, Sri Sathya Sai Baba set up a home for destitute parents in Puttaparthy. An orphanage located in Sri Sathya Sai vihar houses at Alike and Muddenehalli in Karnataka state has drawn about 100 destitute children from very poor families and orphans with the objective of educating and moulding them into cultured citizens of the country. These children also attend the Educational Institutions run by the Trust of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Floods & Earthquakes

Sri Sathya Sai Volunteers are on the forefront at the time of natural calamities like earthquakes, floods or famines etc to help the needy, driven by Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s teaching of ‘Love All, Serve All’. Thousands of volunteers from India and overseas are ready for the call to serve and often the first to reach and help the afflicted. As in other projects, the hallmarks of all relief works conducted by the organization are: no publicity whatsoever, a high level of discipline, service with love and compassion.
with the belief of ‘Brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God’, and all projects are taken up selflessly, absolutely at free of cost.

The volunteers rendered large-scale service during the Gujarat earthquake, Latur earthquake, Tsunami in Tamil Nadu, floods in Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra, to name a few. Internationally, the organization has provided prompt relief during Tsunami in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, earthquake relief in El Salvador, Indonesia, Peru and flood relief in Myanmar and Mexico. This forms only a fraction of disaster relief projects taken up by the organization.

Apart from volunteers trained in disaster management skills, every relief team includes Sri Sathya Sai sevadal members from medical and paramedical fields; Physicians provide first aid, treatment of acute and chronic conditions, and eye care. Also, grief counseling is given to the affected individuals. Volunteers provide victims with food, safe drinking water, shelters, sanitation, clothes, blankets, utensils and other basic necessities. At the community level, the volunteers rebuilt houses, re-established schools and provided school supplies. Tools of trade such as sewing machines, bicycles, wood working tools etc., are also provided to help the people return to their normal lives.

The organization has also trained many of its volunteers in a specialized course of disaster management skills, the highlight of the training being service with love. The course has been so effective that the Tamil Nadu Police Department too has enrolled its Officers to learn the skills. Following are some of the recent projects undertaken in India and overseas
An earthquake with 6.9 magnitude, hit the Nepal - Sikkim Border on September 18, 2011 in which 111 people died. A team consisting of 13 members from the Sathya Sai Organization, Sikkim, set up a relief camp. Volunteers from Gangtok cleared debris from Nandok village in East District where landslides had damaged many houses. They also helped the villagers to rebuild the houses in the area.

**Odisha Floods**

Odisha state witnessed one of the worst floods in September 2008. Out of 30 districts of Odisha, 18 districts were severely affected by the floods. In this time of natural calamity, Sathya Sai workers worked day and night to save, feed and console flood victims for four months and gave relief in the form of dry food, cooked food, tarpaulins, drinking water, clothes, medicines, and other articles of daily need was provided to thousands of people affected by the floods. Sri Satya Sai organizations had built 699 homes, at free of cost in Odisha’s 16 worst affected villages. It has also adopted these villages under its Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme to ensure the villagers’ physical, psychological and spiritual well-being.

**Bihar Floods**

In August 2008, the Kosi River floods killed over 1,000 people and left 2.3 million people homeless. The water had washed away 800 villages in 13 districts and 247,000 acres of farmland. Sai Volunteers from Supaul, the worst affected district in the floods, rushed to the affected areas on motorbikes to rescue people. They returned with stocks of essential food items and distributed over 2,000 people on the first day. The spirited
volunteers deep into the flooded areas, where even Government agencies had refused to enter.

**Chennai Floods**

Many areas of Chennai and its suburbs were inundated with flood waters in the aftermath of Cyclone Nisha in November 2008. Many low-lying areas and slums in Kancheepuram and Thanjavur districts were flooded due to incessant rains. Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization of Tamil Nadu promptly reached the affected places to provide food packets and drinking water. A total of 1,522 volunteers participated in this service and distributed more than 10,000 food packets every day for three days to the victims. In the past, the organization has also done yeoman service to the Tsunami affected people in Tamilnadu.

**Recent Overseas Projects**

**Japan Earthquake**

In March 2011, an earthquake and a Tsunami devastated Japan, leaving 11,000 dead and 17,000 missing. Over 1,90,000 people lost their homes and took refuge in temporary shelters. Responding to calls of help, Sri Sathya Sai Organization in Japan acted immediately. Physicians were sent to join the medical fraternity to facilitate pre-cremation medical processing of the rising number of corpses in Miyagi Prefecture. Several truckloads of lifeline goods and food supplies were directly delivered to the survivors.
**Indonesia Earthquake / Volcano Eruption**

Indonesia suffered a spate of calamities in 2010. There were two earthquakes of 7.6 and 6.2 magnitudes in Padang, West Sumatra and in Mentawai Island and at Merapi in October and November 2010. Sathya Sai volunteers in the country provided their needs. In Mentawai, the Sai Council dispatched volunteers by helicopter and land transport to the flooded areas. Medical services and other essential supplies were provided in temporary shelters to the evacuees, which included children and mothers. Relief works are still on in the country.

**Haiti Earthquake**

Volunteers of the Sai Organisation worked round the clock to provide relief and rehabilitation to the victims of the massive earthquake that struck the Republic of Haiti on January 12, 2010. From January 19th to and August 2010 they provided free medical treatment to over 44,000 people, served more than 1,60,000 hot meals, supplied thousands of gallons of potable water, built homes and cleaned roadways for Haitians. The work that began seven days after the earthquake in the midst of widespread destruction continues to this day with the discipline, determination and dedication that has become the hallmark of Sai volunteers.

**East Africa Famine**

The Sathya Sai Organisation of Kenya helped these afflicted people. On September 11, 2011, a team of professionals and volunteers went to Kyuso district to evaluate and execute planned distribution of supplies. In the past, Sathya Sai Organizations across the world have also provided
large-scale help during all disasters across the world. Some of them are the 2009 war in Sri Lanka, Tsunami relief in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, Peru earthquake in 2007, the 2003 floods in Russia, Indonesian earthquakes, the 2008 earthquake in China, Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita in the U.S. in 2005. Sathya Sai Baba organised many mass marriages and mass upanayanams for the benefit of the poor irrespective of caste and religion.

**Consideration for other Religions**

For decades, the Muslims of Puttaparthi had no place in the village where they could pray. In 1978, Sri Sathya Sai Baba built a mosque in Puttaparthi where the Muslim festival of Ramzan was celebrated. The message of Baba is that the truly religious will never deny the validity of any particular religion, nor declare that salvation can be secured through one path alone. So, Sri Sathya Sai Baba encouraged those who have faith to march forward from where they are, since all reach the same peak, from whichever direction they may climb.

**Sai Alumni - The leaders of Tomorrow**

Several alumni, as a mark of gratitude and dedication to their Alma Mater and their guru, have chosen to stay back and serve in the institutions set up by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. More than 300 alumni, both men and women, are currently serving in Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning and allied educational institutions, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences and allied medical institutions, and Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust and allied institutions affiliated with Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s ashram at Puttaparthi and Brindavan (Bangalore).
While majority of the alumni reside in India, many of them (close to 26% according to a recent survey conducted by the institute) are spread across the globe. The alumni are engaged in varying professions that include the large corporate education and health sector, administrative services in the government, entertainment, media, etc. Many of them have become entrepreneurs and have started their own business joined NGOs and other establishments. The story of their success on the professional front is evident by the extensive positive feedback that the institute receives from the employers and by the frequent testimonials that are given by the heads of the institutions where the alumni have made an impact.

Over 10,000 men & women have graduated from the portals of Sri Sathya Sai Institute since its inception. Many of them are occupying leading positions in government, business and society. Many alumni join the Sri Sathya Sai Seva organizations in their respective towns and cities and participate in service activities. Alumni of Sri Sathya Sai institutes, after a hectic work week, spending their holidays and weekends in camps, serving food to the poor, coaching academically weak children, teaching the blind, attending to the elderly in old age homes, entertaining children in orphanages, visiting patients in the hospitals, visiting prisons, interacting with the prisoners, and many more.

Some alumni have stretched themselves further to organize large-scale group-based service activities. Some others have started own service organizations. A few examples that stand out are the ideas initiative for corporate social responsibility started at D&B Transition Analytics and decision center, Chennai; United Care Development Service (UCDS), a not-for-profit Company Serve And Inspire Sustained Employment for
Village Advancement (SAI SEVA) a pioneering Rural BPO started in Puttaparthi; and ‘Sai Anandam’ a home for destitute children started in Barang near Bhubaneswar, Odisha; and an NGO focusing primarily on imparting education to the impoverished.

**Sevadal - Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s Army Of Love**

The very basis of metamorphosis of a normal person into a Sri Sathya Sai Sevadal is Sri Sathya Sai Samithi, the very foundation of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation. Inspired by other Sevadals, a person first becomes a member of a samithi nearby. Regardless of his status, he is treated as equal among all the members. As a new comer he gets attracted by the love shown to him by one and all in the samithi irrespective of their social standing, financial status or educational credentials. There is no membership fee. The process of training begins here.

The duties of sevadal at Prashanthi Nilayam are requesting the devotees to stay in the queue, stay awake all night by guarding premises of Sri Sathya Sai organization, help the infirm to cross the path in the Ashram, clean the vessels in the canteen and even clean the lavatories etc. The skillful among them drive a garbage van, do plumbing work etc. They all do this with love in their heart and a smile on their face. At their homes they could be farmers, doctors, truck-drivers, professors, bankers, government officers, carpenters, labourers, or corporate executive; they could be from Sikkim, from Kerala, from Punjab or from anywhere across India; they could belong to any religion – Muslims, Christians, Hindus or
Sikhs. These are the ubiquitous Sevadal volunteers who keep Prashanthi Nilayam ticking.

In addition to 75,000 registered youth in the country, there are about 1,50,000 sevadal volunteers. There are two aspects to Sathya Sai Seva activities – the first is the yearly volunteer service ‘Prashanthi Seva’ rendered by the sevadal at Prashanthi Nilayam, and the second is the service rendered by them throughout the year in their respective hometowns. The yearly volunteer service is about 10-30 days each time for each state for about 2,25,000 men and women. Among them about 1500 are the sentinels of service everyday at Prashanthi Nilayam. They travel to and fro to Prashanthi Nilayam at their own expense. The array of opportunities that Sri Sathya Sai Organisation make available to its members is remarkable. Regular ‘Narayana Seva’ (feeding the hungry), medical camps, geriatric service, special service at cancer and leprosy wards, antenatal care in slum areas, organizing scribes for the visually challenged, maintaining order during festivals, educating street urchins, both pre and post-operative assistance to cataract surgery, blood donation camps and organizing blood donors, distribution of prosthetics and tricycles to physically challenged, skill training to women from weaker sections of society, planning and running skill schools for the rural youth, conducting cattle camps for the rural live stock, providing drinking water, and sanitation facilities for small rural hamlets are some of the noteworthy avenues for Sri Sathya Sai sevadal. The crown-jewel of all these is Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme which gives the sevadal members the rare opportunity of serving the rural poor through
systematic and integrated approach in the areas of Agricare, Educare, Medicare, Sociocare and Spiritual care.

Sri Sathy a Sai Baba has done over the last 65 years what no one can ever do in one lifetime: free medical treatment, free education in schools and colleges, and safe drinking water for millions. He rebuilt innumerable lives shattered by calamities, and above all united people across all faiths, cultures, countries and classes with the universal bonds of love, and tolerance. The Sri Sathya Sai Organization, started by Sri Sathya Sai Baba over 50 years ago, today stands for service with love, discipline with dignity, charity without publicity, relief beyond costs, and help without distinction.

For over eight decades, the greatest humanitarian knows in recent times, Sri Sathya Sai Baba practiced and taught the gospel of pure love expressed as selfless service. Today, especially in the physical absence of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Sri Sathya Sai Sevadal stands tall representing the human face of Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s mission. This ‘love army’ is a practical demonstration of Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s often repeated advice, ‘Love all, Serve all’. The colossal social service projects undertaken under his vision and guidance are not only reached out to the poor and the needy but also called for the active participation of devotees and students in participating the values he preached, through service and self-transformation.

**Last Days of Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

Sri Sathya Sai Baba was hospitalized on March 28th, 2011 and made the transition from the form to the formless on April 24th, 2011. Over the next 3 days over half a million people paid their last respects to Sri Sathya
Sai Baba at Prashanthi Nilayam. Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh; UPA Chairperson Smt. Sonia Gandhi; Former Deputy Prime Minister L.K. Advani; Chief Minister and Governor of Andhra Pradesh; many heads of state, central and state ministers, corporate leaders, bureaucrats, spiritual leaders, sportsmen, musicians, eminent people and large number of devotees from all parts of the world were among the lakhs of people who visited Prashanthi Nilayam on the solemn occasion. On April 27th, 2011 Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s physical form was laid to rest at the sanctum sanctorum in the Sai Kulwanth Hall with state honours and a multi-faith ceremony at the very spot where he used to sit daily and grant Darshan to thousands of devotees. On July 15th, 2011 sacred Maha Samadhi was unveiled on Guru Pournima day at Prashanthi Nilayam.

**Objective II :** To Estimate the philosophy of life in the view of Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Philosophy endeavours to understand all that comes within the bound of human experience. It aims at the fundamental understanding of things, the problem of human conduct, the assumptions that underline religious and scientific beliefs, the tools and methods of thinking or any issue that arises in any field of human activity. Philosophy seeks to provide a complete account of man’s world which is reflective and critical in nature. Philosophy tries to understand man in relation to the whole universe, nature and God. Philosophy deals with the nature of the human mind and personality and the ways in which man and his institutions can be understood.
Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1999) said, “The human body is a reward to the Atma (Soul) after many lives of meritorious activity. Man is in a long pilgrimage towards God. He moves from one life to another. On the way he has to take shelter in many rest houses, but he cannot strike root and has to remind himself of the journeys end” (p. 17).

Innumerable things happen in the man’s body without any effort from him. The functioning of heart, respiration, blood circulation, are a few examples of such things. All these are not dependent on human effort. They are the result of divine will, which controls birth mode of living as well as death.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that man has freedom and capability to conduct his life well; life is a campaign against foes; it is a battle with obstacles, temptations, hardships, hesitations. These foes are within man and so the battle has to be incessant and perpetual. Man has to use the power of discrimination given to him to fight the evil forces within him and also to foster the divine elements in him by his own effort by listening to the voice of his conscience. Man has to use the freedom to discriminate between right and wrong, good and evil.

In human beings, the inner instrument (self) is made up of the mind, the intellect, the will and the ego. The ego is linked to the life principle ‘praana’. It is encased in the Vijnaanamaya Kosa, the sheath of integrated awareness. The mind is linked to the Will (chitta) and is encased in the Manomaya Kosa, the mental sheath. The human life functions between the mind and the body. The intellect functions above the level of the mind and the vital principle functions below the mind. Both the intellect and the vital
principle praana are surcharged with Agni. It is their combined presence in
the body that accounts for the heat in the body.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s philosophy of life has been crystallized into
five human values. They are truth, right conduct, peace, love and non-
violece. He said that these human values are existent in every one. What
is needed is the person who will provide the stimulus and encouragement
to bring them out. The feeling of divinity that is present in every one is one
and the same. If this divinity is promoted amongst all, human values will
sprout naturally in every person. The sense of spiritual oneness is the
prelude in experiencing the highest bliss. The key to valuable living, in his
view, is spiritual oneness among all human beings. That can only broaden
the perspective of life to observe the value of each and every thing in life.

Of all the living beings, it is the man who can differentiate between
what he is and what he is not, what is good and what is harmful to him and
others. By one’s actions, one can make or mar his life and others also. The
complex life can be lived in a worthy manner, provided one uses his ability
to discriminate.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba mentioned that the five human values are the
pillars on which a wholesome and vibrant society can be built. But he
never claimed it as a new Sai religion. In fact he emphasized the oneness of
all religious teachings, the underlying truth in all. The same human values
are shared all over the world by so many different kinds of movements -
religious, spiritual, environmental or human oriented. Anyone who actually
works for a better society and harmony among humanity is connected with
these five human values. They are mentioned in the ancient scriptures as
sanathana dharma, the eternal righteousness which never changes. They are the very foundation of life on earth.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba often said in his discourses that nature is the best teacher. Observing nature would naturally teach about God, the dharma of life and of creation. It is the creativity which prompts human beings to express it, in whichever way. The true teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba can be expressed in a nut shell, ‘I am God and so are you. I am I. I am life and love and light.’

Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s teachings always had spirituality as the central theme. He often says that where God is seen in everyone in the form of consciousness, it is the spirituality which destroys man’s inherent animal nature, nurtures humaneness and finally transforms him into a human being. He laid great importance to one rising from the lowest to the highest levels of consciousness. To achieve this, an understanding the path of wisdom and the path of action were essential preludes. Though different in approach, both paths ultimately lead to union with God. The teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba are only to illustrate that his mission was to make man alive to the world in which he lives and the manner in which one must conduct himself for a better tomorrow. This thrust was to draw a balance between the materialistic aspects and the spiritual understanding. His teachings were on the practical plane and oriented to promote universal acceptance of all faiths.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s philosophy of life is focused both on the individual and the society. He declared that his mission was to impress upon mankind about the crucial importance of leading moral lives by practicing the five universal human values. Based on the foundations of
truth, the walls of righteous conduct (dharma) are raised. Thus, the same
love when expressed in action is called dharma. When this love is
contemplated upon, mind attains supreme peace. When one adheres to
truth and righteous conduct, that one can experience the fullness of peace.
When one enquires from where this love has come and understands its
very source, then one can realize and live the great principle of non-
violence. Love that is present in everyone is verily the divine energy
inherent in all. The under-current that flows through truth, righteous
conduct, peace and non-violence is love. Love is one’s natural quality. It
comes out of one’s own heart in a natural way. These five values cannot be
separated as they should work in complete unison. Unity is the goal of life
that ensures unity with divinity. The link between the cardinal human
values and the observable behavioural characteristics is provided by the
sub-values, more appropriately called the instrumental or procedural
values.

In 1979, the National Council of Education Research & Training
(NCERT), New Delhi, compiled a list of 83 sub-values which have been
extensively quoted in books and perception of how one views life and his
role in society. The cardinal values of truth, righteous conduct, peace, love
and non-violence are absolute and universal. They are at the very core of
existence. Gokak (1981) classified and grouped these eighty-three values
under the five basic human values. After analyzing the entire list and
examining the commonalities among these sub values, these eighty-three
values could be grouped into the five core basic human values. The table
below gives the classification of eighty-three values under the five basic
human values.
### Table 4.1: Classification of Eighty Three Values under the Five Basic Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Truth</th>
<th>Right Action</th>
<th>Peace</th>
<th>Love</th>
<th>Non Violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
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<td>Quest for Knowledge</td>
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<td>Self Analysis</td>
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<td>Joy</td>
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<td>Self Knowledge</td>
<td>Helpfulness</td>
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<td>Kindness</td>
<td>Unwillingness to hurt</td>
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<td>Spirit of Inquiry</td>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>Inner Silence</td>
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<td>Synthesis</td>
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<td>Truthfulness</td>
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<td>Appreciation of other cultures and Religions</td>
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<td>Proper use of time</td>
<td>Reflection</td>
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<td>Resourcefulness</td>
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The five basic values are essential, like the fingers of the hand. Just as each finger helps towards the proper functioning and efficiency of the whole hand, these five values correspond to five aspects of the human personality – the intellect, the physical, the emotional, the psyche and the spiritual. Each of these five aspects corresponds to one basic human value. These are common to all people and excellence is a realistic goal at each level.

**Table 4.2 : Relationship between five aspects of Human Personality & Human Values**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Personality</th>
<th>Human Values</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intellect</td>
<td>Truth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Right Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Peace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psyche</td>
<td>Love</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>Non-violence</td>
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This relationship between five aspects of human personality and human values can be picturised as in the figure given below:
Intellect: Traditionally great emphasis has been put on the intellectual development. It is the intellect that enables one to analyze and determine what is right and what is wrong, what is lasting and what is ephemeral. It is within this aspect of the personality that the powers of memory and intuition are uncovered. When this is accomplished, one will have developed the tools to know and manifest the value of truth.

Physical: All beings have bodies composed of the same physical elements. However, by the physical it means not only the development of a healthy and strong body, well coordinated and ready to perform the necessary tasks for living, but the development of habits and the mechanisms of control and discipline. When the will directs desires, the development of proper habits becomes the touchstones on the basis of which good life decisions are made. Self-help skills related to self-reliance, social skills related to conduct in school and the community and ethical
skills related to sharing, consistency and integrity are noted in this physical domain which correspondence to the value of Right Action.

**Emotional:** The emotional level describes the proper utilization of the sense organs. The emotions need to be understood and harnessed in order to be a proper instrument for individual and social well-being. When one experiences emotional equilibrium, can experience the value of peace.

**Psyche:** The psyche is the most difficult aspect of the human personality to describe, for it is that quality in each individual that is the fountainhead of love. Love is not an emotion. It is an energy that flows like the Sun on all. It does not refer to emotional relationships. Shakespeare describes love when he says, “Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds”. Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that truth, peace, right conduct, and non-violence do not exist separately. They are essentially dependent on love. Love is a supreme value in life. Love as thought is truth, love as action is right action, love as feeling is peace, and love as understanding is non-violence.

**Spiritual:** Here, one experiences the essential oneness and unity of all creation. As atomic physics shows, the direct relationship with everything in the universe i.e. air, water, fire, earth, space and the combination of these things. Since ages, sages have been revealing the same. When one understands this basic reality, the result is the value of Non-Violence.

The pursuit of truth, coupled with the application of the will results in right action. When one’s actions are consistent with truth, peace develops and reigns over the emotions enabling the flow of love to unfold and
expand into a feeling of brotherhood with all mankind and compassion for all expressions of life.

**Truth**

Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that there is no higher dharma than truth. That is the acme of righteousness, the essence of all morality. The truth of the oneness of all involves love, service, peace, and so it is the basis of moral living. All distinctions are temporary walls erected by ambition or hate. Truth will always triumph, whatever the obstacle; otherwise the Vedas would not have commanded man to stick to it. A key component of Sri Sathya Sai’s philosophy of five human values is the assertion that there is one ultimate and universal truth, which may be expressed in a multitude of ways. Truth can be approached through the path of wisdom. It can be approached through the intense devotion towards a symbol of divinity and it can be approached through selfless service.

According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1999), “Truth is something that is not modified by time or space or guna (attribute). It must be the same forever, unaffected and unchanged, then alone it is truth. (p. 250). Truth is found within. The pursuit of truth requires discrimination, intuition and introspection. The highest truth is that it is changeless in the past, present and future. Truth is a fundamental principle. Truth is the root of human existence. No one should think it is difficult to adhere to truth. Everything has been created out of truth and all creation is embedded in truth. There is no greater dharma than truth.
Truth is the power with which the heart beats, the lungs breathe, the eyes see and ears hear. Truth is the quantum of energy with which one can live. Truth has different levels. There is the truth of sense perception such as ‘the Sun rises in the East’. One can ascertain this with one’s senses. There is also the truth by inference such as ‘man is mortal’. One can base this statement on the strength of observation of those around and extend it to arrive at a general conclusion. When love is combined with discernment from ‘conscience’ or the ‘inner self’, it is truth. The absolute truth is changeless and as not bound by space and time. Basically, this truth resides in every one and can call it by different names like conscience, inner self, Atma. It is also referred to as ‘God or Divinity’ within each individual. It is without attribute and without space and time.

Adi Shankaracharya (1943) said, “Truth means absence of deceit, absence of fraud in speech, mind and body.” In the words of Swami Vivekananda (1968) “One word of truth can never be lost for ages, it may be hidden under rubbish, but it will show itself sooner or later. Truth is indestructible, virtue is indestructible, and purity is indestructible.” Truth is the changeless reality of pure beings, the eternal self-effulgent, blissful, and consciousness underlying all that exists or moves. It is only God glorified by every religion as the supreme principle dwelling in all. To live in the awareness of this truth is the highest religion.” The Vedas also proclaim Truth as ‘neti-neti’, (that is not only) for it is beyond perception and conception, beyond intellect and ratiocination. According to Bhagavad-Gita, ‘Truth is expressible, in-conceivable and unchangeable.’
Righteous Conduct

Dharma refers to righteousness or moral action derived not from some external forces, but through an individual’s own perception of what is ‘right’. The five senses receive the information from the external world. But for the resultant action to be the right action, the interaction with the inner self and love is necessary.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba defined dharma as that which sustains saves and sanctifies. It is adherence to the universal moral law ‘Do unto others what you wish them to do unto you’. Sri Sathya Sai Baba further explained dharma that it is bound up with many varieties of meanings and does not mean only duty, which pertains to one individual. Dharma is eternal, same for everyone, everywhere. The birth place of dharma is the heart. What emanates from the heart as a pure idea, when translated into action, is dharma, or one can say, act in a manner that one wants others to act towards himself.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1999) said about the universality of dharma, “Every single thing has its dharma; water has its dharma, the nature has obligation to move; fire, the dharma to burn and consume, the magnet to draw and attract into itself, and each of these is keeping up its dharma unchanged, including the solar system and the stars of the firmament. Vyavaharika dharma or dharma relating to the daily routine would be changing from day to day. So it is not real dharma. But dharma is not changeable, it is eternal, it is immutable, it is truth. Swadharma really means “Swa” means atma. So it is atma dharma” (p. 234).
Dharma is a power-packed term epitomizing an entire philosophy and a way of life. A disciple is one who has grasped the content of truth and righteousness by constant Sadhana or spiritual practice. Truth and righteousness sum up the code of conduct and scale of values explicated in the immortal scriptures of India. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that truth and righteousness are two rails on which the locomotive of the nation runs; when truth is given up, chaos prevails. When righteousness is discarded might become right.

The directives suggested by Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1999) are, “See no evil, see only what is good; Hear no evil, hear only what is good; Think no evil, think only what is good; Talk no evil, talk only what is good; Do no evil, do only what is good”. Everyone’s thoughts and actions should be related to the role he has to play, otherwise the social fabric will be shaken” (p. 400).

According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba among the things endowed with consciousness (Chaitanya), the plants and trees, the insects and birds born out of eggs or the mammals – all have retained their specific dharma unaffected by the passage of time. So too, every profession, every stage of life, each sex, each period of life as fixed by age – childhood, boyhood, adolescence, youth, middle-age, old age – has duties and obligations, which set the norm and guide the individual to benefit himself and society. In this context Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1979) defined the nature of duty as “Duty without Love is Deplorable; Duty with Love is Desirable; Love without duty is Divine” (Summer Showers, p. 160).
Dharma is not only a metaphysical concept but also a powerful moral force to be reckoned with. One who deviates from the Path of dharma will have to pay a price for it in the long run. Sri Sathya Sai Baba illustrated righteousness with a tree. He said that truth and righteousness are at the root of human existence. No one should think it is difficult to adhere to truth. Righteousness (Dharma) is the root of human life. Its importance is not realized just as people looking at the fruit of a tree do not recognize its roots. The tree grows because of water supplied to its roots. People want to enjoy the fruits of life without watering the roots of dharma, which nourish the tree of life. Karma is the tree and the fruit one can see in the tree is the result of one’s karma. He further said that good karma will lead to good dharma.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized on the essentiality of purity in thought, word and deed (trikarana suddhi). He said that the complete harmony between thought, word and deed is the mark of a high souled being (Mahatma); without unity of thought, word and deed there can be no fulfillment in life; the humanness consists in the harmony of these three. The consummation of all sadhana (Spiritual practices) is purity of the heart; Man is free to use his intellect rightly and continue his march towards perfection.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1975) elaborated “Dharma is characterized by holiness, peace, truth and fortitude. Dharma is Yoga, union, merger. Its attributes are justice, sense control, sense of honour, love, dignity, goodness, meditation, sympathy, non-violence; such is dharma that persists through ages. It leads one on to universal love and unity” (Dharma Vahini, p. 21).
Sri Sathya Sai Baba further said that whoever subdues his egoism, conquers his selfish desires destroys his bestial feelings and impulses and gives up the natural tendency to regard the body as self, he is surely on the path of dharma. He knows that the goal of dharma is the merging of the wave in the sea; the merging of the self in the over self. As the power of truth increases within man, his mind and intellect are purified and his will power is strengthened, due to which the righteousness of his actions increases. Therefore, through his power of discrimination, he chooses the good, and by his will power suppresses and abandons the wrong conduct. Inspired by truth, man by the help of a mature discriminative faculty chooses a good action and fearlessly performs it, prompted by strong will power, he is acting in a righteous manner. Truth in action is righteous conduct, the action takes place on the physical domain and behind each action there is a thought. If this thought derives its sustenance from human ‘will’ as opposed to human desire, the resultant action will be righteous.

Peace

Peace is the state of being quiet, calm and free of emotional disturbance. Peace is not idleness but a sound and balanced mental state which learns to find rest in action and which utilizes all the inherent vital energies to create a perfect harmony in action. right or wrong, whatever a man thinks or does is with the intention of attaining peace and happiness. However, peace usually eludes him because of the arousal of new desires.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba pointed out the nature of peace as it is the most priceless possession of man. It is the sign of virtuous character, willingness for service, a readiness to renounce, a calm spirit of resignation, an
awareness of the joy in the heart. Dharma or righteousness blossoms in peace which is the most priceless possession of man, is not attainable by power, position or anything mundane but by detached and devoted dispensation of one’s duty.

Peace is the deep reservoir of inherent mental calm. Peace comes from within; contentment is a mental condition. Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1999) said, “Contentment is heaven; grief is hell; anger is the foe; calmness is the armour; and compassion is the comrade. Man must seek refuge in the changeless, the Paramatman (God), from which all variety emerges and into which it merges. Then only man can secure peace and contentment” (p. 127).

Peace requires the capacity for introspection and self-awareness. Self-awareness enables one to become mindful of his or her thoughts, words and deeds. When self-awareness becomes a habit, the individual begins to monitor and modify the habitual patterns of thought that obstruct the peace within. True peace requires inculcating equanimity, regardless of loss or gain, success or failure, pain or pleasure. Quieting the mind and opening the heart are essential for acquiring peace. A quiet mind requires the application of discipline to take time to look inward and experience the silence within.

Agitations in the mind are the cause of all misery of mankind. To lead a calm and healthy life, man has to cultivate mental peace. It is the stage in which the senses are mastered and held in balance. So, real peace can be acquired only in the depths of the spirit, the discipline of the mind, in faith in the oneness of all the seeming multiplicity. It denotes the capacity
to bear success and failure, joy and misery, defeat and victory with perfect equanimity. Detachment gives peace even in the midst of troubles.

According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba peace is essential for sharpness of intellect. It develops all the beneficial characteristics of man. Even farsightedness grows through peace. Through that, obstacles and dangers can be anticipated and averted. When right action and truth are practiced, peace follows. Peace is related to the recognition and management of feelings and emotions that are stored in the sub-conscious mind through past experiences. As a result of information from outside, the conscious mind retrieves some negative files from the sub-conscious mind; the resultant action may not be the right action and it itself may add another negative file in the memory.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba opined that the mind can act as a bridge leading man from the tangible to the intangible, from the personal to the impersonal, if it is cleansed and moulded it into an instrument for loving thoughts and expansive ideas. For this, the restless mind has to be calmed. As suggested by Sri Sathya Sai Baba there are three ways of calming the mercurial mind. They are

1) **Regulated Breathing** : Inhale and exhale in a measured manner and watching its symmetry and balance will diminish the eagerness of the inner tongue to wander into conversation. Eventually it will give good tendency.

2) **Engage in Social Work** : Serving the diseased, sick, and distressed and undertaking to teach a few children who have no one else to care for them, helps one to engage in social work. If the thoughts
and activities are selfless and sincere, the itch to communicate to the mind will be healed thereby. One can find that one’s energies are better utilized in serving the fellow men than in talking with wavering mind.

3) **Spiritual Exercise (Sadhana)**: The repetition of the name of the Lord, recitation of mantras (gayathri manthra) chanting hymns, or practice of some selected yogic postures can lead one to real spiritual exercise. Sri Sathya Sai Baba explained that it is to encourage peace in the human, Godly and natural milieu in which one has to live and also to develop peace to the body, mind and intellect or soul. He added that peace is a divine attribute. It can be attained only by those who, with patience, perseverance and forbearance, follow the sound path of spirituality.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba observed the very causes for lack of peace. He said (1999), “India today is affected by the consequences of seven grievous sins: business without morality, politics without principle, education without character, worship without sacrifice, acquisition of wealth without hard work, human existence without regard for ancient scriptures, devotion without austerity. The country can only regain prosperity and peace when all these are banished” (p. 145).

The main reason for the lack of peace in the world today is that the thoughts and the conduct have gone astray in the main fields of human living and learning like education, politics and business. Man’s greed for materials wealth, lack of interest and gratitude to find the source behind his existence and self-centered spiritual life were also found responsible for
agony of man. If there is righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in character, if there is beauty in character, there will be harmony in the home, when there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation, when there is order in the nations, there will be peace in the world.

**Love**

Love is the most important quality with which a human being is endowed from birth. Love is interrelated to all other values. Love is an undercurrent and therefore cannot be visualized. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that love exists in all beings, but it assumes many different forms in various relationships. In worldly life, it is infatuation between husband and wife, maternal love between a mother and her child; affection between kith and kin. The love towards God is known as devotion.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba (2000) explained the worth of love as “Love is God, live in love. Love is the golden tie which binds heart to heart, soul to soul. It is constructive and creative. The law of love is far greater than any modern science. A life without faith, love and devotion is a dreary waste. Love is priceless; one cannot buy it or sell it. The flame of love is a force which makes everybody does his or her duty. Even the big powers like the Sun and Earth are governed by the power of love. The whole matter is based on love” (p. 37). He called upon mankind to develop love, scatter love, reap love and said that there is no religion higher than love which leads to divinity.

Jesus declared that love is the greatest force on the earth, hatred and malice should find no place in the heart. The Upanishads say that man is a spark of divine love, encased in five sheaths. Truth leads to dharma or
righteousness which unfolds in peace and blossoms into love. The psychic domain of human system is the source of love.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba advised that share unselfish love with all brothers and sisters of all creeds, colours, climes. Let the love flow into the hearts of others. He compared pure love with flowing water and by saying that stagnant water becomes foul; flowing waters are cool and clear. Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized the nature of love as love is ananda; love is power; love is light and love is God.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba (2000) has aptly summed up the cosmic nature of love in the following words. “Let your love flow towards all. Do not hate other people and talk ill of them or seek to calculate their faults. Sweet talk motivated by love is essential” (p. 38).

Sri Sathya Sai Baba often advised to transform love into service, transform the service into worship and that is the highest sadhana (exercise). An act of service done with love has three characteristics. Firstly, there is whole heartedness in the action of service rendered as an expression of love. Secondly, the act is filled with humility and selflessness. Thirdly, the act has nothing to do with violence. It is the individual’s identification of self with others that gives joy and satisfaction while performing an act of service. The best prayer and service to God is, to love all things both great and small, for the dear God who made all, loveth all. It would be appropriate to quote here the immortal words of the famous poet St Coleridge (1938) from his poem, ‘The Ancient Mariner’. “He prayeth best, who loveth best. All things both great and small; for the dear God who loveth us, He made and loveth all”. About the paramount importance
of love, Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that love is God and live in love one can see the moon only with the help of moon light; one can see God only through the rays of love. He emphasized (1999), “Start the day with Love, Spend the day with Love, Fill the day with Love, End the day with Love and that is the way to God” (p.84). Love’s spontaneous kindness and forgiveness, sincerity and sympathy help to harmonize responses to many life situations. Unconditional and enjoyable love balances the work of the mind with the wisdom of the heart and this leads to the value of non-violence.

**Non-Violence**

Sri Sathya Sai Baba described non-violence as that which does not mean merely not injuring a living being. One should not cause hurt even by a word, look, or a gesture. Tolerance, fortitude, equanimity etc help to be steady in non-violence. The meaning of non-violence is that either in thought word or deed one should not cause harm to anybody. Buddha’s dictum ‘Ahimsa Paramodharmaha’ means non-violence is the highest manifestation of righteous conduct. The practice of non-violence is not restricted to the physical aspect alone but includes thought, word and deed.

Non-Violence is the final culmination of all other values. Non-Violence relates to non-violation. Non-Violence is present when people do not violate self or others. It includes concern for all living beings in the form of Universal Compassion. The zenith of all human values is non-violence. Truth, right conduct, peace, and love merge in non-violence. Non-Violence is a state of mind that recognizes the unity within the apparent diversity. It manifests as non-violation of the laws of nature and respect for law and
order. It calls for restraint from doing of harm to others and to nature in general. Non-Violence is rooted in forbearance, morality, and integrity. When the ethics of non-violence is embraced as the means to world peace – there will be global harmony.

In the words of Sri Sathya Sai Baba (2000) “Non-Violence is a supreme virtue. There are occasions when willingly or otherwise injury is caused to some being or other. Complete non-violence is not a practicable ideal. What should be ensured is that there is no deliberate causing of injury or harm to any one”. (p. 40) Absolute non-violence may not be possible as life always subsists on life, but greatness lies in understanding that for one’s survival, one must inflict the least amount of injury and that too on the lesser forms of life like plants, as opposed to higher forms that include animals and man. This love and appreciation alone will complete the growth of human personality.

The attitude of non-violence is a psychological phenomenon. Non-Violence has three varieties; through action, through words and through thoughts. At the action level, non-violence connotes compassion towards all living beings, peaceful co-existence, conflict less society and absence of quarrels and wars. At the speech level ahimsa means not to inflict any injury on anybody’s feelings or sentiments through words. At the mental level it means absence of violent thoughts and violation of mental peace it means malice towards none, that is, charity and love towards all. Since non-violence includes almost all virtues, even small flaws like wasting any of the five elements or gifts of nature like earth, water, fire, air, ether in any form becomes violence. Non-violence relates to man as a member of a
society, nation and the world. It reveals how each is connected to the other and the happiness of one is not divorced from the happiness of another.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s famous saying “My life is my message” embodies his basic philosophy of life and it is focused both on the individual and the society. Saraf (2000) puts in the following lines the philosophy of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. “There is an integral and inseparable link between these five universal values and the cardinal principles of his philosophy, one without the other would be in complete. They are beads of the one divine garland, the five inseparable fingers of a hand all embedded in the divine palm, which is the basic source of strength.” (p. 58)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba (2000) said; “Everyone should have fear of sin and love of God. When these two are present one will become a truly moral person in society. When one observes these three he will be practicing all other human values. Fear of sin will result in non-violence and peace. Love of God will promote adherence to truth and love for all beings, social morality will be righteousness itself.” (p. 41)

Truth, right conduct and peace emanate from the pragnam that is charged with love as resound, reaction and reflection. The proper understanding of the source and nature of truth, right conduct, peace and love is non-violence, the attitude in which one cannot think of causing harm to anyone.

**Objective – III : To identify the Educational Philosophy of Sri Sathya Sai Baba as education for human values :**

Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions are based on the philosophy of education propounded by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He gave equal
importance to educational achievements and spirituality. He emphasized that education must give technical knowledge as well as skills to lead a balanced life. The children must develop understanding and insight into their own life’s purpose. They must develop a lively social conscience and serve society, and develop a strong identity with their family and culture, nation and humanity. Sri Sathya Sai schools aim at human excellence through developing all personality domains – physical, emotional, social and spiritual, and not just the intellectual. These schools do not charge any fees. They follow the mainstream government curriculum. In these schools, the culture is suffused with human values of peace, love, truth, right conduct and non-violence. There are now dozens of Sathya Sai Schools in overseas countries. Many of these schools were started in the 90’s, and more and more are being established till the date.

The present education system is not fulfilling the goals of real education. Real education is that which promotes unity, equality and peaceful co-existence with fellow human beings. Sri Sathya Sai Baba draws a distinction between what has traditionally been conceived to be ‘education’ and what he refers to as ‘educare’. The philosophical cornerstone of Sathya Sai Education is the concept of ‘educare’. It flows from the heart, and is termed as ‘educare’. Therefore he emphasized that educare should be pursued along with what has been usually meant by education.

The guiding principles of the term educare, as used by Sri Sathya Sai Baba, are: divinity is love, and it is the undercurrent of all human values. Educare elicits the inherent values and translates them into action in daily life; the purpose of education is for living a fully human and
spiritual life; the end of education is character and character manifests itself as the unity of thought, word, and deed.

The high levels of suffering and anxiety that exist worldwide show no signs of abating, despite continued scientific and technological progress. Persistent conflict and a steady decline in morality are some of the factors threatening the very survival of humankind. Most serious thinkers would agree that a profound change is needed in the way human beings view themselves and one another. Such a spiritual awakening would require an educational model with the capacity to transform the minds and hearts of all people. The model that is now prevalent throughout the world need to be expanded from its emphasis on the secular to encompass the spiritual.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that education should bring out human values - truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence. The most distinguishing feature of this educational system is its philosophy that is helping students develop a good character along with fostering the development of skills that help them to earn a good living. He says education is for life and not merely for eking out a livelihood. Revolutionary in concept and comprehensive in scope, Sathya Sai Educational principles have become a lifelong learning and transformation process for children, men, and women in all parts of the world. Speaking at the Maharani’s women’s College in Mysore in September 1963, Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that education is not for mere living; it is for life, a fuller life, a more meaningful, and a more worthwhile life. There is no harm if it is also for a gainful employment, but the educated man must be aware that existence is not all, that gainful employment is not all. Again education is not for developing the faculty of argument, criticism, or winning a polemic
victory over one’s opponents or exhibiting one’s mastery over language or logic. The education which teaches to conquer the cycle of birth and death and that will not be disturbed by the blessings or blows of fate is the best and real education. Sri Sathya Sai Baba opined that such education begins where the worldly education ends.

The message given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba to educationists is that they must not be content when students acquire knowledge and adaptive skills that can prepare them only for earning a living. Rather, they should be equally concerned that education helps students to realize their full human potential, which is the realization of one’s inherent divinity. Further, it is through this awakening of human consciousness that students become cultured and refined. Culture and refinement take the students beyond the concerns for personal welfare, to the welfare of all members of society. Such individuals, who have recognized this prevailing unity within the diversity, would then be guided by their sense of right and wrong, good and bad, and by what is helpful rather than harmful to others.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that secular and spiritual education should be merged into a philosophy and pedagogy of education with the power to better serve the needs of society. He has inspired and guided the development of an educational system that achieves this goal of service to society. The essential premise of the system is that the recognition of one’s divine nature can be assisted and nurtured through all forms of educational activity and with students at every level of educational advancement. Sathya Sai Education thus entails a life-long process of transformation, and aims to strengthen the sacred connections between the individual, the family, the society, and all creation.
Sathya Sai Education utilizes pedagogy of integral education that elicits human values through all aspects of education, including the process of learning and the process of teaching, while integrating them into the curriculum, and the educational environment. Most importantly, it does this through love, which underpins all the other values.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1987) said, “The educational system must make an individual to make his mind like the immovable rock, steady and strong fearless daring to take the challenge of life, but his heart must be as soft as butter and silk. But today’s educational system is encouraging the child to develop the mind like butter or silk and the heart like stones. This power the way to the lack of peace of mind” (p. 26).

Education teaches languages and concepts, but it does not teach how to live steadily and happily with others. Education should be the process of all round development of the human personality, in other words the blossoming of human excellence. Education is trying to achieve excellence which leads to perfection. Sri Sathya Sai Baba guided the students that in every task, however small it appears to be, one should strive to achieve excellence. One should not procrastinate, hesitate, complain or try to find fault. One should throw oneself into the task at hand and do one’s job to the best of one’s ability. One should not do it out of fear of others or in the hope to earn the praise of others. So one should do the best and leave the rest.

The National Policy of Education’86 has laid considerable emphasis on value education by highlighting the need to make education a forceful tool for cultivation of social and moral values. The policy has stated that in
culturally plural society education should foster universal and eternal values oriented towards the unity and integration of people.

Gokak (1980) has given a logical correspondence between the five values in Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s philosophy and the five ideals of education as:

| Table 4.3: Logical Correspondence between the Five Values and Five Ideals of Education |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Five Values     | Five Ideals     |
| Truth           | Knowledge       |
| Right Conduct   | Skill           |
| Peace           | Balance         |
| Love            | Insight or Vision |
| Non Violence    | Identity or Oneness |

He proceeds further and brings out the implications of each of the five ideals in terms of educational modules around which curricular programmes and co-curricular activities of educational institutions could undoubtedly be designed. Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that wherever truth, righteousness, peace and love are emphasized, in whatever religion or language, by whichever teacher, wherever he may be, there sanathana dharma prevails.

The cardinal values of Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s philosophy directly lead to his theory and practice of education. Sri Sathya Sai Baba (2000) said “My plan of action is to provide the youth with an education, which will cultivate their intelligence, also purify their impulses and emotions and equip them with the physical and mental disciplines needed for drawing...
upon the springs of calmness and joy that lie in their own hearts. Their high
natures have to be fostered and encouraged to blossom by means of study,
prayer and sadhana, contacts with the sages, saints and spiritual heroes
and heroines of their land and place them on the path of self-confidence,
self-sacrifice and self-knowledge”. (p. 57)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that the cultivation of human
values alone is education; whoever tries to properly understand the human
values of truth, right conduct, peace, love and non-violence, who practices
these values and propagates them with zeal and sincerity can alone be
described as a truly educated person.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba's philosophy of integral education is derived
from his general philosophy of life as a whole which has been crystallized
into five simple words, truth, right conduct, peace, love and non-violence. His integral education is an integration of naturalism, idealism and
pragmatism, bringing about a harmonious blending with science and
spirituality, morality and actuality, knowledge and welfare, covering the
entire life span from childhood to adult hood. His philosophy of education
is based on the universal religion of love and service to mankind as the
highest form of bhakthi or devotion to God to face the reality and accept
whichever may comes.

Sri Aurobindo's concept of integral education with five components -
physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual, is not different from Sri Sathya
Sai Baba's integral philosophy with its implication for education. Sri
Aurobindo adopted a fivefold classifications of a human being and
explained it in his own way. He said (2000) "Education to be complete
must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of human beings, the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. Usually, these phases of education succeed each other in a chronological order following the growth of the individual. This however, does not mean that one should replace another but all must continue, complementing each other, till the end of life". (p. 59).

Sri Sathya Sai Baba, like Sri Aurobindo, has been stressing repeatedly that educational institutions are the appropriate agencies through which such integrated development of human beings is possible. The intellectual (knowledge), physical (skill), emotional (balance), psychic (insight or vision) and spiritual (identify or oneness) integration is the fundamental aim of education. The constitution of Indian as in Article 51A under fundamental duties, talked about noble ideals, unity and integrity of India, harmony, spirit of common brotherhood, preservation of the rich heritage of culture, compassion for living creatures, scientific temper, humanism, adjuring violence, pursuit of excellence and higher levels of endeavour and achievements. If one were to give meaning and reality to the fundamental duties, perhaps it could best be achieved by emphasizing the five integral values of truth, righteous conduct, peace, love and non-violence as the core of the curriculum. There are two sets of values-relative and absolute. Through education relative values are cultivated in the form of factual or intellectual truth, skill or moral behaviour, calm or balance and affability or gentleness. But in integral education the spiritual life of the student has to be opened.
Objective - IV : To study the educational programmes of Sri Sathya Sai Baba at various stages

Sri Sathya Sai Baba chose education as the foundation for his mission to lead humanity away from the precipice of self-annihilation. His plan of action has fructified as a process of transformation beginning with Balvikas and leading up to a marvelous university.

Figure – 4.2

Formal Education

Formal education means education or training received from institutions like schools, colleges or universities. This is public school education in a standardized classroom. Sri Sathya Sai Baba established schools, colleges and university emphasizing more on integral system of education with value based curriculum. The ‘future of education’ and ‘education of the future’ is interlinked. A common refrain is that ‘a nation’s destiny is shaped in the classrooms’. Good education system produces world class citizens sharing common values of universal brotherhood. Sri
Sathya Sai Baba framed an education system namely, ‘Sathya Sai Education’ which makes a man a complete human being well versed with the facets of human existence.

**School Education**

School education lays the foundation for a child to evolve in the labyrinth of life. This is a laboratory wherein the child learns the art of living. Unlike the existing system of monotonous education with emphasis on course or syllabus completion, Sathya Sai Schools which practices the ‘Sathya Sai Education’ system which imparts five human values i.e. truth, right-conduct, peace, love and non-violence. The school education emphasizes not only the development of cognitive domain, but also the effective, psychomotor and spiritual domains of the human personality and to raise the consciousness of the students and thereby help them to evolve into the higher level of being.

The fundamental objective of school education is to help students imbibe a firm cultural pattern which makes them good individuals, good family men and good citizens, who realize their responsibility and their duty to their self, their nation and to humanity. Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values facilitated the integration of human values in to the secular curriculum of the schools. Through this curriculum, students are benefited from a desirable blend of secular and spiritual knowledge in their schools. Currently there are nearly 99 Sri Sathya Sai Schools across India and 41 in abroad. Presently, the Sathya Sai education model is being implemented in more than 90 countries. Seeking to bring character education into public schooling, various governments are being studying the functioning of these
schools. Many Sri Sathya Sai Schools across the globe provide formal education from 1st standard to 10th standard integrating the secular and spiritual components.

Sri Sathya Sai schools offer students a unique education experience which, in many ways, is different from schools elsewhere. There are many salient and distinguishing features which contribute towards making these schools exclusive and exceptional in the sphere of Sri Sathya Sai High school education.

**Integral system of education** : The physical, mental and spiritual aspects of the students’ personality are sought to be developed with stress on character development. Apart from emphasis on academic excellence inculcating the virtues of adherence to truth and discipline, dedication to duty and devotions by the supreme, these schools lays focus in character development. The schools adopt CBSE curriculum for classes I to XII. In addition to this, these schools offer courses in science and commerce at the senior secondary level. A course in human values is taught to students in all classes.

At primary level from I to VIII classes, drawing and painting, work experience, physical education and games and music are introduced along with the prescribed syllabus. For secondary classes i.e. IX and X, health and physical education, work experience, art education, gardening, paper cutting, needle work etc are taught along with academics. At senior secondary classes – XI and XII work experience, general studies, health and physical education are common for all groups.
The school provides facilities for a number of co-curricular activities designed as talent search programmes. These activities are meant to develop communication abilities and perceptual skills apart from proper utilization of leisure. It also gives the students an experience of fellowship and mutual-aid which are essential ingredients of a well balanced personality. Student’s participation in most of these activities is mandatory.

**List of Activities**: Dramatics in English, Telugu, Hindi, recitation, public speaking in English, Telugu, Hindi, hand writing competition, essay writing, storytelling, debate and elocution, quiz, gardening, self-reliance programme, needle work, knitting, paper craft. The school provides a conducive and an encouraging environment for students to pursue their interests and have skills in their choice-area of activities besides co-curricular and academic pursuit like games and sports, music, dance and athletics, dramatics, vedam chanting, art etc.

**Daily Prayers**: Collective chanting of prayers and devotional songs at the start of the day is an everyday practice. Chanting of prayers before meals and retiring at night. One of the most important features of the morning community prayer meeting is silent sitting. This is followed by group singing of multi-religious prayers or a talk by one of the students or faculty on topics related to values.

**Thursday Moral classes**: At each campus, Thursday mornings begin with an hour inspiring and ennobling talks by eminent speakers stressing on their personal, spiritual experiences, messages from sacred scripts and other elevated and socially relevant themes such as patriotism, societal service, professional values, Indian heritage and culture. The moral
class is also used to highlight students’ talents. Audio extracts from the revered founder chancellor, Sri Satya Sai Baba’s discourses where he would typically address students and staff on topics such as importance of education, qualities of leadership, role of students, teacher in society and the purpose of life in wider context are regularly played during these sessions.

**College Education**

If a woman is educated, the entire family benefits from her knowledge and wisdom, as she plays an important role in moulding the future generations of the family into responsible citizens. Keeping this dictum in mind, Sri Sathya Sai Baba started a women’s college in 1971 at Ananthapur. Further, two more Sri Sathya Sai Colleges for Women at Jaipur in Rajasthan and Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh were established. These are affiliated to their respective State University.

Sri Sathya Sai Arts and Science College for Men was inaugurated on June 9, 1969, in the city of Bangalore, Karnataka and South India. A decade later, on November 28, 1978 he laid the foundation stone for the college of Arts, Science and Commerce at Prashanthi Nilayam, Puttaparthi in Andhra Pradesh, South India. In November 1982, the campus at Bangalore was also started. Sri Sathya Sai loka seva institutions located at Muddenehalli and Alike in Karnataka are providing higher education opportunities for the deserving students from the neighbouring villages. A music college was also established as Sri Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music at Prashanthi Nilayam in the year 2000.
University Education

The three campuses at Prashanthi Nilayam, Anantapur and Bangalore were eventually merged under the umbrella of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning on 22nd November, 1981 with Sri Sathya Sai Baba as its founder chancellor. The fourth campus of the university was laid on February 14, 2009, by the chancellor at Muddenahalli, Chickballapur district in Karnataka. The institute began its operation with three campuses at Prashanthi Nilayam, Anantapur and Bangalore. The institute was rechristened as the Sri Sathya Sai University. As per the revised regulations notified by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, government of India in May 2010, the deemed to be university reverted back to its original nomenclature of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning in July, 2010.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba wished that the Sathya Sai University has to undertake the task of revitalizing the ancient culture of India and train the rising generations on the path of love and service to humanity and self-reliance. On the occasion of the inauguration of the university, chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Baba (2010) highlighted its uniqueness by saying “This University will not be imparting in Botany merely the knowledge of trees in nature; it will spread the knowledge of the tree of true living. It will not be imparting the knowledge merely of Economics; the knowledge of theistic ethics too will be included. It will not be teaching mere Chemistry; it will also unravel the mystery of Raso Vai Saha – the supreme embodiment of nectarine sweetness – the Atma. It will teach not only the science of the material world but it will also teach the science of the non-material world. This university will confer on its alumni, the courage and confidence, the
knowledge and skill, to shape their careers by their own efforts, relying on their strength. Spiritual education is integrated harmoniously with ethical, physical, and metaphysical teachings in this university” (p. 30).

Elaborating the purpose and philosophy of the university, chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that the main purpose is to cultivate self-knowledge and self-confidence, so that each one can learn self-sacrifice and earn self-realization. Teaching the university curricula, preparing for the university examinations, and awarding university degrees are only means employed for the end, namely – spiritual uplift, self-discovery and social service through love and detachment. The objective is to provide the youth with an education, which while cultivating their intelligence, will also purify their impulses and emotions, and equip them with the physical and mental disciplines needed for drawing upon the springs of calmness and joy that lie in their own hearts. Sri Sathya Sai Baba hoped that the lives of these students will be shining examples of spiritual awareness and its beneficial consequences to the individual and society.

The Model of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning can be represented as a ‘Temple of Learning’ to which the foundation is the value-based integral education system referred by the chancellor as ‘Educare’. Standing on this foundation are two pillars which form the main structure of the temple, one is ‘Academics’ (secular) component and the other ‘Character’ (spiritual) component.

The mission of the Sri Sathya Sai University is to provide human values-based integral education that aims at achieving excellence at all levels of human personality – physical, mental, intellectual, emotional,
psychological and spiritual through a blend of secular and spiritual education, with the objective of moulding professionally sound, socially responsible and spiritually aware citizens.

The university is widely recognized for providing integral education, character building of the youth, and academic excellence combined with sports, fine arts, performing arts and social service. Some of the distinctive features of this University are:-

- Integral education with equal emphasis on curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Integrating values with secular knowledge through curriculum and class room teaching.
- Curriculum steeped in the rich Indian culture.
- Synthesis of science and spirituality.
- Inculcating the spirit of self-reliance and service to society.
- Spiritual ambience that pervades the disciplined environment.
- Lessons learnt through direct interaction with the Revered Chancellor.
- Compulsory residential system.
- Open admission policy for all irrespective of income, religion or region.
- Integrated five years programmes combining undergraduate and postgraduate studies for a systematic coverage and graduated learning process.
- Free education for all students, selected on the basis of merit.
Self-Reliance Programme

Another feature of the Sri Sathya Sai University is self-reliance programme. The guiding principle is, simple life coupled with self-reliance. Self-reliance means reliance on one’s own innate capabilities and talents. The cultivation and nurturing of this is facilitated through activities that inculcate in the students, the dignity of labour and respect for work. The students do their work with least dependence on external agencies. To inculcate the concept of dignity of labour and respect for work, many functions and departments of the hostel are run by students under the able guidance of resident faculty. The self-reliance departments include:

- Academic support (Library, Computer Centre, Photocopying, Student Tutorials).
- Culinary (Catering Services, Dietics, Fruits and Snacks, Bakery).
- Entertainment (Multimedia and Audio-Visuals for in-house entertainment, Sound Engineering and Recording).
- Health Care (Paramedical and First-Aid Assistance, General Hygiene).
- House Keeping (Maintenance, Electrical, Carpentry, Plumbing, Landscaping, Drinking Water Maintenance).
- Performing Arts (Dance, Dramatics and Costumes, Theatre, Public Speaking, Quiz).
- Publications (Books, Monographs and News Letters – relating to the education system and interaction with and messages of the Chancellor).
- Spiritual Activities (Festivals, select Ceremonies and Rituals to encourage the spirit of traditional Indian culture and heritage).

- Support Services (General Stores, Transport Services).

These self-reliance activities enable students to become self-confident and independent and further contribute to leadership and entrepreneurial development. The activities of these self-reliance departments are never disrupted but ensures continuity by facilitating an effective succession planning in the traditional gurukula way; wherein the senior students train their junior successors before they move out. The self-reliance activities train the students in time management, enhance their skill sets, fuel their latent talents and creativity and channelizing them into productive activities. Other benefits include spirit of team work, group dynamics and spirit of self-service and enhance sensitivity and above all it builds self-confidence and yields self-satisfaction.

The peer team of NAAC accredited the University with A++ in the year 2002 and this high rating is continued till date. The NAAC team accredited the University with a 3.63 CGPA in four point scale. In 2003, UGC Golden Jubilee Seminar on Ethics and Education held at Prashanthi Nilayam; renowned academicians and heads of many universities across India including the Chairman of the University Grants Commission participated in the proceedings in the presence of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

In 1982, first convocation of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning was held at Prashanthi Nilayam. From that year onwards, convocations are an annual event with augment presence of Indian Presidents & Prime Ministers addressing the students. In the words of Sri
Nani Palkhivala, a legal luminary and chief guest at the first convocation of the University in November 22, 1982 “This University is a memorable experiment in the moral and spiritual regeneration of India.” On the occasion of 5th convocation of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning in 1986, Shri S. B. Chavan, then Chief Minister of Maharashtra remarked, “The Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning is a novel experiment in the field of education and the people all over the country are looking up to it.” On the occasion of 11th convocation of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning in 1992, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, then President of India said (2010), “I am deeply impressed by the infrastructure, atmosphere, equipment and human resources organised for imparting education at Vidyagiri (Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning). The Campuses at Prashanthi Nilayam, Brindavan (Bangalore) and Anantapur are an invaluable asset in the crucial task of promoting integral education. There is much to be learnt here by the students, teachers, educationists and policymakers” (p. 35).

In 2002, Bharat Ratna Dr. A.p.J. Abdul Kalam, President of India said (2010), “The purpose of real education is to initiate a learning process that transforms students into good human beings with knowledge and value systems. Is value based education possible? Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning has given an answer in the affirmative” (p.140). A number of other eminent personalities who visited the University as chief guests during its annual convocations have shared the common feeling that the University is a role model for value-based education at the University level, which may be adopted by other educational institutions. Likewise all the personalities who visited the institution gave their convocation address in
astonishment. The experience and results of the last three decades seem to indicate that this novel and memorable experiment has been significantly successful in achieving the exalted goals and objectives with which it was started.

A report by an inspector, Ofsted (UK) (2011) “This is a distinctive institution that is successful in achieving its aims. It provides a secure spiritual environment in which pupils can learn and make good progress. Pupil’s personal development is a very strong feature of the institution and it is conspicuously successful in promoting its philosophy.

Professional Education

As the number of Sathya Sai Schools and Sri Sathya Sai Education in human values classes increased in India and around the world, there was need for more standardization and quality assurance with respect to teacher training and certification. This led to the establishment of the Institutes of Sathya Sai Education (ISSE) starting with the first institute in Denmark in 1987. The network has now expanded to 20 countries and the Indian Head Quarters is located in the City of Mumbai. The Institutes offer Diploma and Advanced Diploma Courses in training of teachers, assist in establishment of Sathya Sai Schools and support the establishment of existing schools. Sri Sathya Sai College of Education for Women offers Bachelor Degree in teacher education at Ananthapur campus.

The main aim of the B.Ed course is not only developing intellectual and practical skills, but also provides a forum for the prospective teacher to develop his personality and imbibe values in his thoughts, feelings and behaviour. The teacher education should therefore meet the demands of
the school curriculum in value education. More emphasis is given for value education as it aims to remove religious narrow mindedness, violence and selfishness from the minds. Methodology for value education therefore finds an important place in teacher education programme. In the B.Ed course regarding the practical aspect, emphasis must be given for teaching practice. This is seen in B.Ed course of Sathya Sai College of Education. In Sri Sathya Sai Autonomous College of Education, the student teachers teach thirty lessons in each methodology. So altogether the student teachers have to teach 30+30 lessons in both the methodologies in Sathya Sai Schools under the supervision of teacher educators. This gives a very good opportunity for the student teachers to deal with the children in real situations which are beneficial for the student teachers. Another important aspect which is followed in Sathya Sai Educational System is giving more importance for values. After teaching each lesson, the student teachers are supposed to find out the values to incorporate in the children from that particular lesson. By teaching the values the student teachers can learn the values and can make the children comprehend the meaning of values through different lessons. This provides a good opportunity for the student teachers as well as children to know about the values that come across through different lessons. This type of practical approach is not seen in other teacher education colleges.

**Vocational and Skills Education:**

In the present day curriculum, vocational education is unrealistic. Education tries to provide training in some vocations irrespective of the potentialities of the individuals on one hand and the needs of the society on the other hand. Vocational training organized and provided these days
becomes unrealistic and loses significance for life. The introduction of a systematic, well planned and vigorously implemented program of vocational education is crucial in the educational reorganization. These elements are meant to enhance individual employability to reduce the mismatch between the demand and supply of skilled man-power and to provide an alternative for those pursuing higher education without particular interest or purpose. Vocational education will be a distinct stream, intended to prepare students for identified occupations spanning several areas of activity.

Presently the curriculum is knowledge centered and neglects the development of skills, attitudes and values. Sri Sathya Sai Baba felt that education must aim at the development of a total and integrated personality, physical vital or emotional, mental, psychic and spiritual. Education is a threefold process of imparting knowledge, developing skills and inculcating proper interest, attitudes and values. But our schools and colleges are mostly concerned with the first part of the process and even this is carried out in a prosaic manner. Though the curriculum speaks of other parts, it hardly insists on them. Again, the knowledge thus acquired is only theoretical, with hardly any scope for practical experimentation, activities and experiences. Consequently there is only a liner development of the mental with disproportionate development of the other aspects.

Sri Sathya Sai Educational System has introduced skills based on vocational education right from the 1st class. At primary level from I to VIII, drawing and painting, work experience, physical education and games and music are introduced along with the prescribed syllabus. At secondary classes IX and X health and physical education, work experience, art
education, gardening, paper cutting, needle work etc are taught along with academics. The school provides facilities for a number of co-curricular activities designed as talent search programmes. These activities are meant to develop communication abilities and perceptual skills apart from proper utilization essential ingredients of a well balanced personality. Student’s participation in most of these activities is compulsory. The school provides a conducive and an encouraging environment for students to pursue their interests and have skills in their choice-area of activities besides co-curricular and academic pursuit like games and sports, music, dance, athletics, dramatics, vedam chanting and art. Self-Reliance is a compulsory programme in which the students do their work with least dependence on external agencies. Self –Reliance provides reliance on own innate capabilities and talents. The Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning has an in-house Brass Band with the latest percussion and wind instruments. The training for playing the Brass Band is provided by international experts. Also, the senior students teach their juniors as they gain expertise in their own instruments. The Brass Band team gets an opportunity to perform on a number of occasions such as the annual convocation and the annual sports day of the university and many other Indian and International festivals.

By the inspiration of Sri Sathya Sai Baba to support and uplift the poor and needy section of the society, especially for the benefit of the village youth, who have no-facility, opportunity, direction or guidance to steer their career. With this background Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation has embarked on creating a skills school to impart training in various engineering trade skills to village youth.
As per the command of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Sri Sathya Sai Skills School was inaugurated on 23rd November, 2005 in Tirukurunalvedi Village in Tirunalvedi District in Tamil Nadu. It was inaugurated for the benefit of rural youth. Here training is given in plumbing, electrical wiring, maintenance of home appliances for 6 months free of cost. The eligibility is 8th class pass or fail. On successful completion a provisional trade certificate will be issued along with tool kit (www.youtube.com dated 25-03-2013).

Also on 16th June, 2007 Sri Sathya Sai Skills School was inaugurated at Parambur, Chennai. The aim of the school is to impart practical on hands training to women of economically weaker section free of cost, so as to provide them with an opportunity to self-employment or employment with commercial establishments, to earn a livelihood and economically augment monitory resources to their families. The skills school caters for the following vocational training courses:-

2. Certificate course in Arts and Crafts.
3. Certificate course in IT enabled services.
5. Certificate course in Home making and

At the end of the course certificates and related equipment are given to the trainees. The successful trainees of these institutions will be provided with practical training in the various available facilities of Prashanthi Nilayam utility sectors with appropriate stipend. These institutions not only impart necessary training in theory and practice in technical trade skills and vocational training for their livelihood, but also prepare and expose them
to Indian culture and spirituality with an emphasis on human values as a base to meet the challenges of life.

Other Sai Centres all over the world are emulating this example by conducting vocational training programme for the economically weaker sections at free of cost. (www.saiyuvak.org dated 25-03-2013).

**Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project**

At present 80% of the Rural Student population of India have less access to education. A recent survey confirms that a majority of Indian students receive sub-standard education. This debilitating handicap hits at the core of human potential, closing doors for opportunities to improve the quality of life. So, Sri Sathya Sai Baba aimed to address this problem with an unprecedented thoroughness, meticulous planning and professional execution.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba inaugurated ‘Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project’ on 23rd November, 2010. It is programmed to achieve the aspects of cognitive thinking, motivation and empowered action by utilizing technology to deliver a synthesis of value-based education and curriculum. Methods of teaching include the articulation and expression of values in core subjects i.e. in cognitive thinking, the conscious involvement of teachers in exemplifying the values (motivation) and the all-inclusive participation of students in service-based projects (empowered action). It was launched to have the synergic affect of the ideas and their translation in human living with the help of technology. The four pillars of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project are insightful, inspiring, enjoyable and participation.
(1) **Insightful:** Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project intends to ingratiate young minds with insightful and noble ideas, thereby widening their horizons. Sri Sathya Sai Baba advised teachers to teach the students in a meaningful way. Education cannot be acquired by rote memory. The project envisaged to provide value-based quality education by best teachers through modern technology to the children in rural areas in collaboration with Tata Consultancy Services.

(2) **Inspiring:** Sri Sathya Sai Baba always stressed that education with human values must be a base for higher education. The students are inspired mainly by value education which must be inculcated from the childhood days itself.

(3) **Enjoyable:** Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project makes school education simpler, easier and much more innovative. It also motivates students as the curriculum is combined with human values and the students are taught via animations, pictures and multimedia technologies which makes the children more enjoyable in their learning process from 6th to 10th standards in rural and semi-urban schools. It intends to make the process of teaching learning enjoyable by building upon and sharing best practices.

(4) **Participative:** Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s main theme is to make all the members participate in the learning process. Teaching is not limited only to the teachers, but Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project make the student play a vital role in teaching-learning process. Some students can learn through listening, some by audio visual aids and some learn by doing. So, Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project intends
to coordinate several types of learning to inculcate interest among students. Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project puts effort to give the students integrated value education at all stages of education. It’s main aim is to channel the capabilities of youth towards self-rewarding service.

Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project is an open-ended project to harness technology as the key enabler to replicate on a national scale, the success of the model of the integral education-combining value based education with academic excellence. It is followed at the university and schools founded by Sri Sathya Sai Baba and created a generation of well-qualified young men and women, who are filled with a burning desire to serve the motherland, a keen sense of integrity, empathy for their brethren and serene spiritual discipline.

The guiding principles of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project are:

1. To make Human Value based secular information available free to rural children.

2. To use technology to face lifted greater percolation of educational initiative.

The Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project is aimed at integrating values in an innovative way into the school curriculum from I to XII Classes mostly for rural people. It seeks to reflect Baba’s guidance through education in human values and connects to the school curriculum. Career counseling and vocational guidance are also the important components of the Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project. The main motto of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project is to make the children to say ‘Thank God, today is
Monday’. This shows that the students go to the school not by compulsion but with pleasure.

The pilot project began at three schools in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Haryana. The project, since its inauguration has been smoothly executed across 8 states, 18 schools and 7 education boards.

**Non-formal Education**

Formal education is linked with schools whereas non-formal education with community groups and other organizations. Non-formal education is an organized educational activity outside the established formal system, whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity. It is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives. It can be seen as related to the concepts of recurrent and lifelong learning. It is the extension of education and learning throughout life. Non-formal education is about acknowledging the importance of education, learning and training which takes place outside recognized educational institutions. Non-formal education is provided in the interest of the learners, and the organization and curriculum planning is undertaken by the learners themselves.

**Sri Sathya Sai Balvikas Educational Programme**

Sri Sathya Sai Baba in 1969 introduced Sri Sathya Sai Balvikas Educational Programme to enable the total development of the personality of the child, i.e. not only the physical and mental faculties, but also the emotional, psychological and psychic faculties of the growing child. This is achieved by bringing out the best which is latent and by helping the child to
develop the skill to tap the divine energy within and manifest the human values latent within the child.

Balvikas is not just a programme. It is a noble movement that took roots in the year 1968 with the founding of Sri Sathya Sai Mahila Vibhag. Sathya Sai Baba instructed Mahila Vibhag in 1969 to run a Bala Vihar for young children where they listen to stories from the Scriptures, the Epics, and the Lives of Saints belonging to all religions. Children are trained to sing Bhajans, enact small plays with themes selected from the classics. They are taught to cultivate habits of discipline, for these alone can ensure happiness both for individual and society.

Accordingly, rules, regulations, and a course syllabus were developed in order to enhance the blossoming of ‘truth, beauty and goodness’ in the child. The Balvikas Programme designed by Sri Sathya Sai Baba for children between 6 years to 14 years of age, in three groups. It took shape with the formation and expansion of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization. Balvikas spread far and wide. Training modules were developed, research went in deeper, and with Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s active and continuous guidance balvikas was crystallized into a 9 year non-formal education system for children enhancing their learning to become role models in character and also in academic performance.

By 1975 the number of trained balvikas teachers in India had grown to 3,500, and the number of students to over 50,000. The programme was soon to be introduced to countries outside of India. In the very early 1970s a Balvikas programme was begun in the United Kingdom. In 1977, Sathya Sai devotees in the United States of America started a Balvikas
Programme, modeled along the lines of the one in India, and published an international balvikas Newsletter Sri Sathya Sai Baba in 1969, the Om Publication.

The Balvikas Programme began to spread rapidly to other countries around the world, and in 1981, a conference for overseas teachers was held at Prashanthi Nilayam. During this conference, the concept of education in human values was introduced and Sri Sathya Sai Baba called for the development of objective assessment techniques. Subsequently, added emphasis was placed on the further development of balvikas teacher training and curriculum. In 1983 the 15th Anniversary of Balvikas Celebration was held in Prashanthi Nilayam. This was attended by 20,000 children and teachers. In 1995 at the Sixth World Conference of Sri Sathya Sai Organizations, in order to emphasize the universality of the Balvikas Programme, it was decided to change the name to Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) in countries outside India.

The natural corollary of this programme was “Education in Human Values”. Early in the development of balvikas, Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that the balvikas course is designed to impart the values of Sanathana Dharma (perennial, virtuous conduct). Wherever truth, right conduct, peace and love are emphasized, in whatever religion or language, by whichever teacher it may be, there will be sanathana dharma. It is imperative that the guru teacher teaches this course with full faith and confidence. The prime focus of the programme and the main objective of the programme is to help the child to realize his or her divinity within, in fullness, through the understanding and experience of all the five values as these values are truly an outward expression of the divinity within. A value
based life makes the child an ideal citizen and a role model in school and college and society and the world.

**Aims of Balvikas**

1. To foster character development and spiritual transformation.
2. To inculcate habits of discipline and self-discipline so that students learn to be masters of the mind and not slaves and have absolute control over sense organs.
3. To engender in children a desire to be of service to all humanity and in this way to be of service to God by helping them. By this, they learn about the life and teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.
4. To cultivate humility, practice of ceiling on desires and render selfless service.
5. To train the children to discriminate between right and wrong, between truth and non-truth i.e. to follow always the inner promptings of the divine.
6. To help children to be fully aware of the unity underlying all faiths and all mankind.
7. To guide all children to have purity and harmony in thought, word and deed.
8. To help children realize their conscience and follow that as the path for attaining divinity.
9. To give priority to the development of character, self-confidence and self-sufficiency.
10. To foster the understanding and practice of the five inherent human values of truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence.
11. To raise a generation of boys and girls who have a clean and clear conscience.

12. To guide the children in the spiritual path, through simple and moral living and installing in the young minds, the importance of duty, devotion and discipline.

13. To help the students understand the five human values, so that they can practice these in their daily lives and to guide the students to love all and serve all.

14. To help the students to grow into worthy citizens to serve the world and identifying the divinity present in all.

Aims of Balvikas were clearly defined as Vikas or Blossoming in respect of

1. Deha Vikas (Physical Development or Blossoming of Body)
2. Mano Vikas (Mental Development or Blossoming of Mind)
3. Buddhi Vikas (Development or Blossoming of Intellect)
4. Bhava Vikas (Development or Blossoming of qualities of Heart)
5. Atma Vikas (Development or Blossoming of Spirit)

**Concept of Balvikas Teaching**

The Balvikas course is based on two principles:

- Existence of God
- Divinity in man

The ultimate aim of Balvikas is to let the child realize that divinity dwells in him. The child is ignorant that he or she is divine though pure at heart, soft in physique, tender in mind and nascent in intellect.
Components of the Balvikas Programme:

The seven major components of Balvikas programme are:

1. The five values.
2. The Child.
3. The Guru.
4. The Parent.
5. The syllabus.
6. The five teaching techniques.
7. The three wings of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization.

These components are shown in the following figure.

![Components of Balvikas Programme](image)

Figure 4.3: Components of Balvikas

**The five values**: Truth, Right-Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-Violence are the eternal values present in every being when a person lives his or her life by these values. If there is peace, harmony and joy within and without, the purpose of life is fulfilled. Having this in mind the balvikas
programme intends to inculcate these five values in the children through prescribed syllabus in balvikas classes.

The Child: In olden days, after the students had completed their education, the gurus (teachers) used to offer them words of advice before they embarked on Grihastha Ashrama (The life of householders). The advice given by the preceptors was to revere father and mother and to serve the world. The training of the pupils would conclude based on the Acharya’s evaluation of the overall readiness of the pupil to transit to the next stage of life. The Shiksha Valli of the Taittareya Upanishad (2002) highlights the message imparted to the students by the teacher at the time of the completion of their studies, ‘Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara; Matru Devo Bhava, Pitr Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava, Atithi Devo Bhava’ (p. 185) which means ‘speak the truth, act Righteously; revere your mother, father, teacher and guest as the very embodiments of divinity’. This was the exalted nature of education and the purity of the teacher-student relation. According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba ‘parent’ means ‘pay rent’, children should pay the rent of respect and service to parents who gave them the room called body. Children should always be grateful to their parents because their food, blood, money and all belongs to them.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba advised teachers to instruct the children of the Sai spiritual education classes to revere their parents. He said that it is a simple act of gratitude for those who endowed them with the material instrument for life. If the children give joy to their parents now, their children will be a source of joy to them in the declining years. Mere possession of the human body, however wonderful it may be, is not
enough for one’s peace and joy. One must know how to unravel its mysteries and how to regulate one’s own impulses and hungers.

According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba it is the duty of every human being to understand and respect his parents. Starting with love and reverence for the parents, students should cultivate love and reverence for the motherland. On one side the individual has freedom and fundamental rights, and on the other he has responsibilities and duties to be performed. Man is no doubt anxious about individual freedom and power, but he does not think of his duty in the same proportion. He should do full justice to social obligations and establish the reputation of his country and its culture. Students must be imbued with genuine patriotism. In a nation, it is the duty of every human being to assimilate and appreciate the historical and cultural background of his nation and consider these two as his father and mother. In fact, one who is ignorant of the historical and cultural heritage of his country is like a stupid person who has no knowledge of his parents. Reminding the students about their duty to society Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that one should enter into society to serve the society and to serve the nation. Sathya Sai Baba advised teachers to teach the great classics and scriptures like the Ramayana, the Mahabharatha, the Bhagavad Gita, the Bible and the Koran etc.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba opined that students in the past practiced, ‘Simple living and high thinking’, but today they are engaged in ‘High living and low thinking’. High living urges them to earn and amass money, which is subject to devaluation and diminution. But the wealth of knowledge and character is free of both these. Even more than the teachers, it is the students who have to be exemplary and high-minded.
Sri Sathya Sai Baba said about students that what is most deplorable today is the indifference of students to their mental development, because they are concerned only about their narrow personal interests. They seek only material gains. People are filled with pride, selfishness, and self-interest; they are ceasing to be human. So it is supremely important that the qualities of devotion to God, patriotism, and self-sacrifice should be developed among the people as suggested by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He further opined that the readiness to sacrifice one’s pleasure and comforts for the sake of the nation should be promoted among the students. When there are men of high-minded, spiritually-oriented students, the nation will achieve peace and security.

At the seventh convocation benedictory address to the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1988) emphasized this again, by saying, “You should undertake service activities which can give you self-satisfaction. There is nothing greater than service. Enter into society and undertake service activities. Do this continuously. When you undertake such a sacred service, your education gets sanctified” (p. 47).

Sri Sathya Sai Baba further said that real education which has significance for the country is that education which gives the courage by which one can go and act where ever there is injustice, unkindness and untruth. The education connected with culture of Bharat is one which should enable to stand one on his own legs. The children are full of fine qualities. They have the ability to develop the whole world. But they do not try to utilize it. Students should realize the integral relationship between them and the world. Hence they should not hesitate to serve the world.
Sri Sathya Sai Baba advised students that if they clamour for rights, they must bend their shoulders to carry the obligations too. He further said that students should develop the skill to distinguish between what is good and what is not, and the means to secure the good and avoid the evil. Sri Sathya Sai Baba questioned why students attend schools and colleges, spending large sum of money when they can read and study at home. He explains this by saying that they attend schools and colleges in order to cultivate discipline, to control emotions and to channelize passions. They learn the lesson of mutual co-operation, good manners, courtesy, compassion and comradeship.

According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba students should not consider themselves weak and imbecile beings. They should rely on their conscience, not on the impermanent body or the fickle mind and make faith as life-breath. Ultimately, he said as God is the basis of everything, students have to develop faith in God. Sri Sathya Sai Baba further stressed on character and said that education without character leads to innumerable wants and desires and converts a hero into a zero. Even if a fraction of what one learns is imbibed and practiced in thought, word and action, then it would make a complete change in man. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that the ‘WATCH’ method is more practicable for the students to watch themselves. He said that ‘W’ stands for words, one should watch his words, ‘A’ stands for actions, one should watch his actions. ‘T’ stands for thoughts, one should watch his thoughts, ‘C’ stands for character, one should watch his character, ‘H’ stands for heart, and one should watch his heart. So the students must watch their Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character and Heart. Watching initially creates an awareness, which is
progressively become a habit by repetitive behaviour. Man is what he repeatedly does. The values can be inculcated and internalized. The intellectual, physical, emotional, psychic and spiritual integration of the individual should be the aim of education. In the opinion of Sri Sathya Sai Baba the core of spiritual training is discipline – not just of the body, but of the mind and senses, physical discipline includes punctuality, time management, a well regulated life, healthy food habits, decent dress code, self-reliance, community living, etc. Mental discipline includes honesty, sensitivity, empathy, thrift, humility, duty consciousness, adherence of rules, abstinence from undesirable habits, etc. Students should be encouraged to follow such discipline, to lead a peaceful life. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that to develop the power of concentration, sports and games are very essential and they serve to promote physical fitness and mental health. So he introduced games and sports in co-curricular activities of his educational system and is to be practiced daily, mainly for keeping the body fit and trim.

**The Teacher**

Father, Mother and the Teacher are the three people who are primarily responsible for moulding the future citizens of the country. Of these, teachers play the most important role, for they are specially trained and selected for the job. Teachers are implicitly trusted by the child, parents and public alike and the trust must be repaid by honest service. The teacher is revered and respected by the children and the public as the ‘Guru’. In the word ‘Guru’, the word ‘Gu’ means ignorance and ‘ru’ means destroyer – the word reminds the role of the teacher itself as said by Sri Sathya Sai Baba.
Sri Sathya Sai Baba gave utmost importance to the teaching profession. He stated that teachers must feel that they belong to a respected profession. The teacher is actually a kingmaker. Even kings and emperors, in their early years, have to be students under a teacher. Such is the nobility and dignity of the teaching profession. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that teachers are the sculptors who mould the rocks into things of beauty and significance, of utility and inspiration. They study the pupils, their nature and equipment, and decide on their roles in society, their paths, and the stages in their progress. He further said that teacher must help the flower of peace to blossom and the fruit of spiritual equanimity to be shared by all mankind with the help of the student. In fact they are not merely teachers at their own schools, but they are teachers of the human race.

At a discourse in Prashanthi Nilayam on 20th Sep 2000, Sri Sathya Sai Baba compared the teacher with a water tank and students to the tap connected to it. He said that when the tank is full, water will flow from the tap, but the tank must have a store of potable water. When the tap is turned, water flows down from the overhead tank. The quality of the tap water is the same as that of the water in the tank. When the heart of the teacher is full of goodness, selflessness, and love, the pupils will express these virtues in every act of theirs. He further said that teachers have to be exemplary that can inspire the pupils. They must practice what they preach.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba felt that teachers must lead lives based on upright conduct, moral grandeur, and spiritual practice. The teachers of tomorrow are the students of today. So in the interests of the future,
cleansing of the atmosphere in the classroom is very necessary. Teachers are reservoirs from which, through the process of education, students draw the water of life. So every effort has to be made to see that the reservoir is not contaminated by hate or pride. Schools and colleges should not be engaged merely in the processes of teaching and learning. Reading, writing, and arithmetic do not exhaust the task of the school. The inculcation of great ideals and the attempt to put them into practice are also equally important tasks. The teachers must inculcate selfless love and the showering and sharing of that love. The teacher moulds the rising generation into self confident, self-reliant and self-conscious persons. Teacher is the architect of happy homes, prosperous communities and peaceful nations. ‘Good Teachers + Good Students = Good Nation.’ is the equation given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. (www.sssbpt.org/pages/trust/balvikas.htm, Mar 2010)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that the teachers have to be lifelong students, engaged not in mere study, but immersed in practice, too. Only a lamp that burns can light other lamps as said by Radhakrishnan. Many teachers have now become dispirited and the flame of their enthusiasm is spluttering because of the multiplication of desires. The great mission of the teacher and its obligations are often ignored as observed by Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba, a teacher should foster duty mindedness among children. Duty is God, work is worship but laziness is rust and dust. Duty is concerned with discipline and devotion. Anything can be achieved by discipline. Teachers have to educate the children to not to give importance for the past and also for the future. Past is a history,
future is a mystery, present is the gift of God. So teachers must educate their children not to waste their time. ‘Time wasted is life wasted’.

**The Parent**

Sri Sathya Sai Baba always emphasized that parents are the first teachers and teachers are the second parents. It is said that the home is the first school where children have the initial education. The foundation of knowledge, skills and attitudes which children display in later life, is laid in the impressionable period at home which is a world in itself, providing varied and numerous opportunities for learning through observation, suggestion and influence. Education which is not information but the formation of the mind does not begin only when the child is put to school. Education begins in the womb itself. Parents cannot absolve themselves from the responsibility of moulding the minds of their children.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba advised parents to give that type of education which inculcates universal and ethical values like compassion, courage, honesty, tolerance and truthfulness that helps in developing a balanced individual and in creating a humane society. In imparting values to the children, parents are the best persons. The parents must be like role models for their children. The parents must practice first and precept next. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that first of all, the parents must honour their parents so that their children will honour them. Good qualities like peace, forbearance, love and attachment to truth must be practiced first by the parents and also by telling some moral stories like Sathya Harischandra, the Ramayana, the Mahabharatha, the Bhagavad-Gita, Chatrapathi Shivaji, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Theresa, Abdul Kalam etc;
According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba, parents must first of all develop philosophical attitude. Unless they develop, they cannot advice anything to their children. Children first learn many things through listening and observing. Parents must guide their children to bear the fruit of good or bad of their past actions and to do good deeds in the present time. Parents must be aware that too much of wealth is an embarrassment like an oversize shoe; too little of it is painful like an undersized shoe that pinches. So, it is better to have only that much of wealth, which is adequate for one’s basic needs. If this idea is transferred to their children from the young age itself they may not become blood suckers.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba advised that parents must train their children to act as masters in controlling the senses but not to become a slave of senses. As science is growing up, sense is going down. Controlling of sense organs and living on satwic food are the paths of self-realization. Since food is Brahman it should not be wasted. Parents must train their children that one should eat to live but not live to eat. Sri Sathya Sai Baba stressed that ‘As is the food, so is the mind, as is the mind, so is the thought, as is the thought so is the act.’ So, he advised that the body should neither be neglected nor fondled but should be cared properly, just as a traveler on home stretch takes care of his pony till he reaches his destination and returned home. Thus the body should be used to attain self-realization which is the supreme end of life. Desire is the sole cause of sorrow and distress. Parents must guide their children to have a ceiling on desires so that they develop the desires according to their capacities. Parents must make their children always to speak obligingly though they may not always oblige. Control of speech is the best ornament and honesty is the best
Jewel. The parents must instruct their children frequently to watch their words, actions, thoughts, character and heart by themselves. The children must be guided that there is one caste, the caste of humanity; there is only one language, the language of heart; there is only one religion, the religion of love; there is only one God and he is omnipresent.

The child, parents and the teachers are like the three corners of a triangle. Child is not only influenced by how the parents and the teachers talk or act, but also how they feel and behave. Parents are the first example of social behaviour that the children see before they learn to imitate. Children learn a lot through example. Knowledge can be imparted by the teacher, but the discipline, the rigorous control of senses and the behaviour of the child must be administered by the parents.

Parents must be very careful regarding their conduct before the child. When the parents practice what they preach, then the child follow their instructions. If parents want their child to behave well, they must also behave well in front of the child. Due to the impact of mass media, today’s children have become very much inquisitive. They will question the wrong conduct of their parents. Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1988) said “The father and mother must supplement at home the training given by the teacher at school” (p. 144).

In line with the thinking of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Joshi (2000) said, “Today if several youngsters deviate from the path of dignity and decorum, to a large extent it is due to the lack of sober influences in their own house. They should not be seen by their children as a worried, discontented and distressed parent. When the parents behave in an unedifying manner, the
youngsters who watch them shrewdly, imbibe the unhealthy tendencies and display them in their activities in the larger life outside. It is unfair to blame teachers when the young do not behave properly, the parents having neglected their training in their plastic period.” (p. 54).

Great men like Shivaji, Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi whose lives were well served as a model to others, have acknowledged with reverential gratitude the value of the wholesome training they received at the hands of their parents while young. Parents are the best value teachers because they are the role models for the children. They give high motivation with feeling of ‘my’ child. Home is the ideal place to train the child through values because parents are available at all times, especially during the child’s day to day activities. So the child can have ample learning opportunities. Learning is prompted by positive qualities of the parents as well as their management of the negative qualities like misunderstanding; anger, suspicion etc. Parents must always remember that child learns through identification and imitation. So parents must present themselves as living Gods. Home is heaven. When there is love and understanding and the same becomes a hell when there is distrust and hostility. Parents must have faith in the basic truths of life. To instill the habit of prayer and the values of humility and loving service to others in the minds of children, the parents have a very important role to play.

Parents have always played a decisive role in the upgradation of the quality of people in different parts of the world. Civilizations reach their golden age of pinnacle when parents are aware of their fundamental duty to groom their children as ideal men and women; also when there are teachers who are worthy of this noble profession. This happens when both
parents and teachers are conscious that the ideal of education, all training should be this man-making. The ultimate aim of all training is to make a man grow. Swami Vivekananda (1993) said, “The man who influences, who throws his magic, as it were, on his fellow beings, is a dynamo of power” (p. 158). Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that children must grow up in an atmosphere of reverence, devotion, mutual service and cooperation. Parents should not sow hatred or contempt for any caste or class, faith or cult in the virgin minds of those fresh blossoms. Parents first, teachers next, playmates and companions later, and elders who command the allegiance of community or region last, have to be on alert constantly, examining themselves whether they are fit examples for the children of the land as said by Sri Sathya Sai Baba

On May 26th, 1993, in a lecture at summer course, Sri Sathya Sai Baba compared the conduct of parents with seeds that were sown in earth. The earth is a common soil in which all types of trees grow. If one sows neem seed (a tree with bitter leaves and seeds) naturally a neem tree will grow, if he sows a mango seed he will get a mango tree. Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that to beget children, the conduct of the parents acts like the seed that is sown. This assertion sums up the role of parents in grooming leaders.

Mother is the main architect of the character of her children. That is why a mother is such a hallowed persona all over the world. In India a mother is bracketed with God. A common dictum is ‘God could not be everywhere, so he made mothers.’ It is a fact of history that the character of every outstanding leader was formed by the influence of his mother. The mothers had the tremendous influence on the character and progress of
Mahatma Gandhi, Chatrapathi Shivaji, Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill in their very formative years. Sri Sathya Sai Baba often said that the role of a mother does not end in rearing children, but ends nation building.

Sathya Sai said (1993), “Motherhood is the most precious gift of god. Mothers are the makers of a nation’s fortune or misfortune, for the shape and the sinews of the soul. These sinews are toughened by lessons they should teach; fear of sin and fondness of virtue. Both are based on faith in God being the inner motivator of all. If one wants to know how advanced a nation is, study the mothers. Are they free from fear and anxiety; are they full of love towards all. Are they trained in fortitude and virtue? If you like to imbibe the glory of culture, watch the mothers rocking the cradle, feeding, and fostering, teaching and fondling babies. As the mother, so the progress of the nation; as the mother, so the sweetness of the culture” (p. 160&161).

Modern research is coming to some interesting conclusions on the role of the mother in building the character of individuals. The process starts when the child is still in the womb. What she does, her moods and her food have a profound effect on the child. The most balanced, well adjusted and warm-hearted individuals are those who have been virtually inseparable from their mothers for the first two years of their childhood. Children in countries and regions, who are constantly carried by their mothers during the first six months, even while doing the daily chores of housework, grow up to be the happiest adults in adversity.
The first guide of the child is the mother, the second is father, before the teacher steps in. The father has to devote time to the family, if harmonious and happy environment has to prevail for the children to grow as well adjusted adults. Admittedly, his major contribution is by the example he sets through his conduct.

The Syllabus

The Balvikas Programme has a well defined syllabus formulated under the guidance and with the blessings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The students who are attending balvikas Classes are made of groups according to their age. The children aged between 4 to 6 years are treated as Group-I Students, the children aged between 7 to 9 or 10 years are treated as Group-II Students, and the children aged between 11 to 13 or 14 years are treated as Group-III Students. The course period of every group is 3 years.

**Group I – Syllabus** : Group-I is the period of doing and making. At this age, the child wants to understand and make things out of it. Hence the focus of the balvikas Guru is on pictorial demonstrations, games, charts, group activities, role plays and attitude testing, group singing, storytelling, prayer, silent sitting, rather than on mere lecturing. Poems and prayers on Indian idols and avatars, prayers from other religions, simple bhajans and value songs are in the syllabus.

**Group II – Syllabus** : At the Group-II level, the focus is on making and planning, as the student at this stage is not happy with mere stories, songs and group games; the student needs much more to meet his imagination and his curiosity. He needs food for thought; so the five techniques must help to master his mind, control his senses and develop
the 5 D’s i.e. Duty, Devotion, Discipline, Discrimination and Determination and thus, the foundation of harmony of thought, word and deed is laid.

Suprabhatam, Gayatri Mantra, Gita Shlokas on Karma, Bh!khth! (devotion), God and Avatar, Food Prayers, Bhajans of all religions, Stories about Temples and holy places in India, lives of great men, patriots and saints and life of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Health and hygiene, tenets of major religious, importance of prayers, omkar, japa and dhyanam, national symbols, ceiling on decider, 5 elements and Inter-Relationship with man 5 D’s are the main topics which are dealt in this level. Significance of Festivals like Guru Nanak’s Birthday, Janmashtami, Shivratri, Mahavir Jayanti, Buddha Jayanthi, Easter, Nag Panchami, Holi, Navratri are taught. Group Activities like Role Play, Quiz, Antakshari, Shramdan Narayanseva, Attitude testing are performed.

**Group III – Syllabus:** The Group-III is a very important phase in the life of a Balvikas Child. Having gone through the six years of tender training in Educare, the Balvikas student has enough information and practice in the skills of sense control and an experience of inner calm and peace.

At Group-III level, the guru has to be more than a mother and teacher. She has to be a friend, a confidante of the student, and hence the focus of the guru must be in tune with the needs of the student. Group-III is the age of planning and achieving. The student, at this level wants a practice ground for him to put to test what he has learnt and so the guru must afford the student ample opportunity to put to practice what he has
learnt and imbibed in the class, at camps or even in the organizational activities through projects and seminars.

Gita shlokas on Gyan, Sadhana, and Karma, lives of Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Lives of Regional saints of India, Ideals of Sai Education, Message of Gita in day to day life, Importance of Prayer, Omkar, Japa and Dhyana, Saving Habits, Personal health and hygiene, Community living like participation in family work, synthesis of Major Religions, Cultural Habits and Manners of India, Lives of Freedom fighters, National Integration., Role of intuition are the topics dealt with.

After completion of course in the three groups there is a project year for group III students in which the child can apply his previous theoretical knowledge. Project year includes Camps, Seminar, Debates, Symposia, Shramdhan, Training as Sevadal, Balvikas Guru, Project Work, Study Circle, Experiential Learning, VIP programme, Vedas chanting of Narayana Suktham, Medha Suktham, Bhu suktham, Sri Suktham. The seminars, workshops, excursions in natural surroundings are some activities that the Group-III Guru considers. In essence the traditional class room approach is discarded at this level.

The following goals were set in terms of the implementation of the Group-III Syllabus.

1. Self Improvement – Through leadership qualities.


3. True Life Experiences – Self experience and case studies.

The Pre-Sevadal (13+ Till 17 years)

At the end of the 9 years of Sri Sathya Sai Balvikas Education, the student at the age of 13+ is faced with great academic pressures of higher education and public examinations. This is also the age when peer influence is at its highest. It is in this scenario that the Sri Sathya Sai Balvikas student is expected to put into practice what he has imbibed over the 9 years period of Sri Sathya Sai Balvikas Education.

In order to ensure that the student succeeds in his endeavour at this age, the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization undertake responsibility of nurturing the child with full love and affection and becoming a friend in every aspect of his endeavour at this stage. Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization also aims at ensuring that such students to join the ranks of the sevadal at the age of 18+.

In order to ensure this aim and help the student to retain his bond with Sri Sathya Sai Balvikas programme between the age of 13+ to 17 years the two Senior Sevadal members – a male and female – are being appointed in every zone of the state to look after the needs and motivation of the Pre-Sevadal students till they attain the age of 18 and are able to join the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization by:

a. Identifying and maintaining a list of such students.

b. Providing the students with interactive projects.

c. Following up their academic progress.

d. Maintaining parental contact with the parents of such students.
The Five Teaching Techniques

Implementation of Balvikas curriculum lays stress on using the Five Teaching Techniques of silent sitting, slokas chanting or prayers, storytelling, group singing, group activities in a systematic and integrated manner. The five human Values are elicited through lessons based on the five teaching techniques. The simplicity and universality with which balvikas can be propagated and achieved with the help of the five direct teaching techniques is amazing. These powerful teaching techniques given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba have a profound spiritual base routed in ancient wisdom. The main purpose of the five teaching techniques: silent sitting, prayer, and storytelling, group signing and group activities is to help the children to imbibe the values being taught.

The First Technique – Silent Sitting

The first technique is silent sitting. In silent sitting, the children are encouraged to sit quietly for a few minutes every day. It is a very powerful technique because with constant practice the children become more receptive and intuitive. It is recommended by Sri Sathya Sai Baba that every class starts with a couple of minutes of silence. Once this becomes a regular practice the teacher notices some changes in the students’ behaviour and then an improvement will be in their concentration skills. It is appropriate to begin with five minutes of silent sitting and gradually build up to about ten minutes.

In this age of advances in science, it is very easy to think that technology has the answer to everything. If this was the case it would be possible to just push a button and one could get peace in the world or turn...
a switch and eradicate world hunger. Obviously this is not true. One can have a look across societies all over the world to see that there is confusion, violence and a general lack of peace. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that everyone seeks peace, but it can never be secured from the outside world and it can come from the fountain of peace within.

There is an old maxim that says: ‘Let there be peace in the world and let it begin with me.’ The greatest gift that one can give to children is the secret to inner peace. In this search for inner peace and happiness one must first look at what is common to all people. Everybody has the three common faculties of thought, breath and time and one can see how they can be instrumental in the search for peace and happiness.

Once children are in tune with their own conscience they will know from within what is right for them and what is wrong. They will develop their own inner discipline that will serve as a guide, rather than depending on outer discipline from parents and teachers. Once this is achieved peace and happiness are assured. One of the main techniques to help children work towards attaining this state is Silent Sitting.

The value of silent sitting and creative visualization was illustrated in Jumsai’s (1997) model in the figure shown below.
This model considers the three levels of the mind: the conscious, the subconscious and the super conscious. Through the five senses, the conscious mind receives and processes information from the environment in order to create awareness and understanding. The subconscious stores the memories of everything that was experienced, and feeds these memories to the conscious mind to control the individual’s thoughts and actions, and even to colour out perceptions of events that happen around. The super conscious mind is the source of wisdom, knowledge, conscience and higher consciousness. In a holistically-balanced person, these three levels of the mind interact together to contribute to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. Jumsai proposed that there are two
important ingredients for this healthy interaction to occur. The first is to free the three levels of the mind from extraneous ‘chatter’, to enable enhanced concentration and memory. The second is to ensure that the information that is trotted in the various levels of the mind is ‘clean’, positive and constructive, since its retrieval will have such a significant effect on the individual’s thoughts and actions which in turn contribute to the presence or absence of holistic well-being. The technique of silent sitting is a useful way to quieten the chatter and hence promote a feeling of inner peace, of creative visualization can programme the mind in a positive and healthy way.

This silent sitting can be practiced by light meditation. There may be some slight variation in the sequence of the light meditation. The most important factor is that it is practiced regularly. In this the most important thing is that the light originates from the forehead, goes straight down to the heart and finally back to the head. From the heart it can both go back to the head and down through the eyes and ears, all the way down to the feet and then up to the head again. Otherwise it may be brought from the heart to the hands and feet and then up to the head. Lorain Burrows suggested other methods of silent sitting that may be used for very young children. One way that is very effective is to conduct a guided visualization.

There is one little incident that occurred at the Sathya Sai School in Thailand that really shows just how useful and powerful this technique is as narrated by Lorain Burrows. During a morning assembly, one of the teachers told the children, that, inside each one of them was a powerful computer in which all information was stored and all they had to do was know how to get it out. She told the students that if they could not do their
exam that they should close their eyes and sit quietly for a few minutes then press on the buttons of the computer (heart) and wait for the answers to come. Later, during the English exam, one boy was looking anxious. Slowly, he closed his eyes and started to press his chest with his fingers. Suddenly, he opened his eyes and his face lit up. He quickly started writing on his exam paper. After the exam was over the teacher asked him what had happened. “I couldn’t think of the answer”, he said. “I pressed on the buttons on my computer and the answers appeared on my screen”. They were the right answers too!

So, children are to be encouraged to spend a few minutes every day practicing silent sitting. In the schools where this is a regular practice, the students need less time to do their school work because their concentration is better and their ability to absorb and remember what they have been taught is greater. It is like those old-fashioned watches that need to be wound once a day and they would keep going for twenty-four hours. In the pursuit of peace and happiness, just a few minutes of Silent Sitting every day can be of immense benefit. This is being practiced in the Sathya Sai Educational System from the 1st standard itself by having marvelous results.

**The Second Technique – Prayer**

Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1997) said, “Teach the children the habit of daily prayer, when they rise from bed in the morning and when they lie down to sleep when the day is over” (p. 51). The second technique is Prayer or Positive Thinking. This should not become a ritual or meaningless recitation but a means of imbibing values which was always quoted by Sri Sathya Sai Baba that ‘what one thinks, he so becomes’.
Therefore the regular use of universal prayers or positive thinking can help develop good character in children. In places where it is not appropriate to use prayers, quotations and poems, thought for the day may be used.

Even a young child at primary level has stored huge amounts of information. Especially today with the wide-spread use of television and videos, children are bombarded with images, many of which are extremely negative and all of which are stored in their memory. To counter-balance this negativity, children should be given sayings or quotations which help to stimulate a more positive thinking pattern. The goal of positive thinking is not to brainwash the children or to impose values on them that they do not really believe in. The ultimate goal is that they should be able to make their own decisions based on a clear conscience. Through thinking positively, children can gain more self-confidence and feel that they can be successful in whatever they do.

It is worth mentioning here another technique as suggested by Lorraine Burrows that can help children learn more easily is sleep learning. The subconscious mind never sleeps, even when the conscious mind and the physical body are sleeping. Extensive research has been carried out to prove the benefits of sleep learning. In sleep laboratories, students listen to tapes containing all kinds of information. Although they are asleep the information is absorbed and they are able to remember it when they awake. This method is especially successful for learning languages. Sleep learning can be used with young children using music or story tapes, a word of caution. This process should not interfere with the child’s natural sleep; therefore the time used for this very night should be limited to about one hour.
The techniques of prayer or thought dynamics contain several components. In many parts of the world, teaching prayers to children is a very sensitive issue and in some cases not appropriate. In this situation, positive thoughts, quotations or poetry can be used as effective ways of passing on values. Prayers can give children a new sense of security, a feeling that there is something greater than them.

The purpose of including prayer as one of the teaching techniques is not to burden the children with more things to memorize or to introduce them to meaningless ritual. The purpose is to show them how to go within themselves to find that centre of peace, love and light. Simple, universal-type prayers are used as a regular part of the lesson. Different kinds of prayers for different occasions taught by Sri Sathya Sai Baba - a prayer before meals, a prayer after wake-up, at bed time are implementing in Education in Human Values Programme and in Balvikas Programme.

The Third Technique – Story Telling

The third technique is story telling. All children love to hear stories; even those who do not like attending class enjoy stories. Many great world figures have been moved and even changed by the stories they have been told in their childhood. Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1997) said, “Hear good things, see good things and be good. In this way all evil tendencies will be uprooted” (p. 79).

Story telling is an ancient art. Long before there was written languages information was passed down in the form of stories. Every country and culture has a treasure house of legends and folk tales that tell of the beginning of time and the birth of their own particular culture. Most
of the religious and world leaders have used storytelling to explain and illustrate their teachings. Stories have a very deep effect especially on children. Something told in the form of a story will be remembered and treasured, whereas the same information told dry may be forgotten in a short while. This technique is used to memorize the geographic, scientific names and things by so many memory trainers right now also.

There are many examples in history of great men and women being transformed by the stories they heard. One such incident is from the life of Mahatma Gandhi. As a young boy he was taken to the theatre to see the play, Harischandra. This is the story of a king who was renowned for his adherence to truth. He did not swerve from truth when faced with losing his kingdom, all his possessions and even his own wife and child. This story greatly affected Gandhi, so that he took a vow to live by truth and by truth alone. He grew up to be the savior of India. Almost single-handedly, he led India to independence from what was then the most powerful empire in the world, through his adherence to truth and non-violence.

There is an example by Lorain Burrows in the first year of the Sathya Sai School in Thailand, amongst the first students to enroll was a young boy who had a very serious discipline problem. One of the teachers, who is an excellent story-teller and has infinite patience sat on the stairs, a little distance away, and told him stories. At first the child pretended not to take any notice but then he could not resist. Several days passed. Whenever he had time, the teacher would sit and tell stories. It did not take long before the boy was ready to go into the classroom and join his classmates in their lessons. But now he is very honest, caring and helpful, Apart from anything else, he tells great stories. According to Loraine
Burrows, the stories which attract at different ages can be categorized into three categories. They are, 6 – 10 years ‘Imagination’, 10 – 15 years ‘Realistic’, and 15 years ‘Upwards factual.’

Young children live in a world of fantasy and imagination. It is quite believable for them to have trees and animals that talk and quite acceptable that there may be a goblin or fairy around the next corner. Stories for the very young should feed their imagination and stimulate their creativity for it is something that tends to fade away as they grow older. Older children no longer believe in talking animals and trees, they want to hear about things they can relate to, stories that are more realistic. As they reach their teenage years, they want facts—what really happened, why people react to certain situations and how great men and women lived their lives.

Techniques for Story Telling as suggested to teachers by Loraine Burrows are

a. Tell the story – do not read it,

b. Be on the same level as the child

c. Choose suitable stories to fit both the children and the value being taught

d. Enjoy the story yourself

e. Become very familiar with the story,

f. Use your voice – vary it to illustrate the story,

g. Use your body especially facial expressions,

h. Use teaching materials to help enliven the story and
i. The teacher must practice what he or she teaches.

Story telling plays a crucial role in the Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values class. It is the crux of the lesson around which the other activities and techniques are orientated. Children should be encouraged not only to tell stories, but also to write the stories on their own. This helps to develop creativity along with a good understanding of values. The same story may be told several times, especially if there is some good reason for it.

**The Fourth Technique- Group Singing**

The fourth technique is Group Singing. Most children enjoy singing. Although many may be too shy to sing on their own, singing in a group build up confidence and is a good way of creating unity, harmony and self-confidence in the students. Of all musical instruments, the human voice is the most wonderful and the most varied. It is a wonderful technique for enhancing the value being taught, as the children often continue singing the song long after the class is over. It is important therefore, that the songs are chosen carefully so as to benefit the children the most. Another benefit of group singing is that it is much easier to remember something that has been put to music and is sung.

In 1950 Dr. T.C.N. Singh who was then the head of the Botany Department at Annamalai University in Madras, had his research conducted on the effects of music. He used an aquatic plant called a hydrilla, which he studied under a microscope. He was able to record the steaming of protoplasm in the cells of the plant. Much encouraged by the success of these experiments, Dr. Singh continued his tests with many
different species of flowers, vegetables and crops. Interludes produced 72 percent more leaves and grew 20 percent higher than the un-serenaded plants, within a period of a couple of months. From all his experimentations, Dr. Singh wrote the following statement in the Bihar Agricultural College magazine: “It has been proven beyond any shadow of doubt that harmonic sound waves affect the growth, flowering, fruiting and seed yields of plants”. In the 1960s, experiments were conducted with field crops. Gramophone music was piped out through loud speakers which resulted in harvests ranging consistently from 25–60 percent higher than the regional average.

Group singing is a very valuable part of the lesson. Apart from the potential of developing the voice and character, it helps the children relax and enjoy learning. One of the great advantages is that the song remains with the children long after the class is over. This means that the values that are in the song lyrics will remain in the child’s consciousness for a long time and will help to transform the child. Group singing can take various forms in the lesson. The children can just sing together, in harmony or as a round. The most difficult part for most teachers is finding the right songs. For young children, simple songs with catchy melodies are the best. For older children more complicated lyrics and intricate melodies make it interesting for them. Teachers should try to find popular songs that have good messages. Music and group singing play a vital role in the all-round development of the child. Apart from all the many benefits of this technique one of the most important reasons for including, it is that children around the world enjoy music and singing.
The Fifth Technique - Group Activities

The last of the teaching techniques is Group Activities, which consists of role play, attitude tests, games, group work and creative work. All these activities help to give meaning and substance to the values. It is ‘hands on’ experience. Children will understand more from what they do than from what they hear or read. Young children learn more through movement and action than through reading and writing. It is hard for very young children to sit still; they need to move. Through these activities children learn, have fun and interact with each other.

Group Activities consists of two words: Group and Activities. The first word is group in which man lives. Man is a social being who lives in societies constantly interrelating to each other. National conflicts, social disorder, disharmony in the family, problems at school, most of these stem from an inability to agree or understand another’s point of view. The second word that we are looking at is activities. In traditional teaching methods, students spend a large part of their school day sitting behind a desk. The only regular activity they have is during such lessons as physical education or sports periods. It is extremely difficult for children to sit still for such a long time. In the all round development of children, man wants them to grow up able to get on well with each other and with an ability to hear others. One of the main purposes of group activities is for the children to learn how to work and play together in a harmonious way. There are five main areas for group activities which are role play, attitude tests, games, group work and creative work.
**Role Play**: A great poet William Shakespeare once wrote: ‘All the world’s a stage and all the men and women merely players’. In the same vein Sri Sathya Baba said, ‘Life is a short play on the stage. Life is love and life is a game; play it’.

**Attitude Tests**: Attitude Tests are a way of not only assessing the progress of the children making, but also of own effectiveness as teachers. One of the aims of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values is that the children develop positive attitudes.

**Games**: It is a great tragedy that many traditional games and activities are slowly dying out because children opt to sit in front of a television set that does not even encourage them to think for themselves rather than create their own games and play. It is an irony because if most children were asked which they would rather do, watch TV or play with their parents, most would want the latter. The pity is that most parents nowadays do not have enough time to really play with their children nor do many children have the initiative to play on their own. Teachers, need to make lessons as interesting and fun as possible. The children acquire through playing games are, interest and fun value, relaxation, co-Operation, self-Inquiry, better memory and concentration.

**Group Work**: There is a growing trend in education today to encourage students to work together in groups. In Israel there is a method of teaching called Co-operative Learning which has been incorporated into the main stream of education. Children work in pairs or small groups finding their own solutions to problems. The teacher acts as a guide. This type of learning is very suitable for children to think for themselves and
come up with their own answers. Group work is a good opportunity for students to learn to work together. This will be a great asset for them later on in life. Another advantage of group work is for children to help each other. The benefits of group work are co-operation, creativity, sharing unity, harmony self-confidence, team work and listening to other opinions.

**Creative Work**: Every child is an artist. Creativity is one of the gems of true education; it is a way of expressing inner feelings. There has been a lot of research on left and right Brain. The left brain is associated with verbal skills, reasoning and the more analytical traits of personality - this side of the brain is well developed in most people. The right brain promotes creativity, art, music and similar non-verbal talents. This tends to be less developed. In the all-round development of the child, the right and left Brains should be equally cultivated. Creative Work should be an integral part of each lesson.

The technique of group activities is a high point of lesson. Children learn more through being actively involved than sitting still and listening to their teacher. They learn to work together and become more creative and intuitive. They develop discrimination and to question things more deeply and learn to be more honest with themselves. Each lesson is based on one of the five values, and its theme follows a particular sub-value. The lesson should contain the five teaching techniques, all of which relate to the value in question. The impact of the lesson does not lie in any one of the methods or even in the value itself; it is the combination of the values and the techniques that give its uniqueness.
The Three Wings of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation

The Balvikas programme is an integral part of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization at the samithi, dist., state and national levels. The three wings of the organization - educational, service and spiritual are working together in harmony with service motto.

Balvikas Growth in India

Over the past 44 years, Sri Sathya Sai Balvikas movement has reached every district of India. The growth of centers, increase in the number of trained gurus and enrolment of students is shown in the following graph.

Figure : 4.5

Source: http://www.sssbalvikas.org/history.htm

Sri Sathya Sai Baba has always directed that the objective of the Balvikas Programme is not only to instill values in children but also to achieve transformation. Therefore the focus of the Balvikas Programme is
to assess the transformation taking place in the student over the 9 years of the programme. This transformation can be assessed by a dedicated process of evaluation by the people engaged in this programme at all levels.

Sri Sathya Sai Balvikas Programme has been conducting in residential homes. In order to afford more opportunities to a greater number of children, it is also conducted in schools by following all administrative requirements and is also conducted in rural or deprived areas with minimum requirements by a trained balvikas guru. The teachings of Sathya Sai Baba is an integral part of the balvikas Programme. The 9 year course content of the balvikas Programme however can be completed by extending the age limit of children to 18 years.

In India alone, the programme has benefited above a million children and over 15,000 Sai centres run this programme which has trained over 10 million children. The programme is now embraced by 81 countries, which have 24 teacher training Institutes called the Institutes of Sathya Sai Education.

So, Balvikas Programme paves the way for each balvikas child to be like a light lit up in the house, giving light to the parents and also leading the light of Indian culture and spirituality.

**Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme**

The main emphasis in education today lies in acquiring large amounts of information, passing exams and securing qualifications for future employment. Children in many parts of the world are under tremendous pressure to succeed academically. It is not uncommon for
children as young as four and five have to take exams to get into good kindergarten schools. As a result of this, children are being robbed of their childhood and have to grow up too quickly. The jewels of childhood such as imagination and creativity are being swept aside. As Balvikas takes one from primary to secondary level where as Education in Human Values Programme takes one to a higher level. It is advancement, a gradual transition from the lower to the higher.

Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSSEHV) is a programme, designed for the all round development of the child. Children are taught from a very early age on how to cope with their emotions and to feel at peace and at ease wherever they are. They are trained to develop discrimination and wisdom and to conduct themselves with humility and gentleness. They are taught to be compassionate and know how to forgive others. Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme is based on the five human values of love, truth, right conduct, peace and non-violence and its goal is the Blossoming of Human Excellence.

The Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values is an international programme focusing on young children throughout the world through self-development programmes. It aims to bring out the innate goodness of the child by developing the basic universal values of: Truth, Love, Peace, Right, Conduct, and Non-violence. The international programme bears the name of Sathya Sai as the whole international programme originated from a workshop given by Sathya Sai to an international group of educationists and academics. The programme was then developed by the working team in the form of international programme for application world-wide.
The primary objectives of Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values are:

- Transformation through the experience of truth, right action, peace, love, and nonviolence within the individual.
- Fostering life-long commitments to act in accordance with the promptings of the conscience.
- Fostering 3HV, or the unity of head, heart and hand.
- The building of self-confidence, self-reliance, and self-discipline, enabling children to effectively solve problems and make decisions.
- The promotion of effective communication and social skills, enabling youth to resolve conflicts and work cooperatively.
- Balancing the development of the body, mind, emotions, conscience, and spirit.
- Establishing harmonious living in the home, community, nation, and world environments.
- Awakening the understanding of the interdependence of the entire human family.
- Promoting reverence for unity of life under God.

The overall objective of Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values is to elicit the human values of truth, right action, peace, love and nonviolence from within each child, and to nurture the development of each child's noble character, or human excellence. Through the cultivation of these values, children learn how to transcend their negative qualities. A person can claim to be truly human when these values are practiced in everyday life. Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values set forth a plan of education designed to help children learn and practice the basic human
values that are essential to civilization. The aim of Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values programme is to foster and nurture the inherent goodness in each child and helps to sustain it by regular practice through difficult periods of emotional growth. It is the cornerstone upon which children can develop into caring and responsible adults who meet life's challenges with resourcefulness and inner strength, and thus positively impacting their families, communities, and the world.

The five teaching components used in the programme are: quotations, prayer, poetry or theme of the week, silent sitting, stories, group singing and group activities. In addition to these direct components, the programme integrates values in teaching of all subjects. The emphasis is on educating the whole child rather than just separate subject areas.

Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values is a programme which deals with 8-12 years old children from all backgrounds. It is a way to arrest the problems in which the world is currently entangled i.e. crime, violence, prejudice, lack of respect etc; and to create a circle of positive values which will initiate the process of the nation to march towards peace, love, compassion, tolerance, non-violence, duty, international unity and cultural development. Sri Sathya Sai Baba has linked the experience of a child in the family with international understanding, harmony and peace.

The goal of Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values is to foster the development of character into all aspects of the personality. Personality is fully integrated when there is consistency in thought, word and deed. So Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values can also be seen as 3HV i.e the values of the head, heart and hands. Information is brought into the head
by means of the five senses. It is then taken to the heart where it is
examined and in turn put into practice by the hands. The finished product,
where personality is character and where the aim of education is not
separate from the aim of life, this is Education in Human Values. In
essence, this character development program builds on three levels. It
makes children aware of the values. It promotes the process of moral
reasoning by developing the ability to distinguish the right from wrong.
Most importantly, the programme emphasizes and supports the practicing
of the values. It is merely to make children aware of the values. Ultimately,
the daily practice of the values will enable them to live the values through
the ability to unify their actions with their highest moral thoughts, feelings,
and promptings from the conscience or inner voice. Sri Sathya Sai
Education in Human Values does not speak of religion. It speaks of the
philosophy of religion. It makes one think of the mind and not of the body.
It is not at the physical level nor it is at the material or mundane level. It is
the psychological domain, the psychic domain. So it is the mind.

Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values takes a holistic approach
to educate the child and recognizes the five values as an integral part of the
human being. These are the values also recognized by all major religions.
However, it adopts a multi-faith approach and allows and encourages each
child to follow his or her faith and is therefore conducive to application in
diverse cultural conditions. It seeks to develop spiritual values in the child
by illustration and example rather than in a prescriptive way. It emphasizes
the triple partnership between the child, the parent and the teacher. The
teacher is assigned a crucial role in developing these values by using the
five teaching components and providing a role model.
Some years ago, three Mexican Ladies in the town of Motomo went to the School where their children were studying, and sought permission to run a class in Sai Human Values. The request was approved. In due course, all the teachers in this school became involved in EHV teaching (Education in Human Values). Struck by the results of such teaching, other schools in the area started EHV programmes, and during the World Conference in 2000, it was reported that nearly a hundred schools had adopted this method. At a conference of EHV teachers that was held in Mexico, one teacher said that this programme is beautiful because she had changed as a person and had started applying values in her own life. She realized that she has to practice values before she taught. Instead of feeling that she was an ill-paid teacher, she felt that she was useful to Society and children felt her as their mother.

The SSSEHV Programme works on the basis of triple partnership between the child, the teacher and the parents have to sign the declaration at the time of admission of their willingness to co-operate in conforming to the school programme.

Dr. Manchishi conducted an impact study of the SSSEHV programme on pupils, teachers, and the parents to examine and determine the suitability of the SSSEHV programme as an educational input for schools in Zambia. The main finding of the study was that the SSSEHV programme had a positive impact on the pupils, teachers, and parents. The pupils at the school developed more positive personalities in terms of respect for parents, teachers, and authorities. The pupils developed attitudes of tolerance, caring, law abiding and willingness to offer service. The SSSEHV had a positive impact on the parents. Most of them became
more interested in the academic work of their children and have developed respect for all religions. Most parents expressed the view that the SSSEHV had an impact on the whole household.

The Sri Sathya Sai Educational System emphasizes on character development along with the acquisition of skills and knowledge. The universal nature of SSSEHV is poignantly demonstrated by its enthusiastic reception in over 170 countries and diverse cultures throughout the world. The program is adaptable to all countries and diverse cultures, yet its essence remains the same.

**Approaches to Education in Human Values Programme**

The Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme is comprised of three broad approaches namely,

- Direct Approach,
- Indirect or Incidental Approach
- Integrated Approach through curricular and co-curricular activities.

**Direct Approach:** In an ideal school situation all the three methods should be used in coordination with each other. But the five teaching techniques are more concerned with the direct method. In the direct method, there is influence of teachers, parents and other factors on the child. During the first few years, the parents have the greatest influence on the child’s life. As soon as the baby begins to understand, it will start to copy and interact with the people who are around it. The parents, especially mothers, are the first role models. It is essential that teachers know what kind of environment their students come from, so that they can try to understand why they behave in a particular manner.
There are many other things that influence children in their home environment such as siblings, friends, television, videos, cartoons, books, music etc. The impact of television on children is something that should not be under-estimated. As its influence is spreading around the world, more and more children are being affected by it. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that it is not television, it is tele-visham (poison) which spoils the children in many ways. Scientific research has confirmed that television is harmful for the reasons of promoting wrong values, imitation etc. Many parents are unaware of the negative impact of television; besides, it is too convenient as a baby-sitter. Television and video can bring into negative values and at the same time good values can be driven out. It would be unjust to condemn all television as there are many wonderful programmes that are very beneficial to children. It is essential that parents must use discrimination in deciding what their children watch. Sri Sathya Sai Baba advised not to watch television especially while eating food. It makes negative effect on digestive system and on emotions also.

The period allotted to moral education could be converted for value inculcation. One can take up a quote, prayer, song, story or a recent incident that had happened to develop the value by way of discussion and other teaching techniques meant for the inculcation of values. Here the lesson is deliberately planned to expose the students to a particular value. The inculcation of values can be brought about by five teaching techniques, i.e. (1) silent sitting or tuning in, (2) prayers, quotations or thought, (3) group singing, (4) storytelling and (5) group activities.

**Indirect or Incidental Approach** : An observant and alert teacher will never lose an opportunity to take advantage of a chance
incident as it arises, either in the classroom, in the school campus or on the playfield to teach a value by correcting, praising or discouraging certain behaviour. A complete teaching-learning situation from an unexpected incident on the playfield can arise. The incident could be used to develop the values of truth, righteous conduct, peace, love and non-violence among children. This approach is called “indirect, incidental approach”. Another strategy, under indirect approach is ‘contrived or planned approach’ under this desirable values could be developed during the various stages of a planned activity.

**Integrated Approach**: The Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme aims at the development of an integrated personality of the students. So, all the activities and experiences to which students will be exposed either in the classroom or outside the classroom on the playfield in the laboratory and the library should be value oriented. The very atmosphere in school should be such that the students imbibe the values of silence, discipline, sense of order, cleanliness, beauty and such other values.

Integrated approach aims at inculcation of values through all academic programme and activities. Even when the teacher is not aiming to inculcating values through the direct or the indirect approach, she has to integrate the relevant values in her daily lessons or in other activities outside the classroom. In other words, value inculcation remains a conscious aim of the teacher in or outside the class activities. Thus the integrated approach should be practiced both through curricular activities and co-curricular activities.
There are a number of writers who have given their considered views in favour of integrating values in planned curricular work in schools. Niblett makes a strong plea for going beyond the aim of imparting only knowledge in teaching subjects. The learning of understanding subject matter does not have to precede the valuing process. They usually proceed best when they proceed together, valuing is superficial without understanding. Understanding is superficial without valuing. And neither can wait until the other is accomplished. Thus it is a false notion that the children should learn their subject matter first and do their valuing later. Knowledge not turned into values has a short half-life in memory and can be almost as easily used destructively as constructively.

**Integrated Approach through Curricular Activities**: Every subject has values inherent in it, which the teacher can discover with her class, and highlight, emphasize and reinforce these values through a variety of teaching methods and activities. The subjects usually taught at the school level are – regional language, English, Mathematics, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences and Social Sciences, Work Experience, and Art Work. Literature and language is rich in ethical values and it deals with those instances of human conduct on which most people pass judgment of approval or blame, and it does this with a beauty which heightens and reinforces whatever truth may be conveyed. The teaching of language is intended to enable the students to learn the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The content of the lesson should be value oriented. All the values can be imbibed and inculcated through a suitably prepared language text and supplementary readers.
**Integrated Approach through Co-curricular Activities :** The psychological basis of co-curricular activities has to be mastered by the teachers and should be projected in the class environment, for which the teacher must plan ahead and prepare the lesson effectively. School is a miniature society in which students learns through participation in planned group activities which could be organized at four places, namely, in the assembly hall, on the play field, in the classroom and outside the school campus. Accordingly one should plan co-curricular activities for value inculcation at these four places, thus having four distinct types of activities. These could be selected and organized keeping the development level and age group of students in view.

Along with these approaches Experiential Learning is also implementing in Sri Sathya Sai Educational System which was adopted as an approach in curriculum.

**Experiential Learning :** Experiential learning is characterized as self-initiated and self-evaluative, thus stands for a learner centered approach having humanistic touch. Experiential learning is a holistic approach to teaching. It provides intra-integration while artificial barriers of discipline disappear. Children understand the science behind the phenomena, relate them to life’s experiences, and discern a fulfilling pattern. The experiential knowledge has been propounded by Carl Ranson Rogers, an American psychologist. It has its origin in his view about psychotherapy and humanistic approach to psychology. The literal meaning of experiential learning is ‘to learn from what we experience’. An old proverb says ‘I hear, I forget; I see, I remember; I do, I understand.’ It is an approach to the curriculum, not a subject to be learnt. It provides intra-
integration which means many subjects together into one whole topic and holistic view of the whole world. Experiential learning is an approach to a curriculum rather than a subject to be taught and learnt. Hence it does not have a well defined body of knowledge, a set of course content.

The purpose of this approach is twofold. Firstly, it involves all children of the class. While the class teacher selects the topic, the ideas for content and presentation come from the children. Once children know their role, they gather all the inputs. Secondly, in working on a theme, children work together; they develop co-operation and co-ordination. They exchange ideas and skills, which promote the values of sharing. They develop consensus, inculcating democratic values. Thus, group activity provides a lot of ‘peer group’ support.

An attempt was made to present the Experiential learning approach with a large number of examples by the Institute of Sri Sathya Sai Education, Mumbai. The topics that were taken fall under two broad categories. In the first instance, some themes are tried out in schools with children of standards 2 to 6, age ranging from 6 to 11 years. Other themes have been tried out in teacher training workshops conducted by the Institution.

**Seven Steps involved in Experiential Learning:**

Experiential learning has a total of seven steps. They are Silent sitting, Topic selection, Radiant thinking, Mind mapping – web chart, Group activities, pre-presentation of activities and final presentation of activities.
In the first step, silent sitting, the students should calm down and open the heart with the help of guided visualization or prayers. It takes 1-2 seconds.

The second step is topic selection. The point would be to initiate a class discussion focused upon identifying a theme for the activity. The selected topic should be such that it holds interest of the children. This is possible when children see its relevance to their immediate environment and their role in life situations. After discussion among themselves, students would decide to work on the topic which they picked out.

In the third step – Radiant thinking, the students are asked to think upon words connected with the theme.

The fourth step is mind mapping and web chart. It is almost a replica of brainstorming session. Teacher invites children to relate words on a theme selected and which are not restricted to any subject or syllabus. Thus the word flow is scripted on the board and enhances the creative thinking of other pupils. It is generally observed that children tend to group the words linked to their course content. When this word flow (mind mapping exercise) reaches a satisfactory stage, the class begins preparing a web chart wherein a flow is established. When the flow is established, children are encouraged to share ideas thus promoting freedom of interaction. Then the entire class can share ideas of these groups. The ideas are put in a chart which is in the shape of web. If, the web-chart appears too large, the teacher may suggest that they work on certain selected portions, based on the children’s interest.
The fifth step is group activity. After making the web-chart, the class can be divided into groups of about 5 to 6 children. Each group should choose to work on one particular sub-part of the web-chart according to their interest. The teacher should rotate the nature of work in such a way that specialization is discouraged so that all children can have an opportunity to develop all skills in due course of time.

The sixth is pre-presentation of the activity. When the exercise is completed, the children are asked to present their activity in the classroom.

The last and seventh step is final presentation of activity. The children can present the activity to other classes and visitors/parents. Charts, models, role-plays, songs, games, stories or any other activity can be used for effective presentation.

The area of activity normally falls into several categories such as language skills (songs, poems, writings, skits or role-plays), Mathematical skills (measurements, estimation, mapping, graphing), creative skills (art, craft, music, dramatization) and communication skills (interview, storytelling, speech, writing). The information or content for any exercise cannot be pre-determined. Initially, children provide the course content based upon their past experience and perception. However, as their involvement in the theme activities increases, the course content gets deepened and widened. Thus, experiential learning is a dynamic, evolving process. Essentially, it is an enquiry method laying stress on social skills, intuitive experience and creative expression. In the process, the approach explores an extensive range of skills, collection of all types of data and its interpretation, communication by a variety of methods and promoting
inter-personal understanding. Ability to work in a group, giving and accepting suggestions, respecting others and physical environment, and accepting responsibility are some other skills which are promoted with care to ingrain a stable value system. Experiential learning is the pedagogy used for teaching the awareness course that includes debates, symposia, discussions, role plays, quizzes, skits etc. The theoretical knowledge gained in the classrooms needs to be translated into practical insights through experiential learning. A lot of lessons and inputs can be imbibed by the students through co-curricular activities which can play a major role in facilitating experiential learning. Most of the lessons in values and morals are imbibed through these experiential learning modules.

Children learn best when they are active participants in the process of learning. The balance is required between gathering information of the external world and acquiring knowledge of the inner self. Education is facilitated when the classroom becomes a practical laboratory for exploration under the careful guidance of a trained teacher. Researches repeatedly proved that when children merely listen, the absorption is barely 20%. When they get involved actively, and speak out what they have understood, the absorption ratio is 70%, or even more. Children assimilate well what they experience directly. They can call that knowledge their own. What is not assimilated, i.e., not integrated into the system, is thrown out, vomited. Sri Sathya Sai Baba considered that bookish knowledge comes into this category, Practical knowledge is what they absorb; this is a net academic gain. Learning is that which brings relatively permanent changes in the behaviour of a learner through experience or practice.
Sri Sathya Sai Baba (2002) said “Along with worldly knowledge and experimental knowledge, man must acquire also experiential knowledge. The fundamental objectives of Sri Sathya Sai Institutions are humility, adherence to discipline and application of what is learned in daily life. He further added “If what is learned is not put into practice, the student is like a cow that does not yield milk, a fruit lacking in taste, a book bereft of wisdom. So experience is essential for the confirmation and consolidation of what is learnt from books. So the student should keep in practice what he has learnt”. (p. 147). He concluded that knowledge without personal experience is futile and knowledge becomes blessed only when it is translated into actions which promote the good of humanity. Knowledge gathered from books is but second hand. Bookish knowledge without practice may be useful but it is of no value to the man himself. Firsthand knowledge alone is helpful and this has to come from the urge for love and light. Unfortunately, education today has its aim at carrying of wealth, attaining a comfortable life of leisure and pleasure. The objective of Sathya Sai Education is to enable a balanced and whole some development of all aspects of a child’s personality. The international commission on education for the 21st Century also discussed the need to advance towards a ‘learning society’. It felt that the truth is that every aspect of life at both the individual end the social level, offers opportunities for both learning and doing.

In the whole process, the teacher’s role is very crucial. The teacher must always keep the essential objectives in mind. The teacher must be active for children to have as easy access and to receive encouragement from time to time. He is to be a guide, because she gives careful suggestions and hints, conducts discussion and question sessions in a
positive manner. He is a philosopher to them, because the teacher’s presence and influence, hints and suggestions influence. The children have to discover values inherent in all learning.

With very young children, who have yet to develop good writing and conversational capability, questions and discussion immediately after the activity is very essential. Children should be asked to describe what they have done, what they have discovered and concluded. This increases their vocabulary and communication skills. It gives them self-confidence and self-satisfaction.

As stated earlier, experiential learning is an approach, not a discipline. The teacher must, therefore, come out of her own limitations of thinking in terms of the syllabus alone. When children enjoy and are engrossed in their work, when they develop a deeper understanding of correlation among diverse events and phenomena, when they are able to express effectively what they observe and learn, and when they have harmonized their thoughts, feelings and actions into one unified entity, the teacher’s objectives are fulfilled which would give satisfaction due to the outcomes of her effort. Experiential learning helps to develop social skills, working together, brings co-operation, co-ordination, adjustment, responsibility, initiative and self-confidence.

**Parent Contact Programme (PCP)**

Sri Sathya Sai Baba has often said that parents are living Gods. Children are their most valuable treasure. Parenting is nothing other than ‘Family Sadhana’. Mother is the first guru (teacher) of the child. “Great mothers create great men”. Indian culture emphasizes the importance of
mother, father, teacher and God. Sri Sathya Sai Parent contact Programme aims at:

A – Awareness

I – Induction

M – Motivation

The objectives of parenting programme are:

- To fulfill Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s vision that every home must be a Balvikas class and every mother must be a Balvikas guru. For this one has to work with great momentum.

- To highlight the need of individual transformation and the family transformation.

- To heighten the parents self-awareness and self-knowledge.

- To let every parent get the benefit of Sai experience.

- To inculcate the idea not to send parents to old age homes.

**Purpose of Parent Contact Programme (PCP)**

The guru and the parents have to work hand in hand for the full development of the child. If a child sees that the ideals taught in balvikas and those he sees at his home are contradictory, it causes approach-avoidance. The child is confused whether to approach or avoid his parents. The result can be any one of the two viz., frustration or depression. The latter is more dangerous because the child gets secluded from his family. So in order to maintain a peaceful, value-based environment at home, parent contact programme has to be made a must.
Aims of Parent Contact Programme

Parent Contact Programme has two goals – one secular and the second spiritual. Secular means that parents would be made to create greater self awareness. On the spiritual side, the parents should be convinced that the Balvikas is a programme ordained by God, it is a gift of God. First the parents should be convinced that God exists, and love for God and faith have to be created in their minds. They should be convinced that balvikas is a Divine Programme. Then only they will send the children to the class.

The methodology of parent contact programme is visit to the homes of children, letters to parents, parents study circles, parents meetings, parents awareness programme, children’s rally and mother’s day programme. This is the methodology that is adopted in almost all the states. This helps one to have a clear picture of the atmosphere in the house and the general cordiality among its members. This can be correlated with the child’s behaviour. Visiting parents at home brings in cordiality between the teacher and the parents with which transformation can be brought in the child in a positive way. So, teacher and parents are marching together to make the child like a light lit up in the house by leading light of Indian culture and spirituality.

Study Circles in Sai Centres

The study circle is an integral part of Sai organization activities. A study circle is not just reading books, it means taking a topic and each person discussing the meaning of the points in the topic. The Bible, the Koran, the Gita, Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s literature may be used for the
The aim of study circle is transformation but not information; not instruction but construction. So, a study circle does not mean only just reading and discussing and taking information into the head, but also putting into practice what is learnt. Theoretical knowledge is a burden, unless it is practiced. It can be lightened into wisdom and assimilated into daily life. Knowledge that does not give harmony and wholeness to the process of living is not worth acquiring. Sri Sathya Sai Baba advised that every activity must be rendered valid and worthwhile by its contribution to the discovery of truth, both of the self and the nature. If knowledge is stored in the mind, it causes confusion and confusion leads to blowing of the fuse. Sri Sathya Sai Baba compared it with indigestion of food. He said that if one goes on eating all the 24 hours, it will result in indigestion which will lead to disease. What is eaten should be digested and then only one can eat again. So, Baba advised that one should listen (eat) in the study circle and put into practice (digest). In the Study circle, whatever was listened and assimilated in the mind should be distributed to others. Whatever one hears and practices should also be distributed to society at large. Baba said that such gratitude is very important for man and if one
does not have gratitude, he leads the life of an animal. So, keeping this in mind, the members of study circle maintain unity and help the world.

The goal of study circle is to help one to understand how better to lead a spiritual life, to come closer to God. As Sri Sathya Sai Baba said, it is important not simply to read and understand but to find something to put into practice. At the start of the discussion of the goals of a study circle, the facilitator discusses the overall goals, quoting from Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s teachings or discourses. Then one can ask the participants for their ideas of the goal of a study circle. The general process is to read a passage, and then go around the circle, giving each a chance to comment on the passage. Since the goal of a study circle is transformation, not simply transfer of knowledge at the end of the study circle discuss a teaching that came out of the study circle, and put into practice during the coming week. The group can hone in on teaching principles. At the next study circle one could begin by going around the circle and see what comments people have about how they put last week’s teaching in to practice and what effect it had on them.

In the study circle one can learn a lot of things, but the most important thing to be learnt is Athmhatwa i.e. one’s true nature. Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that learning all about external things without knowing one’s own self is like studying the branches of a tree, ignoring its roots. The study circle studies the best means of bringing peace and applies those means in a few villages to prove its validity. They can then be taught to people in other lands also. Members of the circle help students who are handicapped or defective and who have not been able to keep abreast of the rest, by giving them extra attention and special guidance.
Radio Sai: In September 2001, when after meeting with Sri Sathya Sai Baba, world space founder Dr. Noah Samara offered to dedicate a free channel to air Baba’s message around the globe. Soon world space satellites were beaming programmes from Prashanthi Nilayam over Asia and Africa next followed by the digital portal www.radiosai.org allowing the Americas and rest of the world to log on to programmes round the clock via the internet. On 29th of August 2002, Baba personally inaugurated the state-of-the-art Prashanthi digital studio located next to the ashram’s information technology center. Since 2008, a modern and well-equipped video recording studio is being used for recording interviews and musical programmes by top musicians from India and abroad. Both the studio and radio Sai office remain dedicated to categorizing, archiving and disseminating Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s message of love and harmony, via various media such as video, audio, internet, radio and print. Apart from providing live feed on major ashram celebrations and events, Radio Sai studios also produce special video programmes for broadcast via television channels, generate audio content for its 24 x 7 digital radio channel available on world space digital radio sets as well as online at www.radiosai.org. To extend its reach, radio Sai has also made available its services on Airtel mobile phones and downloadable Apple Apps.

Radio Sai has developed 6 dedicated channels available over the internet. All radio Sai online services are offered absolutely free of cost to its subscribers. These include its popular e-journal ‘Heart-to-Heart’ as well as the daily dose of inspirational messages dispensed through the daily ‘Sai
Inspires’ thought for the day. Radio Sai has been a lifeline for many devotees from all parts of the world.

Experiences of students and devotees, stories of Sai movement and service activities in different countries, patient profiles from Sai hospitals as well as detailed accounts of events and festivals held in the ashram have the highest hit rates.

**Sanathana Sarathi** : ‘Sanathana Sarathi’ is a monthly magazine started by Sri Sathya Sai Baba in 1958. This monthly magazine ‘Sanathana Sarathi’ which means’ the eternal charioteer and figuratively to God within’ is publishing in almost all in Indian languages. Baba wrote continuously for this magazine for 25 years on Upanishads. The magazine has remained the mouthpiece of Baba for the last 55 years. While the English and Telugu editions are published from Prashanthi Nilayam, other languages are published from the respective regions in India. The international editions of Sanathana Sarathi are published in Chinese, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian and Spanish from the respective country headquarters. It has a large number of subscribers from all parts of the world. The uniqueness of the magazine is that it is purely focused on Sri Sathya Sai Baba and his universal message with a nominal annual subscription fee. This is a magazine disseminates elevating and inspiring literature without focusing on commercial considerations. The present multilevel publication division also has a large book centre with over a thousand titles on Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s life and message on its stand, published in more than 40 languages. There is also a library cum reading room forming an important wing of the publications division. The Library has about 22,000 books written in 55
languages across the world on various religions, spiritual and ethical matters.

**Techno E-media Group**: The Techno E-media Group is part of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization. This is an all India based group with active participation from all states of the country. The technology group known by this short name was initiated by the all India president Sri V. Srinivasan and blessed by Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the 17th of February 2004. Incidentally by shear providence, Sri Sathya Sai Baba willed this programme just three years before the launch of the Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme (SSSVIP). The objective is to provide, deliver and implement simple, effective, affordable, operable, manageable and self reliant techno solutions at the village locations. This is to alleviate various difficulties faced by the poor village folks who have no means to have no reach to the modern techno solutions benefit in terms contacts, knowledge or financial ability.

It aims at new and simple technologies for service activities; reach the needy and poor of village and urban areas; uplift the economic status and improve the quality of life; enhance self reliance; make them united and develop love and spiritual base. The group adopt latest scientific discoveries and inventions to provide efficient, user-friendly and quality solutions addressing basic educational and infrastructural needs of today’s village or villager; in line with Sathya Sai Seva Organization’s philosophy. Projects under taken are agriculture, biotech, computers, drinking water, employment, fluoride projects, health and hygiene, info tech, micro power, sanitation, solar lighting etc.
The techno group laid a kind of Support Bridge to transfer the knowledge and the resources to deserving destination. The focus was in terms of where and how the resources can be identified and it connects it to the needy poor farmers. Not only Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme services supported their need but also followed it up till the farmers could see the rewarding results in terms of costs, quality and yields substantially. This is specifically in paddy production, fruits, vegetables, flowers, turmeric, pulses etc. This is on account of supply of quality seed, seed cleaning procedures, quality farming practices, soil test at door step free of cost, appropriate supply of fertilizers, pesticides etc. These were also supplied through appropriate authorized agencies direct to the farmers. The group consulted the experts-searched for appropriate user friendly and affordable on site solutions-obtained their contacts and connected to the needy. All these measures have given remarkable yields and lucrative prices to the poor and small farmers.

The aims and objectives of the techno group is to elevate and enhance the quality of life and living standards of the poor folks who are at far off remote places and have reach to the modern techno solutions benefit in terms contacts, knowledge and financial ability. The techno group has pooled two or three expert members from each state in the country and nominated about 60 members. They are knowledgeable in various subjects such as from Agriculture ,Bio technology ,Computers, Construction , drinking water , electrical mini power , ground water ,Health and hygiene , Sanitation, Solar lighting, Veterinary, Organic farming etc. The nominated members meet at Prashanthi Nilayam a day before Shivarathri, Gurupoornima and Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s birthday and
deliberate on various subject matters presented by members. Thereafter they will be interacting with each other and arrive at an appropriate solution. Then the approved projects are put in for implementation in identified villages around the country.

The techno group members are in constant contact with Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme members who identify and seek the techno group assistance in providing effective solutions as per the subject matter. Techno group members are also constantly in search of newer techno solutions by seeking information from a variety of sources such as newspapers, magazines, libraries, research centers, web sites, professionals, national laboratories and manufacturers. These ideas are translated into workable projects.

The techno group has a web site and all relevant valuable information is published in this for the benefit of all interested and concerned. Currently the priorities are provision of pure and safe drinking water plants, provision of sanitary toilets, affordable agro services, solar lighting systems etc in addition to any other techno need. The technology group has a large data base of techno solutions available for all organization members in India. Further, the techno group has drawn a plan to develop another young new generation of working groups in all the wings of the organization, so also in the techno group. With this objective about 15 members were drawn from each state.

**Water purification plant’s installations**: On a number of occasions in his discourses and interviews with youth and elders, Sri Sathya Sai Baba has emphasized on the need of supplying safe clean drinking
water to the poor village folks. Sri Sathya Sai Baba himself has demonstrated this with his gigantic drinking water projects in Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu. The organization has been looking at identifying opportunities to provide clean and safe drinking water to the needy all the time. The techno group was ready with a number of techno solutions as in purification of water, sanitation and agro interventions, solar systems and many more simple cost effective solutions. Priority has always been for provision of clean and safe drinking water. The organization, state trust and Grama Seva trust together with the support from the technology group, worked seriously in implementing the installation of de-fluoridation water plants in the states so long.

The organization and Grama Seva Trust have taken it forward by establishing a 100 over drinking water facilities in 2012 by the name “Sri Sathya Sai Amrutha Dhara”. The organization installed 33 such plants in different districts of Andhra Pradesh state till date. The users and implementers take a note that it is not installing the plant alone, but putting a maintenance management practice and process model which is the one that drives the facility, nonstop. Consequent to the implementation of the Amrutha Dhara in villages, the group found remarkable rise in health standards of the village folks, especially in villages where they established de-fluoride plants. This has been the voice of 27000 beneficiaries.

Another adventure is establishment of bio gas power station, although small, it has been working in Gokulam, at Whitefield in Bangalore since more than a year. Further the group has total concept and implementation, procurement cost details of a biogas plant for a village need. Similarly, it has the complete concept, design and implementation,
cost details on solar lighting systems in the bank of technology group; a project also has been implemented in agency area in East Godavari district. The most needed village facility - affordable toilet construction - is ongoing at several locations. The group focused more on the need of farmers in terms of advice support and connecting them to an appropriate affordable technology. Similarly the group have worked on the need of supply of folder for cattle and then various techno solutions for enhancement of fodder production, enhancement of milk production techniques-loving and caring for animals etc.

In the year 2008 and after, there were calamities and disasters in the country. There have been no rains for some time and there has been too much of rain at the odd time with cyclones and floods. This has resulted in heavy loss to the farmers and poor village folks all over in the country that again resulted in poor production, shortages and high price raise. The vicious cycle was visible and touched the lives of the agro communities first and then the live stock owners next. They were hit badly. This has made the poor livestock owners resort to selling off their animals for livelihood. There was no fodder as they were either washed away or dried out. The agro community was put in to great suffering. The technology group, Sri Sathya Sai army at that time went into search mode to find out, how best they can provide relief to the poor small farmers, how best they can find alternative dry crop farming methods and how best they can provide alternative fodder feed stock and save animals from going to slaughter homes.
Objective – V : To discuss the relevance of Sri Sathya Sai Educational System to the present day educational system

Education has continued to evolve, diversify and extend its reach and coverage since the dawn of human history. Every country develops its own system of education to express and promote its unique socio-cultural identity and also to meet the challenges of the times. Intellectuals and thinkers all over the world view education as a crucial factor in raising the standard of living of millions all over the world. Any sound educational system must be relevant to the existing needs of the people and society. Having thoroughly understood the educational philosophy of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the researcher examines how far these ways and means of education are relevant in the current educational system with special emphasis on human values.

The relevance of Sri Sathya Sai Educational System to the present day educational system is divided into three categories namely Secular education, Intellectual education and Spiritual education. Secular education gives information oriented knowledge and the intellectual education helps to resolve conflicts and provides solution for problems in everyday life whereas spiritual education gives transformation oriented knowledge. Spiritual training in the curriculum develops an innate ability to live the life of the soul.

Secular Education

Sports and Physical Education

National Policy on Education’86, which was modified in 1992 lays great stress on sports and physical education. Sports and physical
education are an integral part of the learning process, and should be included in the evaluation of performance. A nation-wide infrastructure for physical education, sports and games must be built into the education edifice; The infrastructure consist of play fields, equipment, coaches and teachers of physical education as a part of the school improvement programme; Available open spaces in urban areas are to be reserved for playgrounds, if necessary by legislation. Efforts must be made to establish sports institutions and hostels where specialized attention will be given to sports activities and sports-related studies, along with normal education. Appropriate encouragement should be given to those talented in sports and games and due stress will be laid on indigenous traditional games. It also emphasized that yoga must receive special attention as a system which promotes an integrated development of body and mind. Efforts must be made to introduce yoga in all schools. To this end, it must be introduced in teacher training courses.

In Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions sports and games include cricket, table tennis, lawn tennis, squash, shuttle and ball badminton, volleyball, basketball, football, long distance running, athletics, track and field events are practiced regularly. Sri Sathya Sai Baba constructed two big stadiums at Puttaparthy, Sri Sathya Sai Hill View stadium and an Indoor stadium with International standards motivating the students to participate in sports and games.

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning organizes an Annual Sports and Cultural Meet during the period from December 15th to January 15th. The Chancellor of the University, Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that ‘Bend the Body, Mend the Senses and End the Mind’. He emphasizes on the
efficacy of a healthy body and stated that, ‘a sound body ensures a sound mind and a sound mind ensures a sound body’. Yoga classes are an integral part of the curriculum at all the stages in Sri Sathya Sai Educational System. The month long sports and cultural activities are marked by a spirit of excellent teamwork and co-operation.

January 11th is celebrated as sports day every year. The primary, secondary and University students of boys and girls participate in the sports and games by performing wonderful gymnastics as a symbol of love for their divine master, Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The sports and cultural activities culminate on the 11th of January of every year marked by a grand display of cultural, athletic and dare-devilry items. These include national and international sport items. The programme culminates in the evening with a soothing exhibition of colourful items by the tiny tots of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School. On this occasion, the students of the University’s campuses perform stage dramas on lofty themes highlighting the lives of great Indian spiritual heroes and heroines. The distinctive aspect is these are all planned and executed by the students only. Unity Cup Cricket Match was held in 1997 between India XI and World XI at the new world-class cricket stadium in Prashanthi Nilayam. Then Prime Minister of India, Sri I.K. Gujral hoisted the World Unity Flag during the inaugural function.

**Rural Education**

According to New Education Policy’92, the new pattern of the rural university must be consolidated and developed on the lines of the Mahatma Gandhi’s revolutionary ideas on education so as to take up the challenges of the micro planning at gross root levels for the transformation
of rural areas. Institutions and programmes of Gandhian based education are to be supported.

At present 80% of the student population of India is mainly from rural areas that had less access to education. A recent survey confirms that a majority of Indian students receive sub-standard education. This debilitating handicap hits at the core of human potential, closing doors to opportunities to improve the quality of life. So, Sri Sathya Sai Baba aimed to address this problem with an unprecedented thoroughness, meticulous planning and professional execution. Sri Sathya Sai Baba inaugurated ‘Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini Project’ on 23rd November, 2010. It was launched to have the synergic affect of the ideas and their translation in human living with the help of technology. The project envisaged to provide value-based quality education by best teachers through most modern technology to the children in rural areas in collaboration with Tata Consultancy Services Sri Sathya Sai Loka seva institutions located at Muddinehalli and Alike in Karnataka state are providing higher education opportunities for the deserving students from the neighbouring villages.

**Parental Education**

It is a known universal fact that parents are the first teachers for their Children. Research studies also prove that parents’ personality has direct influence on the development of personality on their children. In the early years of life, learning of the children is mainly through imitation and observations of the intimate parents who are in their proximity. Even they get guidance from their parents in their trails and errors.
Sri Sathya Sai Balvikas programme rightly gave a prominent place for parent contact programme. This parenting programme has broad vision and long term goals. Its objectives are to make every home a balvikas class and every mother a ‘guru’ (teacher), to highlight the need of individual transformations and family transformation and, to heighten the parent’s self-awareness and self-knowledge. Thus it rises to fulfill the two goals—one secular and second spiritual.

The present education system proposed to have parent teacher association in every educational institution though it was proposed decades back and continuously insisting on that, its functionality rarely could find appealing to its members and beneficial to the students. But it is seen in the Sathya Sai Educational System. Parents role and their development are found promoted through the planned methodology with study circles, parents meetings, parent awareness programme, children’s rally and Mother’s day programme in Sathya Sai Educational Institutions.

**Women Education**

The National Policy on Education’86 emphasized that education must be used as an agent of basis changes in the status of woman. The national education system has to play a positive, interventionist role in the empowerment of women. Women’s studies are promoted as a part of various courses and educational institutions encouraged taking up active programmes to further women’s development.

At the time when gender equality issues had not even surfaced in the field of education in the country, Sri Sathya Sai Baba envisioned the importance of educating women who would serve as the foundation for the
building of the nation, as rightly said, ‘The hand that rocks the cradle rules
the world.’ So, Sri Sathya Sai Baba started a women’s college in 1971 at
Ananthapur which aimed to emphasize that if a woman is educated, the
entire family benefits from her knowledge and wisdom, as she plays an
important role in moulding the future generations of the family into
responsible citizens. There are two more Sri Sathya Sai Colleges for
Women at Jaipur in Rajasthan and Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh which are
affiliated to their respective State Universities.

Ladies Day Celebrations commenced for the first time in 1995 as a
part of the Annual Birthday celebrations of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. This
becomes an annual feature on 19th November every year and is continued
till today.

Cultural Education

The New Education Policy affirmed that culture formed a prominent
factor in a student’s educational sphere of knowledge and understanding,
and that it must be integrated into the educational pattern. The New
Education Policy can be considered to be broader minded with the
provision of a positive outlook towards the subject of cultural integration in
education. It considered the simultaneous flow of culture within the system
so as to provide the student with a broader variety and unique pattern of
learning. This blend according to the New Education Policy would enhance
the student’s capabilities and reform their attitudes to a large extent.
National Curriculum Framework’2005 stressed that there is an urgent need
to expand the knowledge base of education keeping in view the diverse
socio-cultural contexts to which children belong as well as the complex nature of classroom realities in India.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that education with culture brings about the blossoming of human personality. Good thoughts, good feelings and good behaviour constitute culture. Man’s conduct should be sacred. Man’s thoughts should be noble and refined. Man’s feelings should be oriented towards bringing about society’s welfare, nay the welfare of the entire humanity. It is not sufficient if the student is endowed with the physical, scientific and worldly knowledge. The student should have moral, ethical and spiritual knowledge also. The Indian culture aims at developing human beings with such a total personality. The main aim of education is to bring about such a total personality development of the students. Education should make all virtues emerge and shine forth in students. Sri Sathya Sai Baba added that education without culture is like a kite cut off from its main thread. According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba, culture should be an aim of education, rather than a constituent. So Sri Sathya Sai Baba guided the students towards cultural understanding and salvation including any such activities as part of their educational routine or syllabi. That’s why Sri Sathya Sai Baba introduced value-based integral education in his institutions.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba conducted summer classes for students on Indian culture and spirituality every year for about more than 25 years. He said that ‘Samskriti’ the word for culture and civilization is derived from the word ‘samskara’, which means the dual process of removing the dust and dirt of vice, and planting the virtues of truth, righteous conduct, peace and love. Samskara is also the name for certain obligatory rites of initiation and
purification prescribed by the Vedas for the spiritual upliftment of man. Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that expansion is the keynote of education. True education consists in teaching people to live in peace and harmony with a feeling of common fellowship. He advised students to accept the good things from other cultures, the things that help to control vagaries of the senses and the mind, to investigate and discriminate more clearly. According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba the educational system must produce young men and women of character and ability, committed to national service and development. Then only education will be able to play its vital role in promoting national progress, creating a sense of common citizenship and culture and strengthening national integration. This is very necessary if the country is to attain its rightful place in the committee of nations in conformity with its great cultural heritage and its unique potentialities. Sri Sathya Sai Baba also considered education as the principal means for making the country prosperous. He emphasized that students must be aware of their social obligations. They should lead lives of service and sacrifice for the nation and the education should develop a broad outlook and an all-round view of life. Sri Sathya Sai Baba opined that true education consists in instilling in the students reverence for the country and its cultural heritage. He stressed on to inculcate the essentials of the Indian culture in each and every child of the country.

**Intellectual Education**

**Education for integral personality**

   Education for total personality development has received maximum support from all the educational philosophers and also the various

The intention as articulated in the NPE’86 and the Programme of Action’1992, proposed a national framework for curriculum as a means of evolving a national system of education capable of responding to India’s diversity of geographical and cultural milieu while ensuring a common core of values along with academic components. The New Education Policy aims at the education of the “whole man”, the ‘total man’ with commitment to higher values. National Curriculum Framework’ 2005 observed that there is neglect of children’s present abilities and difficulties which could deprive them of a quality of life much in content than that of the education system prepares them for, with over emphasis on the future of the students their place in society and their economic status. It stressed that there is a need to give the children some taste of understanding, following which they would be able to learn and create their own versions of knowledge as they go out to meet the world of bits, images and transactions of life. Education should inspire children to become learners for life. National Curriculum Framework’ 2009 proposed teacher education curriculum is to have knowledge and understanding of educational theory and professional attitudes and values.

The views of Sri Sathya Sai Baba coincide with these aspects. According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba (2002) the purpose of education is to make a complete human being, who is well developed in all the facets of
human existence. Human values are latent within an individual. Human values must be reflected more in practice than in mere theoretical knowledge. The need of the education is to produce world class citizens who share common value system. He opined that education should aim not merely at making men human, but should try to make them perfect human beings (p. 228). Sri Sathya Sai Baba felt that education aims at the development of a total and integrated personality, physical vital or emotional, mental, psychic and spiritual. Education is a three-fold process of imparting knowledge, developing skills and inculcating proper interest, attitudes and values. But present schools and colleges are mostly concerned with the first part of the process and even this is carried out in a prosaic manner. The knowledge thus acquired is only theoretical, with hardly any scope for practical experimentation, activities and experiences. Consequently there is only a linear development of the mental with disproportionate development of the other aspects.

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL) has always believed in integrating ethics and values as the undercurrent of every subject right from its very inception. It is to fulfill the need and engage in the character formation of young students. The Integral Education System at the SSSIHL inculcates spiritual and moral values in youth with a practical orientation for the benefit of the individual and society. Sustained participation in spiritual activities enables the experience of inner peace and joy and a sense of fulfillment. This in turn motivates and inspires students and faculty to strive for excellence in all aspects of their life.

Sambi Punam’s comparative study (1990) of the values existing among Sathya Sai Higher Secondary Schools and Central Schools
revealed that the value pattern of the students studying in Sathya Sai Higher Secondary Schools was significantly high. An intensive study was done by Sathya Sai Education in human values trust (1993) in the primary classes of 161 schools spread in 13 states for over a period of one year. The results revealed that there was significant positive impact of the programme on the practice of values by the children in their homes across all the thirteen states.

**Learning to live together harmoniously**

Basically educationists in democracies are mostly in favour of patterns curriculum and timings in the light of local needs and conditions. Diversity is a virtue of democratic values. Aggression and violence against neighbouring countries have resulted in educational aims of this type. Militant nationalism ‘my country right or wrong’ is the attitude which may develop in the tender minds of children. Education has to strengthen the world view and motivate the younger generations for international cooperation and peaceful co-existence. This aspect cannot be neglected as proposed by New Education Policy 1986.

The recent pillar erected by the Education Commission of UNESCO in 1996 especially for 21st century education is “learning to live together”, to lay the necessary foundations for the educational edifice meant for the global community. National Curriculum Framework’2005 also emphasized that education seeks to nurture ethical development, inculcating the values, attitudes and skills required for living in harmony with oneself and with others, including nature.
Sri Sathya Sai said that real education is that which promotes peace, unity and peaceful co-existence among individuals. The aim of learning to live together harmoniously is brought into reality by following team work, group discussion, pre-sevadal, social activity initiatives, group activities etc of Sathya Sai Educational System. The fifth technique of Sathya Sai Educational System is group activities which consist of role play, attitude tests, games group work and creative work. One of the main purposes of group activities done by the children is to learn how to work and play together in a harmonious way. So, the foundations at the tender age to live in harmony can be laid that would be continued to their adult years. Hence Sri Sathya Sai Baba advocated integral education to develop the spirit of nationalism and internationalism in the children. Through education one can gradually reach the idea of universal brotherhood by flinging down the walls of separation and inequality. Sri Sathya Sai Baba love for mankind knew no geographical boundaries. He advocated internationalism of world society into a compact union of hearts and souls. Sri Sathya Sai Baba aims of education, whether they are for creating self-confidence and self-realization in the individual, formation of his character, development of his personality, his service to mankind, for promotion of universal brotherhood, ultimately they all mean ‘man –making’. Every child as it comes to the world is not a man in the real sense of the term. He is only an individual. It is only through education and training that his individuality is transformed into the personality of a man, fit for civilized social life of the time. Gradual transition from ego-centricity to sociability brings a person nearer to human goals.
**Development of mental faculties**

Learning pillar raised by UNESCO in 1996 was ‘learning to be’. Its intention is to see that learners exercise all their mental faculties or human resources. Aurobindo also stressed on the realization and utilizations of all the mental powers embedded in each learner.

The core of spiritual training in Sathya Sai Educational System is discipline - not just of the body, but of the mind and senses. Mental discipline includes honesty, sensitivity, empathy, thrift, humility, duty consciousness, adherence of rules, abstinence from undesirable habits etc. Students are encouraged to follow such discipline, both in letter and spirit and live a well regulated life within certain discipline, stipulated boundary conditions in the Sathya Sai Educational Institutions. Sambi Punam’s experimental study on Balvikas children in 1983 revealed that learners were remarkably high in all areas of moral judgment, self-concept and human values and their behaviour and attitudes towards their parents was better than those of others.

**Experiential Learning**

New education Policy emphasized the concept of experience in education. According to National Policy on Education-1986, Work-experience, viewed as purposive and meaningful manual work, organized as an integral part of the learning process and resulting in their goods or services useful to the community, is considered as an essential component at all stages of education, to be provided through well-structured and graded programmes. This experiential learning is helpful on the children’s entry into the workforce.
The New Education Policy envisages a place of primary importance to the learner in the learning process. Self-learning and learning by doing have been recommended interactive teaching and relating the process of learning with environment have been emphasized to promote a spirit of discovery and inventiveness.

National Curriculum Framework’ 2005 stressed that work centered education is to be reorganized as a meaningful and contextual entry point for organizing the curricular experience in the school. In this sense, the experiential base can be further developed through more evolved form of work in the school, including social engagement. It promotes the inculcation of locally relevant content in the curriculum as well as pedagogy National Curriculum Framework’2009 emphasized that it is important for the development of concepts in children as well as the application of school knowledge in real life that the formal knowledge is linked with community knowledge which increases the relevance of education as well as the quality of learning. It also stressed to interpret reality within varying theoretical and experiential framework.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba also opined that if what is learned is not put into practice, it is of waste. He compared the student who cannot put into practice what he learned to a cow that does not yield milk, a fruit lacking in taste, a book bereft of wisdom. He further said that experience is essential for the conformation and consolidation what is learnt from books. So, Sri Sathya Sai Baba always advised students to keep in practice what they have learnt. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that knowledge without personal experience is futile. Knowledge becomes blessed only when it translated into actions which promote the good of humanity. He added that books
only burden the brain with secondhand stuff. Practice, experience, feeling, and doing with one’s own hand give insight and intelligence. The fundamental objectives of Sri Sathya Sai institutions are also humility, adherence to discipline and application of what is learned in daily life. So, experiential learning is absorbed as an approach in the curricular and co-curricular work of Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions. One of the main inputs of the ‘character’ pillar of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of higher learning is experiential learning. A lot of lessons and inputs are imbibed by the students through co-curricular activities which can play a major role in facilitating experiential learning. Most of the lessons in values and morals are imbibed through these experiential learning modules. Experiential Learning has taken as an approach which is implementing in Sathya Sai Education System.

**Vocational Education**

The New Education Policy’86 emphasized that the introduction of systematic well-planned and vigorously implemented programme of vocational education is crucial in the proposed educational reorganization. Education with vocational aim balances the distinctive capacity of the individual with social service. The elements are meant to enhance individual employability to reduce the mis-match between the demand and supply of skilled man-power and to provide an alternative for those pursuing higher education without particular interest or purpose. Vocational education is a distinct stream, intended to prepare students for identified occupations spanning several areas of activity. It emphasized that vocational education must be on development of attitudes, knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship and self-employment. National Curriculum
Framework’ 2005 emphasized that educational system must move in a phased manner towards a new programme of vocational education and training which is implemented in a mission mode and institutions from the level of village clusters and blocks to sub divisional, district towns and metropolitan areas.

Education tries to provide training in some vocations irrespective of the potentialities of the individuals on the one hand and the needs of the society on the other hand. Vocational training organized and provided like this becomes unrealistic and loses significance for life.

By the inspiration of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization has embarked on creating a skills school to impart training in various engineering trade skills to village youth. These institutions will not only impart necessary training in theory and practice in technical trades’ skills and vocational training for their livelihood, but also prepared and expose them to Indian culture and spirituality with an emphasis on human values as a base to meet the challenges of life. Sri Sathya Sai Vocational Training Centre located at Alike in Karnataka state is providing training in computer processing and printing to the needy villagers free of cost. One important and very encouraging development in Sri Sathya Sai Grama, alike is that some of the alumni have joined the centre as tyagajeevis, who sacrifice their life for service of others. The Sathya Sai Educational Institutions also have vocational training, work experience and self-reliance programme right from primary education along with curricular work.
Research

Research as a means of renovation and renewal of educational processes is undertaken by all higher technical institutions. It is primarily aimed at producing quality manpower capable of taking up research and development functions. Research for development focuses on improving present technologies, developing new indigenous ones and enhancing production and productivity. A suitable system for watching and forecasting technology must be set up as emphasized by New Education Policy’92. National Curriculum Framework’2009 stressed that there is need to increase research that documents practices reflectively and analytically whether it is of programmes or of individual classrooms, so that it can be included in the body of knowledge available for study. University departments and institutions need to undertake such research and teachers must carry out action research.

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning has a twin modular research programme that enables the interested candidates to pursue the Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) or the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) programme. Research at the University is always aligned with the apex objective of it being beneficial to the society at large. Many of the research projects undertaken by the departments of the University are multi-disciplinary in nature and are in thrust areas like Mathematics, Computer Science, Physics, Chemistry, Bio sciences, Home-sciences, Economics, Business Management, Accounting and Finance. Besides these areas of research, the University has also been undertaking advanced research in association with organizations such as UGC, Defence Research and
Development Organization (DRDO), Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and many others.

**Spiritual Education**

**Value Education**

Historically, in the post-independence era, value education had been emphasized by several Commissions and Committees of the Government of India. The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) in 1945 recommended that ‘spiritual and moral teachings common to all religions should be an integral part of the curriculum’.

The Secondary Education Commission (SEC) (1952-53) observed that religious and moral instructions do play an important role in the growth of character. The committee on religious and moral Education (1959) diagnosed that the gradual disappearance of the basic principles of religions in the hearts of people was the cause of suffering, resulting in widespread disturbances and dislocation of life. Dr. Sampoornanand Committee (1961) stressed that it is the duty of educational institutions to give the present generation, a sense of direction and a goal to work for. It felt that value orientation of the educational system would strengthen the feeling of national consciousness among the youth.

The National Policy on Education (1968) observed that the educational system must produce young men and women of character and ability committed to national service and development; only then will education be able to play its vital role in promoting national progress, creating a sense of common citizenship and culture and strengthening national integration.
The Faure Commission Report (1972) reflected that education should be for life and not only for a living. It recommended that the aim of education should be that of educating the complete individual.

The New Education Policy assigned a special place to impart value-oriented education. A beginning is made by instituting a special study value-oriented education. Based on its analysis, it would, in collaboration with NCERT and state institutions, help in suggesting broad parameters of values of integrity, truth, devotion, loyalty etc., with particular reference to their embodiment in the Indian heritage, so as to blend naturally with the overall educational process. The third aim of education proposed by National Curriculum Framework’ 2005 has stressed on moral education and collaborated that the value must be a part of the education system.

While the above mentioned Commissions and Committees focused on education in general at the primary and secondary levels, a focused effort for improving the university education system in the county was made by the university education commission was keen to incorporate spiritual training in the curriculum of educational institutions.

SSSIHL has been implementing ethics and values as the undercurrent of every subject in the curriculum to fulfill the need and engage in the character formation of young students that the university has laid stress on value education. Value education is universal in its nature and scope and is relevant for all people irrespective of the geography, creed, caste, or the stream of learning. Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning adopted the integrated approach of values oriented education that aims at inculcation of values through all academic programmes and
activities. The teacher integrates the relevance and analyses in the daily lessons and in other activities outside the classroom both curricular and co-curricular.

Shanthi’s (1992) case study of Value Education Imparted in Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School found that the children of the school were very much influenced by the value education and they had assimilated the values to a great extent.

**Spiritual Development among the Learners**

Starting from Kothari Education Commission (1966), New Education Policy (1986), National Curriculum Framework’2005 and all recent educational policies stressed on spiritual development along with physical, intellectual, emotional, social and moral developments among the students to facilitate all-round development of their personality. Twentieth Century yogis and sages like Aurobindo, Vivekananda, Krishnamurti and Dayananda Saraswathi identified that the degeneration of society is due to the neglect of spiritual dimension in educating children.

Sathya Sai Educational system stressed that the education is complete only when the students are educated to lead both secular and spiritual lives. The students of Sathya Sai Educational Institutions have the golden opportunity of receiving direct spiritual teachings from Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Spiritual science therefore becomes an essential part of the curriculum of Sathya Sai Educational System. It aims at the development of the human personality, and to raise the consciousness of the students and thereby help them to evolve into a higher level of being.
Silent sitting of the students starting from balvikas is the most appreciable step in educating the inner self which it lived for long in silence of the mind. It would open the deeper levels of consciousness which is a proven fact in many related disciplines in transpersonal psychology, yoga and consciousness and so on. Thus starting the class with silent sitting not only could facilitate readiness to assimilate academics but also a way to spiritual progress. Thus the practical living is one of the main features of Sathya Sai Education.

Anita Devi found in UK with the grade 4 students that regular use of silent sitting led to a significant improvement in the children’s concentration, behaviours and Mathematics attainment. After sometime she stopped the practice for a month. There was a decline in all three of these aspects and eventually the children themselves asked to start it again. In other research projects around the world where Mathematics teachers have utilized silent sitting at the beginning of the lesson, children typically gave their compliments.

Sathya Sai Institute of Research in 1977 when evaluated the Sathya Sai Balvikas centres at Mumbai and Bhopal, found that moral and spiritual training programme is effective in building up a good character and provided a more positive profile to the experimental group of Balvikas children.

**Promotion of Self – Knowledge along with knowledge**

Jacques Delores, the Chair person of Education commission UNESCO focused on self knowledge apart from knowledge along with self critical awareness as the mile stones to bring in unity among the humanity.
National Curriculum Framework ‘2005 proposed self-knowledge as one of the aims of education. National Curriculum Framework’2009 also stressed on self-learning, reflection, assimilation and articulation of new ideas; developing capacities for self-directed learning and the ability to think, be self-critical and to work collaboratively in groups.

Sathya Sai Educational system highlights the 4S’s which are Self-knowledge, Self-confidence, Self-reliance and Self-realization. Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that the goal of every student must acquire these four. Self-confidence is the foundation for a building, self-satisfaction is walls for the building, self–sacrifice stands for roof of building and self-realization is the life. One of the guiding principles of Sathya Sai Education is simple life coupled with self-reliance. The self–reliance programme is compulsory for under-graduate and above levels in Sathya Sai Educational system. Self-reliance means reliance on one’s own innate capabilities and talents. The cultivation and nurturing of this is facilitated through activities that inculcate in the students – dignity of labour and respect for work. These activities train the students in spirit of selfless-service and enhanced sensitivity which builds self–confidence and yields self–satisfaction.

**Education for Liberation**

The seventh aim of education proposed by National Curriculum Framework’ 2005 stressed that education must be seen as a liberating process which must be free from the shackles of all kinds of exploitation and injustice. National Curriculum Framework’ 2009 also emphasized that education must be for liberation. The sages and yogis of 20th Century,
Vivekananda, Aurobindo and J. Krishnamurti were interested in education as a means to liberate the human minds.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba always guided the students to destroy the ego as ego is the crown for all the evilness. The real meaning of liberation is free from ego. Be liberation itself. He also said that the parents have to advice their children to do all karma as an actor in a play by keeping their identity separate and not attaching themselves too much to their role; When suffering comes in waves one behind the other one must be glad that shore is near and bear them bravely; Whatever happens is ordained by God is ultimately good and this leads to liberation. Sri Sathya Sai Baba also emphasized that education must liberate man from the shackles of cowardice, pettiness, greed, hate and narrow-mindedness, from the limits of I and mine. Liberation is freedom from all kinds of bondage especially from the cycle of birth and death. It is a state of absolute freedom, peace and bliss, attained through self-realization which is the supreme goal of human endeavour. Sri Sathya Sai Baba opined that education based on cultural heritage can alone leads one to real education, ‘Atmavidya’, the state of self-realization. Sri Sathya Sai Educational System forms curriculum, based on these directives and directs students towards self-realization which is the main aim of education.