CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

God’s best creature none but men and women alone can realise as well as practise spirituality and supreme values in their behaviour to the highest perfection. The pride possession of character is the most worthwhile, and inseparable to human beings like brightness inseparable to diamond. The human race, indeed, is the custodian of the most precious gift of God i.e. Purity in speech, thought and action, without which no civilisation could ever be complete. In fact, the concept of moral, spiritual and human values has been prevailing on earth since long as the human being exists. It has been carried out by human society to regulate their behaviour in relation to other. The human beings are continually valuing things and activities throughout their whole life. But, in modern times, the valuing of men has shifted from spiritualism to materialism, from humanism to barbarism. The material pursuit has become the be-all and end-all of life. The present era has witnessed serious erosion of moral virtues and human values.

Someone very truly said that if a tree reaches the sky (Heaven) its root might reach the Hell. With the advancement of science and technology, today the civilisation have conquered the moon but simultaneously the barbaric qualities like selfishness, clashes, corruption, nepotism, hypocrisy etc. are dominating our lives. The 21st century is jeopardised by valueless tendencies like corruption, violence, immorality, terrorism, crime, murder, rape, agitation, self-centred egoism, youth unrest, eve-teasing,
degenerating civil services, exploitation in all walks of life, growing pollution of all types etc. Human virtues like love, sympathy, honesty, purity of mind, selflessness, wisdom, mercy, humility, faithfulness, obedience, sincerity etc. remain only the words of dictionary. Science and technology opened up new vistas as a result of which rapid and visible changes have been taken place extensively in almost all walks of human activity and endeavour. But, the most precious wealth of humanity that we lost today is a big measure of our character, ethics and values. It is said that if an individual loses his wealth, he loses nothing; if he loses his health, he loses something; but if he loses his character, he loses everything. What is true of individuals is also true of nations (Kapur, J. N., 2000)

Considering the present value crisis ridden atmosphere, Bhagban Baba in his Benedictory address at the Eighth Convocation, November 22, 1989 stated that,

"Wealth is worshipped as God. Pride has become a creed. Selfishness is entrenched in the intellect. The ego is flaunted and Desire has become an adornment. Righteousness has become a mere figures head in the world. Compassion has dried up. Gratitude has wanted. Hypocrisy has become the hallmark of life. Love and affection have become lustful affections. The scriptures are disregarded....In the Kali age these have become the qualifications of educated persons".

(Chittibabu, S. V., 2000)

The world wide resurgence of interest in value education is indicative of the fact that value crisis is not only a phenomenon of a particular country but the whole world is witnessing tremendous value crisis. India is a country of diversified culture which is
rich in its traditional beliefs and value systems. It is the land which was known as the
custodian of ‘soul’ in the ancient lore, is becoming a nation without soul now.
Materialism has engulfed us to the extent that everyone by and large has become a
worshipper of mammon (Dixit, P., 1998). ‘Sattyam, Shivam, Sundaram’ meaning Truth,
Beauty and Goodness were the highest values cherished in ancient India that had guided
the human life towards attainment of Moksha. The Ancient Indian system of education
entirely concentrated on moral and spiritual development of minds. The whole of Vedic
education and even the Post-Vedic lectures like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the
Geeta etc. are the treasure house of values. The holy Quran also stresses the importance
of human values. The Islamic approach for the establishment of peace and welfare of
humanity emphasizes on the establishment of social peace, moderation and snubbing all
destructive activities and permitting only the positive actions (Pakeeza and Chishti,
2012). But unfortunately, the continuity of our great cultural tradition was precluded by
the long-stretched rule over the country by foreigners. Technological advances and the
growing materialism have deprived people from the essence of India’s ancient value
system. After independence considerable advancement have taken place in almost all
endeavours like agriculture, industry, science and technology, education etc., but
Indians are losing their character, pride and identity of values. The present Indian
society is characterised by speedy erosion of moral, social, spiritual and religious
values, which are creating serious threats to the standards of personal and social life as
well as the progress of the nation at large. Goswami, Dulumoni (2011), in his book
“Higher Education in India—Growth, Issues and Expansion” has mentioned some
matters arousing out of the effects of value crisis in the present day life. A few of them
are as follows:
• The democratic ideology that has been accepted by our country is yet to be actualised in the form of social and economic democracy, so as to realise the democratic values guaranteed by the constitution of India.

• A new impersonal social order that is developing fast has been unduly ignoring the values and concepts without attempting to replace them with suitable ones.

• The individual is becoming a prey to contradictory values and ideologies and is being converted as a consequence into an extreme radical, a reactionary, a sceptic or a cynic.

• Our Curriculum does not reflect values and value system. Hence, our schools and colleges have become examination centres and not value centres.

In such a fissiparous situation, therefore, if hoped to create an enlightened and spiritual society, we the citizens should concentrate not only on our personal welfare but also for the good of others. We should not be indifferent towards altruism and interests of other people. The objective of creating an enlightened human society can be achieved only when the human possessions like health, harmony, happiness, wisdom and above all character reflecting ethical and human values will manifest in every one’s thought, speech and action.

1.2 Values: The Concept, Classification and Determinants

Value literally means something that has a price, something precious and worthwhile. This may be material or concrete aspects as well as non-material or abstract concepts like state of mind, interests, truthfulness, peace, happiness etc. A newborn baby values his mother or the feeding bottle. As the infant grows into a boy or girl
playthings acquire all the values. Similarly, in adulthood friends are replaced by a
married partner in life. But, besides the possession of things or persons like mother,
feeding bottle, doll, marbles, bats, balls, friends, house, furniture, jewellery, children
and grand children; values extend to what we want to become or desire to be
(Prahallada, N. N., 2000). We value what we desire to have or become and hence
become the ideals, standards and set of guiding principles of all our activities and
endeavour. In this connection the statement made by John Dewey is worth mentioning
which states that “The value means primarily to prize, to esteem, to appraise and to
estimate. It means the act of achieving something, holding it dear and also the act of
passing judgement upon the nature and amounts of values as compared with something
else.” (Aggarwal, J.C., 2010)

The word ‘value’ is derived from the Latin word ‘Valerie’ which means to be
strong and vigorous. Thus, ‘to be of value’ implies to have certain virtues. ‘Axiology’,
the branch of philosophy is concerned with the study of values. However, history shows
that the philosophers of the great tradition from Plato to Hegel have been greatly
concerned with values, though they may not use the term value, but have spoke of
desires and aims. There are altogether four views regarding the nature of values namely
the Interest theory, Existence theory, Experimental theory and Part-Whole theory
(Jangaiah, C., 1998).

The Interest theory is also known as subjective theory. According to this theory,
if a person desires something it has a value for him/her. Value resides in the inner world
of mind and depends upon the interest of persons. The activity or event which is
interesting or satisfactory for an individual is valuable or worthwhile for him/her but may not for others. It is idealistic in nature.

Secondly, the Existence theory is objective in nature. It holds that value is independent of the subject or his/her interest and mind, rather it wholly belong to the object. This theory believes that value is entirely manifested in the outer world which needs to be discovered for making judgement. This theory is realistic in nature.

Thirdly, the Experimental theory advocates that the thing or event which yields a greater sense of happiness at present and promises still more of it in future only holds value. Experimental value can also be interpreted as the instrumental value, which helps in the achievement of certain fruitful end but not permanent or absolute. This value is the outcome of pragmatic philosophy.

Lastly, the Part-Whole theory holds that in order to realise and enjoy value, one must effectively relate parts to the whole.

According to Indian philosophy which is not completely free from the hold of religion, the value is associated with the activities or endeavours that are directed towards spiritual liberation (Moksha). The four Purusharthas i.e. Supreme ends of life which hold highest value in Indian philosophy are Economic Well Being (Artha), Physical Wellbeing (Kama), Righteous Action (Dharma) and Spiritual Freedom (Moksha). Of the four, Artha and Kama are treated as relatively lower value than Dharma and Moksha. Economic Well being (Artha) and Physical Well being (Kama) are to be achieved through Righteous Action (Dharma), which in turn help in the realisation of the ultimate end of life i.e. Moksha. Thus, Dharma is considered as
regulatory principle of attaining Artha and Kama in proximate sense and Moksha in ultimate sense. On the contrary, western view holds that value judgement is not necessarily dependent on religion, rather it is completely a rational activity and guided by reason. When an individual decides an action to be right or wrong; some course of action as ought to be followed or ought not to be, implies that these judgements are backed by reason behind these (Goyal, B. R., 1998).

Thus, it is seen that values have been conceptualised in a large number of perspectives and in a variety of ways. And as such, defining values inclusively have always been a big problem before philosophers, psychologists, sociologists and all concerned intellectuals. Morris (1957) had accepted value as indefinable. However, the definition given by Kluckhohn (1960) stating value as “A conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristics of a group of those desirables which influence the selection, from available means and ends of action” seems to be most inclusive of all, as it recognises the relationship between subjective and objective views of values, and values as both personal and societal.

Thus, almost all types of concepts viewed values in terms of normative ethics which guide us to decide what is right, desirable, ought to be and vice-versa. It refers to an internal code or mechanism that enables us to distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong, desirable and undesirable, justice and injustice and serves as a ground for our decision-making process and the final course of action. It is the norm that helps people to formulate judgments and to select the most sound and appropriate course of action that is acceptable by the society and culture to which they belong. Values create a specific mode of conduct and our end-state of existence and motivate, define and colour
all our activities Cognitive, Affective and Psycho-motor. In this way, a vibrant set of values provide the basis for principles of life that give direction and firmness to life and bring joy, satisfaction, peace and quality to life in the same way as the rail keep a train on the track and help it move smoothly and quickly with direction without accident. Value is an abstract concept and regarded desirable, important and held in high esteem by a particular society in which a person lives (Venkataiah, N., 1998).

Values are classified differently by different thinkers according to their own way on the basis of some specific criteria. Most of the schools of philosophy are agreed to classify values into two types as higher and lower values. For example, knowledge is considered as higher value in comparison to physical pleasure. Turner classified values as abstract and concrete. According to Spindler values are of two types as traditional and emergent. Traditional value stands for concepts like puritan morality, work success ethics, individualism and achievement orientation. On the other hand, emergent value is used to mean qualities like sociability, moral attitude, consideration for others, and conformity to groups etc. Sprenger, Edward (1928), in his book “Type of Men” mentioned six values as theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political and religious. According to Brubacher (1962), values are of two fold, Terminal and Instrumental. Terminal values are those basic values of life that include survival, caring, comfort, dignity, freedom, knowledge, self-respect etc. These are rooted in human nature and are judged good not for others else, but in and out of themselves. These values are inherent, self-contained and end in themselves. They represent the ultimate life-goals that people have. On the other hand, instrumental values are not self-contained and inherent, but are associated with some other values. Instrumental or intermediate values serve as a means of attaining the fundamental or basic values. These instrumental values include moral,
social and spiritual values. These are judged good not for themselves, rather because they are good for something else and help to promote the ultimate life-goals of people. Indian philosophy classified values into four types which are called ‘Purusharthas’ viz., Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Dharma and Moksha are viewed as supreme values where Artha and Kama are viewed as lower values. Similarly, Artha and Kama are held as temporary values, whereas Dharma and Moksha are held as permanent and absolute values because Artha and Kama through Dharma (Righteous action) help in attainment of Moksha i.e. spiritual freedom.

Further, classifications of values have been made from time to time, but no classification seems to be conclusive. However, all efforts are focused to explain cherished experiences related to human ideas and aspirations. In total, a well defined value system is a mirror-image of an individual’s character, perception of well-being and determines his short and long-range purposes, goals and priorities. Indeed, irrespective of divergence in classification, there is a consensus that Sattyam, Shivam and Sundaram (truth, goodness and beauty) are the highest combination of values. These are considered desirable and help in achieving a better world as well as the ultimate end of life.

Underlying much of the research studies it is implicit that value dimensions are essentially related, influenced and shaped by factors like sex; age; marital status; psychological and personality traits like interest, aptitude, motivation, intelligence, achievement motivation, self-concept etc; socio-economic status; parental education and expectation; rearing up practice; home environment; area of residence; culture; religion; education and school climate etc. (refer Chapter-II). Students perusing different types of
education may possess different value pattern as education system is one of the most potent factors in determining values of individual. Similarly, students with different levels of aspiration may also differ in their value patterns. Level of aspiration is closely associated with value dimensions in the sense that it may determine or may be determined by value dimensions. The following paragraph discusses the second variable of the present study i.e. level of aspiration.

1.3 Level of Aspiration: The Concept, Determinants and Development

The dictionary meaning of the word aspiration is ‘to desire eagerly to a certain standard, to aim at or strive for certain higher goals and to tower up’. To ‘aspire’ means ‘to desire’, this is a pre-requisite of any achievement. Level of aspiration is an individual’s future expectation or ambition. Dembo, who was a student of Lewin, first introduced the concept of level of aspiration in 1931 in the course of an experimental investigation of anger. The word ‘aspiration’ is a translation from German word ‘Anspruch’ & ‘Niveau’.

The first experiment directed towards the analysis of level of aspiration was performed by Hoppe in 1930. Hoppe defined level of aspiration as a person’s expectations, goals or claims on his own future achievement in a given task. He opined that level of aspiration is qualitative in nature because on the basis of his experiment, he found that a given performance is accompanied by a feeling of failure if it falls below the level of aspiration and a given performance is accompanied by a feeling of success if it goes above the level of aspiration. Hoppe further investigated various factors which
effect goal setting behaviour. He concluded that individual variations are found in level of aspiration. In his view, a realistic person always set a goal on the basis of his past experience keeping in view of his capabilities for doing a particular task. Thus, Hoppe conceived level of aspirations a technique for studying dynamic factors which operate in the prediction of feeling of success and failure.

Frank (1935) altered Hoppe’s concept of level of aspiration in the light of his quantitative technique, where the goodness of performance was measured in terms of the times taken to complete the set task. He redefined Hoppe’s concept of level of aspiration as level of future performance in a familiar task which an individual, knowing his level of past performance in that task, explicitly undertakes to reach. Frank emphasised the role of ego-involvement in determining one’s level of aspiration and concluded that the degree of ego-involvement is correlated with divergence of level of aspiration.

According to Dembo (1931), an individual’s aspiration level represents him/her not only as he/she is at that particular moment but also as he/she would like to be. It is a measure of his internal dispositions. According to Boyd (1952), level of aspiration means an individual’s ambition in a dynamic situation i.e. it is an individual’s goal or expectation with regard to the goodness of his own future performance for a given task. Backer and Seigal (1957) referred level of aspiration, ‘as individual strives for a particular goal or level of achievement.’

In the words of Hurlock (1967) aspiration means, “a longing for what is above one’s achieved level with advancement on its end. In other words aspiration means the
goal an individual sets for himself in a task, which has intense personal significance for him and in which he is ego-involved.”

Scanning the foregoing definitions, it appears that level of aspiration is a form of self motivation involving competition with one’s past experience. When an individual is actively involved in a task, he sets new goal to achieve. If he succeeds in attaining the set goal, it motivates him to set higher goal in the subsequent attempts besides giving him satisfaction. On the other hand, if he fails to attain his set goal, he experiences a sense of failure which is normally followed by a lowering of the goal for future attempts. This is a common characteristic of behaviour in all goal setting situations.

Level of aspiration is usually influenced by two types of factors- environmental and personal. Environmental factors include determinants like parental ambitions, social expectations, peer pressure, social value, education, competition, group cohesiveness etc. In early childhood, before the child is old enough to know what his abilities, interests and values are, his aspirations are largely shaped by environment. On the other hand, personal factors play dominant role in determining his level of aspiration as the child grows older and become more aware of his abilities and interests. These personal factors include determinants such as wishes, personality traits, past experiences, values, interests, sex, socio-economic background, racial background etc. Gutman, L. M. and Akerman, R. (2008) stated that aspirations begin to be shaped early in a child’s life and tend to decline as children become mature. They further concluded that practical and attitudinal factors play important role in preventing high aspiration among individuals. Financial constraints, earlier failure in academic achievement, becoming parents at younger stage etc. are some of the practical problems which act as barrier in the
formation of aspiration. They further showed that the individuals, who are confident in their ability to achieve and attribute their success to hard work and not on luck, tend to form higher aspirations.

Generally, a great deal of individual differences is found in goal setting behaviour. Even persons with equal amount of ability may also differ significantly in their level of aspiration. One may set his goal very high, while some other very low and some may have aspiration level near to their performance level or capacity. Setting ones goal and level of aspiration in accordance with socio-economic as well as psycho-physical condition is of vital importance for balanced development of personality. A congenial and conducive environment both at home and school and exemplary behaviour of family members and teachers goes a long way in setting aspiration level suited to one’s capacity as well as helps in fostering right value in children at large.

1.4 Formation of Values as a Function of Education

The principal objective of education is to bring all round development of the personality. It needs not necessarily to focus on merely providing certain degrees or diplomas. Education has to integrate all the dimensions of personality- mental, social, moral, spiritual, physical and so on along with developing human values which are desirable for the individual as well as for the society. In fact, education itself is a social process as it goes in the social set up and meant for preparing the individual for effective social living with other fellow members. Its function is to transmit, preserve and promote the desirable aspects of culture, ideals and norms of society from one generation to another. It is to instil in the minds of the students a sense of morality and
concern for others. It has to develop among the students the power to distinguish between right and wrong, desirable and undesirable, justice and injustice etc. Thus, good education, its aim, curriculum, methods of education, role of teachers etc. all are always inseparably tied up with inculcation of universal and eternal values. Real education should combine science and ethics, and create a passionate hunger for truth.

In ancient days the word ‘value’ was not being affixed before ‘education’. The term ‘education’ was quite sufficient to specify its function of value orientation. But today, everybody talk about value education, and the subject of value education is becoming increasingly prominent in educational discussion at all levels. Such extended emphasis on value orientation through education depicts how value is diminishing in the present society. All over the glove, the moral, spiritual and human values are getting relegated to the background. The minds are captivated to western culture. There is an unhealthy race among people behind the material wealth. The possibilities of earning more and more have dominating the younger minds. The 21st century is jeopardised with valueless and unethical activities in its entire dimensions— personal, social, political, economic etc. And the education is also unable to do what it is expected to do. It has become one sided. Rapid strives have been made in acquisition of knowledge about the outer world, in the growth of physical sciences, and in discovering the wonders of the materialistic means (Bhandari, M. S., 2000). Goswami, Dulumoni (2011) stated that values, attitude, interests, appreciations have come to be sidelined during recent times and education has become a process of acquisition of information in conventional cognitive areas with the sole purpose of passing the examinations. People have forgotten that knowledge which does not accompany wisdom will lead the human race only to barbarism and make them slaves of material civilisation. In this connection
Russel, B. (1967) in his book "Impact of Science in Society", says, "Unless people increase in wisdom as much as in knowledge, increase of knowledge will be increase of sorrow".

Indian education system since its inception has been emphasising the inculcation of right values in the growing minds. The whole of ancient system of education- the Vedic education, Buddhist system of education, education during Muslim era etc. are deeply rooted on value orientation. Holy Scriptures of all religions prevalent in the country like Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism etc. is treasure house of sound moral teachings. The modern system of education, before and after independence, has also been highlighting the urgent need for incorporating appropriate programmes in education for bringing integrated development of body, mind and spirit of the students. Prior to independence, the Central Advisory Board of Education (1943-46) suggested that provision of spiritual and moral instruction for building up the character of the young should be the responsibility of the home and community. As the country attained freedom from the British yoke, a new thought has aroused to reconstruct the education in consonance with the native value traditions so as to cope with the changing socio-economic and political system. Various committees and commissions being appointed thereafter, on education at all levels have duly recognised the importance of value orientation. Radhakrishna Commission (1948), Secondary Education Commission (1953), the Sri Prakasa Committee (1959), Kothari Commission (1964-66), National Policy on Education (1986), Ramamurti Committee (1990), Programme of Action (NPE) (1992) all have taken cognizance of the need for value orientation through education and recommended direct or indirect instruction of social,
moral, and religious values in educational institutions. Some of the statements made in this direction are as follows.

Radhakrishnan Commission (1948): “If we exclude spiritual training in our institutions we would be untrue to our whole historical development”.

Sri Prakasa Committee on Religious and Moral Instruction (1959): “Every effort must, therefore, be made to teach students true moral values from the earliest stages of their educational life”.

Kothari Commission (1964-66): “A serious defect in the school system is the absence of provision for education in social, moral and spiritual values. In the life of majority of Indians, religion is a great motivating force and is intimately bound up with the formation of character and inculcation of ethical values. A national system of education that is related to life, needs and aspirations of people cannot afford to ignore this purposeful force”.

National Policy on Education (1986): “The growing concern over the erosion of essential values and an increasing cynicism in society has brought to focus the need for readjustments in the curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for the cultivation of social and moral values.”

Ramamurti Committee (1990): “Education must further provide a climate for the nurture of values, both as a personalised set of values, forming one’s character and including necessarily social, cultural and national values, so as to have a context and meaning for actions and decisions, and in order to enable the persons to act with conviction and commitment”.
Programme of Action (NPE) (1992): “The framework emphasised value education as an integral part of school curriculum. It highlighted the values drawn from national goals, universal perception, ethical considerations and character building. It stressed the role of education in combating obscurantism, religious fanaticism, exploitation and injustice as well as the inculcation of values”.

But, in spite of the steady efforts, value education is being neglected to a great extent. It is much pity that nothing is done sincerely and dedicatedly in this direction in India till date. Education in general and higher education in particular, which is considered as the most potent factor in value orientation, has failed today in its sole purpose. It proved quite ineffective in recent times to inculcate among the young generation the values such as love, co-operation, trust, acceptance, joy, dignity, compromise, respect for others, sympathy, tolerance, forgiveness which are the backbone of society. The majority of educational institutions have failed in evolving an integrated approach in the curricular and co-curricular programmes for the all round development of human personality. The system with all its complexities and intricacies, have proved to be deficient so far, as it neglects or does not give deserving importance to values in human life (Venkataiah, N., 1998). It is becoming day by day more or less materialistic and value traditions are being slowly given up. The prime objective of education today is no longer the formation of character and promotion of values, but the emphasis is on promotion of technical knowhow, skills, and technologies for material progress.

As the labour market is becoming more specified, it requires more skilled person in different profession. Consequently, professional education is becoming more popular
in this age of LPG. The emergence of private sector in education, more particularly at tertiary level, has made the system mostly commercial. Now, education is considered as instruments for preparing the students as money earning tools. Provision of value education seldom exists in institutions of professional courses run by private undertakings. Profit-motive always remain their first priority. No doubt, in a country like India where unemployment rate is almost 10%, career oriented professional education is of utmost significance. But, at the same time such career oriented professional education must take cognizance to instruct the students in desirable human values. It is very unfortunate that Modern Indians are being educated mainly with the bread and butter aim of education, as a result, most of our graduates run after money, power, comforts without caring for any values (Prahallada, N. N., 2000). Thus, there is an urgent need to revive and reform the values of human life and to rejuvenate the foundation of civilization. It is vitally necessary for the universities to consider their special role in education in human values. Institutions of higher education might have to function properly in transforming cultural heritage, accumulated knowledge, values and skills from one generation to the other. In the present value crisis-ridden society education must create the climate for the nurture of values.

1.5 Statement of the Problem

The present study has been stated as “A Study on the Value Dimensions of Undergraduate Students of Professional Courses in Relation to their Level of Aspiration.”
1.6 Objectives of the Study

The present study has been designed keeping the following objectives in view.

i. To study the value preferences of undergraduate students of both technical and non-technical professional courses of Gauhati University.

ii. To examine whether there is significant difference between undergraduate students of technical and non-technical professional courses in their value dimensions.

iii. To study the level of aspiration of undergraduate students of both technical and non-technical professional courses of Gauhati University.

iv. To determine the relationship between value dimensions and level of aspiration of undergraduate students of technical and non-technical professional courses.

v. To determine the relationship between value dimensions and level of aspiration of male and female undergraduate students of professional courses.

vi. To examine whether there is significant difference in the relationship of value dimensions and level of aspiration between undergraduate students of technical and non-technical professional courses.

vii. To examine whether there is significant difference in the relationship of value dimensions and level of aspiration between male and female undergraduate students of professional courses.

viii. To study the level of aspiration as predictor of value dimensions of undergraduate students of both technical and non-technical professional courses.
1.7 Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses have been formulated in order to meet the objectives.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between undergraduate students of technical and non-technical professional courses in their value dimensions.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between undergraduate students of technical and non-technical professional courses in their level of aspiration score.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between value dimensions and level of aspiration of undergraduate students of technical and non-technical professional courses.

Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between value dimensions and level of aspiration of male and female undergraduate students of professional courses.

Ho₅: There is no significant difference in the relationship of value dimensions and level of aspiration between undergraduate students of technical and non-technical professional courses.

Ho₆: There is no significant difference in the relationship of value dimensions and level of aspiration between male and female undergraduate students of professional courses.

H₇: Level of aspiration is the predictor of value dimensions of undergraduate students of both technical and non-technical professional courses.
1.8 Significance of the Study

Today there is almost a public debate on the erosion of values. Newspapers, magazines and other news media are flooded with the news of immoral and criminal activities which are creating serious threats for the smooth survival of mankind. So, it becomes important for all the members of the society to understand the nature of values and factors responsible for its formation and development.

There is a general feeling that our present system of education in not quite effective in inculcating the right values among the young generation. It is becoming more materialistic day by day and value traditions are being slowly given up. The prime objective of education today is no longer the formation of character and promotion of values, rather the emphasis is on promotion of technical knowhow, skills, and technologies for material progress. The students of today are primarily inclined towards the fulfilment of material greed. So far the students of undergraduate level of education are concerned; there is considerable paucity of research attempts on value dimensions in India in general and in Assam in particular. It is evident from the overview of the review of related studies, that only one study is made in Assam by Islam, Sirajul (2002) to examine the value pattern of college students. Considering the inadequacy, the importance of the present study aiming at identification of value dimensions of undergraduate students of professional courses as well as their determining factors is justified.

Professional education has been recognised as inevitable for a country’s socio-economic development. Though, the main motto of professional education is to prepare
students for job, simultaneously it must teach the students the desirable human values. Research studies on professional education undertaken in some foreign countries and also in India mostly covered the areas like management, administration, job satisfaction, vocational preference etc. The Value pattern of students of professional courses received little or no attention by scholars. Among the related literature reviewed, only one study investigating the attitudes, self-concept and values of Professional and Non-professional college students is found which was conducted by Manav, Ram Niwas (1981) under Meerut University. No study involving a comparison on value dimensions of students of technical and non-technical professional courses has been conducted so far. Therefore, this neglected area of professional education needs to be addressed with great care.

In today’s world of competition, there is not a single individual who is devoid of ambition in some or other form. Everyone seems to set their aspiration to a higher level. At the same time, the whole world is witnessing tremendous value crisis. Thus, natural questions arise whether our value dimensions are shaped and influenced by our level of aspiration? Is there any relationship between level of aspiration and value dimensions of individuals? Level of aspiration is closely associated with value dimensions in the sense that it may determine or may be determined by value dimensions. It is observed in the overview of related literature scanned, that value dimensions are not adequately investigated in relation to level of aspiration. One study is made by Ranu, Sarbjit Kaur (1995) in Patiala on value pattern of postgraduate students in relation to level of aspiration. No study is found revealing the value dimensions in relation to their level of aspiration so far undergraduate students of professional courses is concerned. As such the necessity of conducting the present study is felt important.
Considering the above issues, the importance of the present study is justified. This is an attempt to throw light on this neglected area of professional education. The study is first of its kind and as such is expected to fill the gap in this regard.

1.9 Operational Definition of Important Terms

In order to make the research precise and convenient and also to avoid any ambiguity, the operational definitions of important terms used, are given below.

1) Value Dimensions

Value Dimensions refers to the six types of values as measured by R.K. Ojha and Mahesh Bhargava’s revised form of ‘Study of Values Test’, an adaptation of Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Scale of values, used in the present study. These value dimensions are-

(i) **Theoretical:** The dominant interest of the theoretical man is the *Discovery of Truth* and *Empirical, Rational* and *Critical* treatment of issue.

(ii) **Economic:** The economic man is characteristically interested in what is *Useful, Economic* or *Profitable* for him. These men are thoroughly ‘Practical’.

(iii) **Aesthetic:** The aesthetic man sees his highest value in *Form and Harmony*.

(iv) **Social:** The highest value for this type of man is *Love of People*.

(v) **Political:** The political man is interested primarily in *Power and Influence*.
(vi) **Religious:** The highest value of religious man is *Unity*. They are *mystical* and seek to comprehend the cosmos as a whole.

**2) Level of Aspiration**

Level of aspiration is an individual’s future expectation or ambition in a given task. In the present study, it refers to the aspiration level of an individual as revealed by his total GDS (Goal Discrepancy Score) on the ‘Level of Aspiration Measure’ developed by Mahesh Bhargava and Late Professor M. A. Shah.

**3) Undergraduate Students**

Undergraduate Students refers to the students studying for their first degree in all the degree colleges affiliated to Gauhati University offering education in professional courses.

**4) Professional Course**

Professional Course refers to those subjects or streams of study that prepares students to become extremely competent for a job through giving specialised training to engage in an activity, the purpose of which is to supply objective counsel and service to others for gaining direct and definite compensation or a means of livelihood.

In the present study ‘Professional Course’ covers the subjects or streams of study like Engineering, Education, Medicine, Technology, Law, Management, Architecture, Town Planning, Pharmacy, Applied Arts & Crafts, Hotel Management and Catering Technology etc.
5) **Technical Professional Course**

Technical Course refers to those subjects or streams of study that makes academic and vocational preparation of students for jobs that are based on practical activities involving applied science and modern technology where emphasis is given to the understanding and practical application of basic principles of science and mathematics, rather than the attainment of proficiency in manual skills that is properly the concern of vocational education.

In the present study the researcher has used the term ‘Technical Professional Course’ to mean those professional subjects or stream of study which are under the purview of AICTE. These are Engineering, Technology, Management, Architecture, Town Planning, Pharmacy, Applied Arts & Crafts, Hotel Management and Catering Technology.

6) **Non-Technical Professional Course**

Non-Technical Course refers to the subjects or stream of study that prepares students to become competent for a job through giving specialised training to earn his livelihood that do not necessarily involve applied science and modern technology and an understanding and practical application of basic principles of science and mathematics.

In the present study the term ‘Non-Technical Professional Course’ refers to all other professional subjects or stream of study like Medicine, Education, Law, Music etc., except those which are under the purview of AICTE.