Chapter-III

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BRAHMA KUMARIS ISHWARIYA VISHWA
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Chapter-III

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF BRAHMA KUMARIS ISHWARIYA VISHWA VIDYALAYA

Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya strives to impart knowledge to enable individuals and social groups to learn and develop practical wisdom and to attain constant peace and happiness and to achieve excellence in life. The main philosophy of this unique university is to bring new political and social order to establish a peaceful and harmonious society. It strives to achieve this objective through the spiritual approach to the political and social issues. The main thrust of its political and social philosophy have been discussed in this chapter.

3.1 Political Philosophy of Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya

Introduction

Politics is an art and science of governance. Politics is a way of serving the society by ventilating the views and will of the people. It conducts the public affairs of the state. It is the instrument for implementing the plans and policies relating to various aspects of society such as education, environment, economic matters, defence, development, etc. Politicians and politics are indispensable to a civil society.

Politicians have a crucial role in the job of conducting the affairs of the state or for running the government and for ministering the polity. Politicians who represent the people in the government have to
perform various functions such as (i) making laws, (ii) running the internal affairs of a state according to the will of the people, (iii) devising and enacting the state policy with regard to Education, Human Resource Development, Social Welfare, Commerce, Trade and Industry, Environment, Rural and Urban Development, Transport, Communication, Health, Multimedia, Promotion of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Agriculture, Natural Sciences, National Economy or Finance, Accounts, Excise and Taxation, etc. (iv) planning of defense of the country, (v) safeguarding interests of the country against other countries, (vi) maintaining law and order, (vii) looking after the matters relating to various sections of the society, (viii) population growth, (ix) employment, (x) housing and energy, (xi) water management, (xii) looking after the weaker sections of the community, (xiii) relief during natural calamities, (xiv) governing all internal and external affairs of the state and (xv) resolving conflicts between diverse interests of various communities, etc.

The role and responsibilities of politicians are varied and vast. The state craft and statesmen are the sine qua non of a modern civilised society in a democratic form of government.

3.2 Politics and Social Transformation

The autonomous role of political sphere in social change in India has been emphasized by Atul Kohli 1. The centrality of politics in social transformation has been universally recognized.

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Kothari\(^2\) perceives that the overall structure or principle of organization of the society can not be changed except through political change. Theories of politics of social transformation or reconstruction differ in their assumptions as well as conceptions of human needs and potentialities which are to be maximized or fulfilled through political institutions Thomas Pantham \(^3\). Major socio-political transformations have been associated with major revisions in political philosophies. Wolin\(^4\) stresses that political paradigms/political theories are moral in the sense that they entail notions of what is correct, right or appropriate behaviour. They are value-laden. Marx and Engels expressed that the aim of their political theory was to bring about a form of society in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all. The central concept of Gandhian moral-political theory are 'satya', 'ahimsa', 'tapas' (self suffering), swaraj (self rule and self restraint) and 'sarvodaya' (the welfare of all). Liberal political theories uphold the values of freedom, reason and toleration which are said to be necessary to liberate people from the hold of customs, traditions, status, absolutism, etc. of the pre-liberal order.

3.3 Spiritual Approach to Politics – Political Philosophy of Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya

India's strength lies in its spirituality. Spirituality provides a solid and everlasting foundation for building the character and attitudes

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of statesmen and politicians according to Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya. It helps statesmen and politicians to find spiritual solutions to current problems and provide inspirational leadership which is endowed with statesmanship, sagacity and a spirit of sacrifice. "Spirituality brings simplicity, sincerity and attitude of service. If politicians have to serve the society rather than their parties only, politics must be imbued with spirituality"5

The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya exhorts ethical principles as basis for sound politics. A politician must act in a manner that behaves him as a chosen one who reflects in his conduct and character, the hopes and aspirations and dreams and desires of the people he represents. He should keep aware that a great multitude of people are watching him. The politicians must follow some of the principles befitting his status as a peoples representative viz.,

3.4 **The Principle of Honesty, Integrity and Incorruptible Character**

Honesty should be the first among ethical values which a politician must have. The politician must be a man with unbending honesty and impeccable integrity. Even his critics and foes must acknowledge this trait in him. This according to the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya can be cultivated by politicians by keeping good company, study of inspiring literature and by acquiring spiritual wisdom and yoga meditation. A politician can do great national service by following the ethical principles.

3.5 The Principle of Trusteeship

The principle of trusteeship related to the firm belief that one is a trustee to God or to the society. This belief leads to humility and honesty despite having high powers and in the face of great temptations. Such a person shall not be influenced when the whole atmosphere is corruptive. Politicians in power must remember that the positions and power are given to them by the society and they owe much to the society for their comforts. They should not betray the trust and should not use the powers and position for selfish ends.

3.6 Transparency and Accountability

A politician in power must not only be honest and a trustee but his acts must confirm it. His actions and his life need to be transparent. Certain actions of government require secrecy. However politicians should not use them as a cover for their covert acts of corruption. Their life must be an open book. They have been entrusted with great responsibility by the public. Hence their acts in public service are accountable to the people. People have the right to seek information about their actions and non-actions. It is therefore necessary that their work culture and methodology and the criteria used for decision making should be transparent and above suspicion.

3.7 Respecting Human Worth and Dignity

Politicians must have faith in the dignity of man and the divinity of the human being. A civil society is based on the belief that all men have a great potential. Politics should be based on this belief and treat
the poor, the backward, the weaker sections, the middle class and men and women with understanding and due respect.

3.8 Freedom and Basic Human Rights

Citizens should be ensured with basic freedom and rights. In the absence of these the government becomes authoritarian, autocratic and fascist. Politicians must behave as servants and as equal partners. People should have open debate and the right of free expression. They must enjoy other human rights so that they fully cooperate with the politicians and the government in the task of governance. Right to information and basic freedom can lead to meaningful discussions on national issues.

3.9 Rule of Law and Self Rule

Freedom of some should not impair the freedoms and right of others. There should be a fair balance of law or rights and duties or freedom and discipline. People should be educated to have self control or 'swarajya'. Politicians can govern others without much effort, if they govern themselves. Self rule is the best rule a genuine politician makes all efforts to see their rule of law, there is legitimacy of what they do and they act according to propriety and that politicians also are subject to law. The dictum that be you ever so high but the law is always above you should be practiced by politicians.

3.10 Principle of Consent or Proper Sanction

The governance of the state should rest on the consent of the people. There should not be scope for the use of force or methods of coercion. Sanction of people is behind the power that vests in those
who hold public office. Public consent implies the willingness of the people to discuss issues and to express public opinion and to support the government that has acquired legitimacy through their consent or sanction. It is essential that politicians give due hearing and consideration to the views and opinions of others. Efforts should be made to arrive at a point of maximum convergence.

3.11 Principle of General Welfare

This principle of politics is based on the belief that things can be improved leading to general welfare. Efforts should be made for achieving progress. This needs positive thinking and optimism. General welfare involves the participation of all. Politicians should not be swayed by group-selfishness. They should work for social welfare and betterment of all. The political ethics demands that a politician must always be above narrow mindedness, petty politics and narrow considerations.

3.12 Principle of Compromise and Mutual Adjustment and Consensus

Difference in political ideology of political parties is a common feature in democratic societies. When there is large variation of group interests in a policy, there has to be some type of compromise for the sake of national interests. A national consensus has to be evolved in a pluralistic society through mutual give and take. It requires the values called adjustment, mutual accommodation, tolerance and harmony. It also requires respect for the ideas and views of others and a friendly attitude. When there are conflicts among the political parties
compromise becomes necessary in order to resolve the deadlock to establish harmony, unity or solid progress and better society.

Compromise becomes necessary but there are always limits to compromise. Compromise implies mutual accommodation. It does not mean total surrender by one party nor does it mean a policy of repeated appeasement. The governments have to go in for compromise and it is one of the functions of politics and the job of politicians to establish harmony and peace through compromise between conflicting parties.

3.13 Principle of Noble Motives, Righteous Means and Happy Consequences

Political parties must have noble motives irrespective of their ideology and form of functioning. They must adopt righteous means to fulfill their aims and should keep in mind their policies, strategic, tactics, logistics and moves and manoeuvres must result in happiness of all or the welfare of the greatest number. Politics now is based less on principles and more on brute majority. Hence the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya exhorts that politicians should practice value based politics so that it can be restored to its due place of honour and it can serve best the nation and the human kind.

The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya maintains that politicians must have this awareness that politics is the name of their role in the drama of life but the fundamental truth is that we all are human souls who are accountable for actions. The philosophy of Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya relating to politics and
politicians is related to maintaining spiritual wisdom and enjoyment of purity of mind and reach peace. The university suggests that public office is not for accumulating private wealth or for favouring certain people. It is ethical to lead a life of service, simplicity, self control and purity. This according to the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya is the essence of India’s spiritual heritage or native ancient culture. Spiritualists and politicians should give a lead by living these values.

3.14 Better Governance and Swarnim Bharat – The Mount Abu Declaration

Mount Abu Declaration for Better Governance for ‘Swarnim Bharat’ was adopted by the All India Conference of Politicians organised by Prajapita Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya at Mount Abu from 6 to 9 October, 2001. The declaration has the stamp of the basic spiritual philosophy of the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya. A summary of the declaration reflecting the spiritual approach of Prajapita Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya has been provided here as a complement to the principles governing the political philosophy of the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya enunciated in the earlier part of this chapter.

3.15 Government and Governance

Government is a politico-administrative entity in charge of the nation’s affairs and the arbiter of its destiny. Government must

necessarily provide good governance which entails ensuring better quality of life to its citizens, welfare of the disadvantaged sections, protection of human rights and dignity, peace and tranquility as well as rule of law. Governance is about the balancing of roles of states and governments with the rights of people.

The preamble to the Indian Constitution embodies the aspirations of the freedom struggle and the visions of the future of the country as envisaged by the Founding Fathers. Targets were laid for education, literacy, poverty elevation, health, population control and economic development. There are hurdles in better governance which need to be overcome viz., high incidence of illiteracy, indifferent bureaucracy, rampant corruption in society, lack of consciousness among legislators about their responsibility, faulty electoral system, halting judicial system and lack of vigilant and enlightened public opinion.

3.16 Roles of Legislature, the Judiciary, the Executive and the Media

The conference at Mount Abu convened by the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya has supported the need for prescribing minimum qualifications for the legislators who are the law makers of the country. The political parties should evolve their own norms for selection of candidates so that, the quality of debates in the legislatures and over performance of elected people improve.

Judicial reforms are a felt need in the present context as thousands of cases before the Supreme Court and lakhs of cases before the High Courts are pending. Justice has been delayed and has
become costly. There is need for opening new branches of High Courts and Supreme Court for quick disposal of cases. About judicial activism the conference has expressed the view that judicial activism should not become judicial adventurism.

About the executive the conference has voiced the view that the political wing of the executive often tries to manipulate and browbeat the bureaucracy and in some cases, makes that accomplice in their misdeeds. The 'anonymous face' of the officialdom is obliterated and the apolitical bureaucracy is often politicized. Administrative delays breed corruption. Specific norms and time schedules should be prescribed for various jobs for which citizens approach officials at different levels. The conference has suggested that there should be greater decentralization of authority at various levels which will promote ethos of participatory governance and facilitate harmonious citizen-administration interface. The conference has also suggested to be conscious of their social obligations and ethical dimensions of their profession and a code of conduct is to be evolved to curb yellow journalism.

3.17 Responsibilities of Political Parties: The conference at the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya has emphasized that clean governance results from clean politics and political parties have a great responsibility to ensure this. Their primary duty is to select decent, honest and knowledgeable persons to contest elections at various levels. Political parties should give orientation and training to candidates who enter public life on the basis of reservations. A spirit
of service and adequate sense of duty has to be inculcated in the people's representatives.

Political parties must reduce the influence of money and muscle power. They must agree upon basic electoral reforms, fund raising and election expenses. They must prescribe a code of conduct for their members particularly for legislators and Panchayat Raj functionaries. There must be an end to criminalization of politics.

With the advent of coalition politics the coalescing parties must follow a code of conduct to ensure smooth and effective functioning of the government. The loopholes in the Anti-Defection Law should be removed to prevent party hopping and further splintering of political parties.

3.18 Awareness of People: Public opinion and pressure can have an impact on the functioning of the people's representatives. The conference at Mount Abu suggested that voters' councils should be formed in all the constituencies to oversee the functioning of the elected persons and to act as a check or erratic public men. Intellectuals, professional and social workers who normally shun active politics should come forward to form these voters' councils. NGOs should also lend their assistance in this task. Awareness of the people in this direction has a positive impact on good governance.
3.19 **Transparency and Accountability:** It is in the interest of administrators and politicians that their work culture, methodology and the decision making process are transparent and above suspicion.

Good governance requires accountability both at political and administrative levels. Recommendations of parliamentary and legislative committees should be made mandatory and non-observance of the suggestions and directives of other constitutional functionaries should be made punishable.

3.20 **Probity:** The Mount Abu Conference expressed the views that probity in public life adds luster to the system of governance. Rampant corruption has eroded the faith of the people in the very system of governance. Political will is necessary to achieve the objective of ensuring probity in public life. Consensus among major political parties is necessary in our democratic system.

3.21 **Protection of Freedom:** Protection of various freedoms guaranteed in the constitution is a *sine qua non* for good governance. Fundamental Rights will have meaning when a new socio-economic order is effectively created on the foundations of the Directive Principles of State Policy and the preamble as enshrined in the Constitution. There is need for creating social awareness for protection of human rights and freedoms.

Political democracy is meaningful when economic equality accompanies it. Social justice is denied to vast majority of our population and there is blatant exploitation of the poor and weaker sections. Social justice is the key to social harmony and solidarity.
India's strength lies in its diversity and secular fabric being a pluralistic society. Religious tolerance and respect for all faiths have made India great and enriched its culture and social structure. Fissiparous tendencies like regionalism, communalism, casteism and linguism tend to destroy nation's unity.

There is need for training the legislators and politicians. Lakhs of public men including Panchayat Raj institutions are involved in the governance at various levels. It is essential to chart out suitable training courses for all of them. A national institute should be set up for their training.

Review of Constitution to make it effective is necessary. The political class should demonstrate its commitment to probably in governance. The Mount Abu Conference has expressed the view that all archaic laws dating back to the colonial era should be reviewed, revoked and re-enacted with suitable amendments.

The leaders of major political parties should put their heads together and reach a consensus on vital issues confronting the nation. Consensus can be reached on such vital issues such as Women's Reservation Bill, Lok Pal Bill, Electoral Reforms Programmes, Population Control and National Defense and Security.

The All India Conference of politicians on Better Governance organized by Prajapita Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya at Mount Abu (2001) has concluded thus; "Democracy can never become a live instrument to ensure social, economic, human values. Democracy without human values is like a
human body without life. Similarly human values can only flourish in an atmosphere of freedom. The political philosophy with spiritual content of the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya is largely reflected in the views expressed at the Mount Abu Conference on Better Governance.

3.22 Social Philosophy of Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya

Introduction: Social philosophy is concerned with the study of the nature and structure of society and the interrelationship that exists between individuals within the society. Social philosophy relates to a behavioural science which deals with the behaviour and the personality of the people. It narrates that a society regulates the human behaviour. Social philosophy indicates the ultimate aim of the society and the values governing the behaviour of people in a society.

3.23 Individual and Society: Society consists of groups of people bound by mutual interests, participation in characteristic relationships, shared institutions and a common culture, society refers to a totality of social relationships among people. It relates to institutions and culture of a distinct self perpetuating group.

Individuals socialize and interact in the society under different social situations. Such interactions lead to inculcation of values and skills of the society in the individual personality. Personality is the sum total of behaviour and trends manifested in a person's attempts for social adjustments. Man's personality is not a fixed state but a dynamic totality which continuously changes due to many interactions with environment.
There is a definite linkage between individual and society. A better society is one whose individuals are men and women of sterling character with independent civic sense and a feeling for the welfare of the society. It is a society in which people do not pull in different directions, creating conflicts and leading it to disintegration, but they lead a life of harmony, unity and peace. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya's social philosophy aims at a better society which is not sick or vicious society whose people are a drag on each other and are drawn with lethargy or out at each other with hatred and violence. On the contrary it is a viable vibrant and happy society which has a high degree of personal, intellectual, social, economic, political, cultural, moral, spiritual aesthetic and environment wellbeing and development or enrichment which is based on sound and tested norms, values, traditions, conventions, customs and principles. Society is not a mere conglomeration of people, it has natural love, affinity, cultural and ideological cohesion and spirit of coexistence and cooperation and self generating, self refreshing and self energizing in-built mechanism.

3.24 Value based Society: The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya's social philosophy is focused on the establishment of value based society. Establishment of such a society involves the education and inspiring of all sections of society so as to inculcate values in them. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya emphasizes that values can not be established in a piece meal manner. All sections of the society are interlinked and so efforts have to be made
to do something for all the segments simultaneously. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya further believes that moral or human values cannot be established by mere discourses, lectures of literature. For effective teaching, moral role models are necessary. People follow those whose own conduct, character and behaviour is tested in the crucible of life situations. The seeds of morality after being sown need nurturing. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya exhorts that practice of Rajyoga Meditation is of utmost importance besides daily study of moral and spiritual truths under the guidance of an able and experienced spiritual teacher-cum-practitioner of meditation.

The social philosophy of the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya is related to developing man's potentiality for doing well. Its main thrust is on making people to have positive attitudes, emotional balance, self restraint, good behaviour, creative, intelligence and better human relations.

3.25 Reshaping the Society through Transforming Individuals

Reshaping and reconstructing of individual character forms the basis of the spiritual organization of Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya. The main problem with the present society has been the crisis of character so often called the crisis of spirit. This is the root of all our present day problems and social evils that societies all over the world in general have come to suffer from. These problems have to be overcome through soul consciousness according to the founder of Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya Shri Dada
Lekharaj. According to him we are not merely body beings but are basically spiritual beings. We are not merely human beings but are essentially human souls. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya was founded by Dada Lekharaj to awaken human consciousness from symbolic slumber of body consciousness and the horrifying nightmare of infection by accompanying vices. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya has the message of creating knowledge about the creator and the creation with the purpose of achieving.

- Soul consciousness becoming an accomplished fact in the lives of spiritual adherents.
- Souls are absolved from the bondage of vices.
- Vices are totally eliminated from the lives of seekers.
- Life ultimately becomes virtuous and
- Through an ideal way of living foundations for a superior way of life with a superior society living in complete amity and perfect prosperity.

The social philosophy of the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya has led to a programme to rejuvenate the spirit of man to re-enlighten the intellect and to sublimate the mind of the person to recreate the nature so as to reform our norms and habits and thereby to transform the individual into glorified uplifted personality from the previous fallen one. Writing about the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya (Ram Rishi Shukla) 7 has maintained, “Through this

spiritual university we have been able to create a new community of conscious souls and a new society of sisters and brothers who put celibacy in life above everything else and who are dedicated to live a vice-free life. The universal community or society of sisters and brothers through this spiritual university is working as a pre-requisite and a footing the formation of the new society through human emancipation, social reconstruction and world renewal.

3.26 Character, Moral Wellbeing and Peace: The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya gives utmost importance to character formation, moral wellbeing and peace. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya believes that corruption, the root cause of man’s social and economic evils can be eradicated only by building character. Moral education becomes indispensable for introducing values. There is no alternative to this. Steps need to be taken to impart moral education to induct moral values and character among the students and the teachers. The academic institutions should rise to the occasion. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya says- Let value-education start with moral orientation of the staff and let this be introduced as a subject in Teachers’ Training courses and let us give moral touch to such subjects as history, etc., in order that students learn to inculcate values. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya imparts education which is holistic and not fragmentary. The education it imparts though visibly spiritual in its content is a happy blend of ethics, practical psychology, metaphysics
or philosophy, the gist of world history and culture, sociology, political science, etc. Its courses include training of stress-free management in business and industry and even in day to day family and social life.

The Universal Peace Conference held in Mount Abu (Feb, 1984) adopted the 'Universal Peace Documents' which reflect the social philosophy of the Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya. It envisages a society in which there will be no class-conflict, no racism, no castecism, no wars and no disease. It will be a society in which every one will have a dignified existence in an atmosphere free of social turmoil, feudalistic bossism, monarchical curbs on individual freedom, dictatorial tyranny or democratic indecisiveness, divisionism and political confrontations. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya believes that the state of universal peace is that state of the universe in which elements and forces of nature are in perfect harmony with and lend best comfort to man and the relations of every individual with all others are characterized, unexceptionably, in born sincerity, goodness, honesty, natural cordiality, love and joy.

3.27 Social Unity, Integration and Harmony: The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya has emphasized that there are divisive trends almost everywhere. There are organized groups which indulge in violent and secessionist acts for having a separate homeland. Disorder is the order of the day. Societies are getting disintegrated, families are breaking up and individuals live under immense

insecurity. Every religion is divided into many sects and subsects. These fragmentary tendencies are based on dissensions, hatred, enmity, intolerance, lack of understanding, adjustment and cooperation. At such a critical time unity is a vital need. It can play a decisive role in setting all the problems right.

Unity is a canopy under which one's progress is smooth. Collective decision making helps solve major issues amicably. Unity provides a platform for an individual to grow to the fullest mental, spiritual and social development and above all one learns how to line together, how to bring equality in sanskars, how to perform actions in collective manners and one also learns a great deal from others experiences (B.K. Pius). Unity comprehends taking collective decisions, giving regard to all, not to underestimate the suggestions and ideas of any individual and making best use of one's inner capabilities and inner strengths.

The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya perceives that the seed of unity lies in soul conscious stage whereas body consciousness disintegrates people. Unity is automatically adopted when one practices soul consciousness. When one remains in the soul conscious stage one shall have communion with the supreme and it is extremely easy to have communion with bodily beings in a detached manner.

3.28 Unity in Its Variant Forms: Unity is found in its various forms viz., unity with the self, unity with the supreme, unity with the soul and body, unity with the family and unity in the society.

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• Unity with the self is to know the self accurately which is also the basis of all other unities.

• Unity with the supreme relates to having unbreakable communions with him. When one realizes the self the next step is to know God, the Supreme Father.

• Unity between Soul and Body: The soul is the master and it rules the body. This consciousness helps soul regain mastery over the body and its organs. The communion with God Father paves way for getting the battery of the soul recharged and the soul gets energized and gains supremacy over sense organs.

• Unity with the Family: For achieving unity in the family one has to consider the self as well as others as souls, points of light and children of one and the same father. With this consciousness true relationship of brotherhood is awakened and there is real love, understanding, unity and cooperation. It leads to perfect communication between the family members and ultimately it brings unity in the family.

• Unity in the Society: Unity in society can be achieved when individual attains unity in the form of unity discussed above. When one considers society as a bigger family; hatred and favouritism gets diminished and harmony becomes a dominating factor. Thus the basis of unity is the practice of soul consciousness and God consciousness. For achieving the state of perfect unity with the self, with the family and with the society, one has to experience soul-conscious stage. Holistic unity can be experienced through
strong faith in self and firm belief in God. The social philosophy of Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya aims at promoting emotional integration between various religions, communities and ethnic, racial, linguistic and regional groups.

3.29 Youth and Social Change: The period of youth is characterized by the spirit of adventure and the refulgence of energy, tempered by a growing sense of responsibility and maturity. Youth are the strength of a nation. The activity, the vitality, the enthusiasm, the zeal, the verve of an institution or society or nation come mainly from its youth. Youth is the human terrafirma which stands the structure of society.

The social change through youth can be brought about if the youth does not succumb to vices like corruption, indiscipline or the youth does not develop slave mentality or loose character.

Youth have to be developed to become worthy instruments of social change and creativity. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya has exhorted the youth to take up the work of paving the path of life with purity, peace, honesty, integrity, sincerity and sympathy. With these, the youth will be taking up great steps towards building a clean society. They should build up channels of communication with God and with people of different communities. If they spend some energy for building bridges of understanding and cordiality they would be working as great and worthy instruments of social change, moral transformation, economic transformation and spiritual creativity.
3.30 Responsibility of the Youth: In the vision of working for universal harmony and freedom from negativities the first responsibility of the youth would be to learn this totally new knowledge which will wash away all traces of disharmony and negativities by giving them the firm basis for self identity as souls. This identity will develop a loveful relationship among all souls as if beloved brothers. They would learn new lessons which liberate them from all forms of selfishness and distinctions of caste, class, religion, etc. and cultivate in themselves, such values as should root out corruption, nepotism, drug addiction, hatred, violence, etc. and in their place develop sense of human dignity, cooperation, etc.

The youths have the responsibility to have awareness that the nation has high hopes in them and they are not to believe those hopes. The youth have to work for creating harmony and for friendship and cooperation in constructive activities. This shall be their responsibility. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya's "Youth Wing" has built up a large strength of youth of girls and boys and conducts courses and activities for them to promote creativity, positive thinking and national solidarity.

3.31 Empowerment of Women: An empowered woman is free from enslavement, free from mental, physical or moral abuse from her family, social group or nation and she enjoys the right to develop herself to her full potential, spiritually, intellectually, socially and politically according to her choice. Misogyny (hatred of women) is traced back to the scriptures of all the religions while there is no word
of hatred for men. Men are called Purusha (beings) and women are called Prakriti (things). Women are considered as objects to be used for sexual pleasure. Violence against women assumes different forms – female foeticide and infanticide, domestic violence, denial of education to women and denial of legal rights to women, etc.

Women’s issues were addressed in India by welfare approach and later on by development approach. It was assumed that development would benefit men and women equally. However it has not occurred in the Indian context and it is constrained by patriarchal social system. There is need to change the attitude of men. The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya suggests that there is need for value orientation and purification of their attitudes and outlook. It is soul consciousness that will give self respect, feeling of human dignity and spiritual strength and strong will. Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya affirms that it is the spiritual connection of the souls with the supreme that really lends to right type of empowerment. Empowerment implies acquiring such spiritual power that lifts a person from the animalistic behaviour to the graceful level of Devi Shakti or a women who has high sense of self esteem, built on the belief that the self is a child of the supreme. Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya exhorts that meditation is the real way of empowerment of women. Spiritual and moral empowerment is the way out for women empowerment10.