

# AESTHETIC MAPPING OF VALUES: A PRACTITIONER-LED MODEL FOR INTEGRATING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

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## ABSTRACT

*This study presents a practitioner-led pedagogical approach for integrating values-based education with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the Values Ascension and Alignment Model (VAAM). Despite strong policy emphasis on values and global citizenship education, teachers often experience SDGs as abstract policy goals rather than as extensions of their professional ethics. The study therefore explores whether aesthetic mapping of values can enable teachers to internalize and align SDGs with their personal and pedagogical value systems. The research is based on a practitioner-led action research design involving over 500 in-service teachers across three Indian cities over a one-year period. Through workshops incorporating reflection, aesthetic value mapping, SDG alignment, and collaborative inquiry, teachers were invited to represent core values using colors, symbols, and visual metaphors. The researcher collected data through artefacts, pre- and post-workshop surveys, facilitator's observations, and follow-up interviews. Findings of the research indicate that teachers consistently organized values across three domains, personal, relational, and systemic. This sequencing of values recognition formed the conceptual basis of the VAAM framework. The aesthetic mapping process strengthened emotional engagement with values and significantly increased teachers' perception of alignment between their professional ethics and the SDGs. The findings of the study are twofold. First, aesthetic approaches can bridge the gap between global policy frameworks and lived classroom practice. And two, there is a way to transform SDG engagement from a duty-driven exercise into a values-driven commitment. The findings also offer a low-cost, scalable solution for integrating SDGs into teacher professional development. These findings make a significant contribution to operationalising the values-based vision of contemporary education policies such as India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.*

## KEYWORDS

*Aesthetic Pedagogy, Global Citizenship Education (GCED), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Teacher Reflection, and Values-Based Education.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a moral undertaking. Both India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and UNESCO's SDG 4.7 frameworks stress that teaching and learning must be rooted in ethics, compassion, and dedication to the environment. Values education is often confined to abstract discourse in the classroom rather than a practical enactment.

The SDGs, on the other hand, are important but are mostly considered outside goals that are not connected to the moral compass of teachers and students. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, provide a global framework for addressing interconnected challenges such as poverty, inequality, environmental sustainability, and peace (United Nations, 2015). This paper emerges

from a series of workshops for in-service teachers on the topic of "Transforming Education through Values, SDGs, and Pedagogical Innovation". What emerged was a strong, unexpected way to map values artistically by giving them colours, patterns, and emotional metaphors and then slowly connecting them with SDG goals. The study uses this unique teaching experience as a paradigm and a tool for teaching that is based on moral imagination and global responsibility.

In the Indian educational context, the challenge of values-based education lies not in the policy intent but in the classroom enactment. NEP 2020 has laid great emphasis on constitutional values, ethics, and holistic development. Teachers and school leaders, however, experience values education as an exercise in abstraction and ritualisation of announcements in the assemblies, moral science periods, or episodic celebrations. Similarly, the SDGs are referenced in curricular documents, but they are perceived as external global mandates rather than as an extension of lived ethical practice. This disjunction is further intensified by the pressure of examination, content-heavy syllabi, and limited pedagogical tools to translate moral ideals into everyday classroom experience. The Values Ascension and Alignment Model (VAAM) is situated in this gap between policy and practice. VAAM responds to this distinctly Indian implementation challenge, enabling NEP 2020's vision of values-based and experiential learning to be enacted as a lived pedagogy and not a symbolic aspiration.

This study therefore addresses the following research question:

Can aesthetic mapping of values enable teachers to internalize and align the Sustainable Development Goals with their personal and professional ethical frameworks?

## **2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

The goal of values-based education (VbE) is to help people become moral, thoughtful, and emotionally stable. "Learning: The Treasure Within" (Delors, 1996) from UNESCO stresses 'learning to be' and 'learning to live together' as two of the most important pillars of learning. Philosophical discussions on ethical education have also emphasized the role of imagination in cultivating moral understanding. Nussbaum (2010) argues that moral imagination enables individuals to perceive the humanity of others and to connect ethical principles with lived experience. In this context, aesthetic and metaphorical approaches to values education may provide meaningful pedagogical pathways for translating ethical ideals into lived classroom practice. The NEP 2020 says that constitutional and human values should be included in both curricular and co-curricular spaces. The Global Citizenship Education (GCED) gives students the tools to take an active role in solving global problems. Andreotti (2006), however, cautions of "soft" GCED that encourages charity and tolerance and the "critical" GCED that questions institutions and powers that may be. The SDG Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) expects that the society's basic principles of governance are put into reality. But we need to embrace innovative pedagogies to understand these principles.

The role of aesthetics in producing meaning and purpose in education is underrated. Research in cognitive linguistics suggests that abstract concepts are often understood through metaphor and sensory representation. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that human cognition frequently relies on embodied metaphors through which complex ideas are mapped onto sensory experiences such as colour, space, or movement. In educational contexts, such metaphorical representation can help learners internalize abstract ethical ideas by grounding them in experiential and visual forms. Vygotsky (1978) argues that imagination can be used as a cultural and developmental instrument. When students assign sensory traits like colour and pattern to abstract concepts, they use more of their emotional and cognitive capacities creating embodied knowledge. This process further con-

nects personal beliefs with social action. Active learning based on real-life situations was also the focus of the constructivism theory propounded by Piaget and Bruner.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The present research follows a practitioner-led action research design in which the researcher facilitated the professional development workshops and examined the pedagogical processes and outcomes emerging from them. Such a design is particularly suited to educational settings where the goal is to improve the current practices through planning, implementation, observation, and interpretation. Teachers engaged in value identification, aesthetic mapping, SDG alignment, and collective reflection in the workshops and the reflective cycles. The artefacts created by the participants, surveys, facilitator's observations, and follow-up interviews were the main sources of data collection.. The data collected was analysed to identify recurring patterns and pedagogical implications. The research design allowed the facilitator to capture authentic practitioner experiences while generating insights into how aesthetic value mapping can support SDG integration.

A series of workshops were conducted for the teachers as part of a school-based professional development programme. More than 500 teachers in India spread across three locations participated in the workshops. The workshop architecture included group discussion, application of visual metaphors, SDG mapping, and integrated reflection prompts. Participants were part of an invited school-based professional development programme. In the workshops teachers were asked to list the key values that are important to them, such as love, empathy, and respect. They were then invited to assign these values a colour and pattern. The prompt such as "What if 'compassion' looked purple?" were give to reflect on how these values show up in relationships, classrooms, and society. The participants reflected on values such as caring, working together, and being thankful. To make the exercise more challenging, teachers were told to come up with concerns and values such as climate justice, inclusivity, responsible citizenship, innovation, and cleanliness that are important to all inhabitants of the Earth,

### 4. PARTICIPANT SELECTION

A series of teacher professional development workshops facilitated in three major Indian cities:Delhi/NCR, Hyderabad, and Indore. More than 500 in-service teachers participated across these locations. The location offered a representation that was a mix of public and private schools and included educators across subject domains.The workshops were part of a school-invited initiative on the topic, *Transforming Education through Values, SDGs, and Pedagogical Innovation*. The selection of participants was based on their schools' willingness to participate.

#### 4.1. Workshop Design

A constructivist and reflective pedagogical approach rooted in values-based education and global citizenship frameworks was the basis of workshops design.The facilitator integrated the use of metaphor, colour, symbols, and reflective storytelling to ignite educators' value systems and connect them with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Each workshop followed a structure including self-awareness, collective inquiry, and global alignment.The following learning experiences unfolded.

1. **Value Identification and Visualisation:** Teachers identified compassion, honesty, and respect as core individual values. They assigned each core value a colour and a visual pattern.

Questions like “*What if compassion looked purple?*” to evoke sensory imagination and reflection were asked by the facilitator.

2. **Relational and Systemic Value Expansion:** Participants were put in a group discussion setting and reflected on the important values they identify in interpersonal relationships (relational) and those promoting planetary consciousness (systemic) contexts as an extension to the original set to include terms like ‘collaboration’, ‘inclusion’, ‘justice’, and ‘sustainability’.
3. **Visual Presentation:** Teachers created visual charts to represent the values using colours and symbols to convey emotional resonance.
4. **SDG Alignment:** The attention of the participants was drawn to the icons, colours, and descriptions of each of the 17 SDGs, displayed. The participants were prompted to map the core values identified with the corresponding SDGs. This created a personalised bridge between inner ethics and global goals. For example, ‘zero hunger’ immediately evoked connections with food security, responsible consumption, and empathy for the farmers.
5. **Gallery Walk and Collective Reflection:** Data collected through these charts, maps and personal evocations needed an enforcement, and hence a gallery walk of the aesthetic maps was organised to allow for peer sharing, interpretation, and insight generation.

## 4.2. Data Collection

Employing a mixed-methods approach to capture teachers’ engagement with the aesthetic mapping of values and their subsequent alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), data were collected through the following sources:

### 1. Artefacts and Workshop Outputs.

The artefacts created during the workshops, individual value maps, group charts, and SDG alignment diagrams were the primary data sources. These visual products provided insight into how teachers represented values aesthetically and how they mapped them with the global goals. Photographs of artefacts were collected for analysis not so much for the artistic fineness but for the value symbolism, serving as a vital qualitative data source, capturing how teachers internalised and expressed values through aesthetic imagination. Each artefact helped abstract ideas to be translated into a visible form. For example, hands became metaphors of care and responsibility, and hearts reflected empathy and gratitude. The luminous orbs represented innovation and shared insight. The visuals functioned as “aesthetic texts” that encoded teachers’ moral imagination, linking inner ethics with planetary consciousness. Representative examples are provided in **Annexure E**, illustrating the three emergent value domains of the Values Ascension and Alignment Model (VAAM): *personal*, *relational*, and *systemic*.

### 2. Pre- and Post-Workshop Surveys.

Data were collected using a 9-item Likert scale (5-point, Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) developed for this study. Items assessed three domains: (a) perceived alignment of values with SDGs, (b) usefulness of aesthetic mapping, and (c) pedagogical confidence and intention. Example items include ‘I can explain how my core teaching values connect with specific SDGs’ and ‘The VAAM process increased my personal engagement with SDGs.’ Internal consistency was acceptable (Alignment  $\alpha = .82$ ; Aesthetic Engagement  $\alpha = .79$ ; Confidence/Intention  $\alpha = .84$ ). The full instrument is provided in Annexure B.

### 3. Facilitator’s Journal.

The observation notes to capture non-verbal cues, the essence of group discussions, and recurring themes across workshops were maintained. The facilitator collected these notes as the group work was in progress. The collection was done to serve as contextual evidence. It helped identify patterns not visible in artefacts alone.

#### **4. Follow-Up Interviews.**

A purposive sample of teachers ( $n \approx 30$  across the three sites) participated in semi-structured follow-up interviews one month after the workshops. The interviews intended to find out whether teachers applied VAAM in their classrooms and whether perceptions of values and SDG linkages persisted beyond the experience they gained during the workshop session.

#### **5. Quantification of Patterns.**

Thematic coding, and frequencies were documented where possible (e.g., the proportion of participants who associated purple with compassion or green with equality). These simple descriptive measures provided a semi-quantitative layer of evidence, complementing the qualitative richness of artefacts and reflections.

#### **4.3. Data Analysis**

The facilitator analysed data using a combination of qualitative interpretation and descriptive statistics. The goal was to capture recurring patterns, deepening understanding, and identifying how aesthetic mapping facilitated the connection between teachers' values and the SDGs.

##### **1. Artefact and Visual Analysis.**

Individual and group value maps were reviewed systematically. Visual elements, such as colour selection, recurring patterns (swirls, spirals, interlocking rings, geometrical shapes, hands and gestures), and their associated meanings, were coded inductively. Quantitative elements of the analysis were limited to descriptive statistics. Frequency distributions and percentage comparisons were calculated for colour associations, value clustering, and pre- and post-workshop survey responses. A semi-quantitative layer of evidence was thus collected that complemented the qualitative interpretation of artefacts, reflections, and interview data. This statistical treatment was intended to support pattern recognition rather than formal hypothesis testing. (e.g., purple chosen for compassion in 68% of cases, green for equality in 54%). This semi-quantitative treatment added weight to the interpretive coding.

##### **2. Survey Data.**

Responses from pre- and post-workshop surveys were analysed in two ways. The Likert-scale items were aggregated to provide descriptive statistics on shifts in perception (e.g., the proportion of teachers agreeing that SDGs relate directly to personal values increased from 42% pre-workshop to 81% post-workshop). Similarly, the open-ended responses were coded to identify shifts in perception through language and framing. Teachers' descriptions moved from SDGs being a "policy obligation" to a "personal commitment".

##### **3. Facilitator's Note**

Observation notes were cross-referenced with artefacts and reflections to triangulate themes. The facilitator noted changes in group energy; there was hesitancy first, followed by more animated participation once the aesthetic tasks began, reinforcing the interpretation that aesthetic mapping acted as an affective catalyst.

#### 4. Follow-Up Interviews.

Interview transcripts were coded for evidence of application and retention. Several teachers reported adapting VAAM in simplified ways for their classrooms, asking students to assign colours to values such as honesty or teamwork. This personal interaction confirmed that the impact of the workshops extended beyond the immediate session, though the depth and frequency of classroom integration varied.

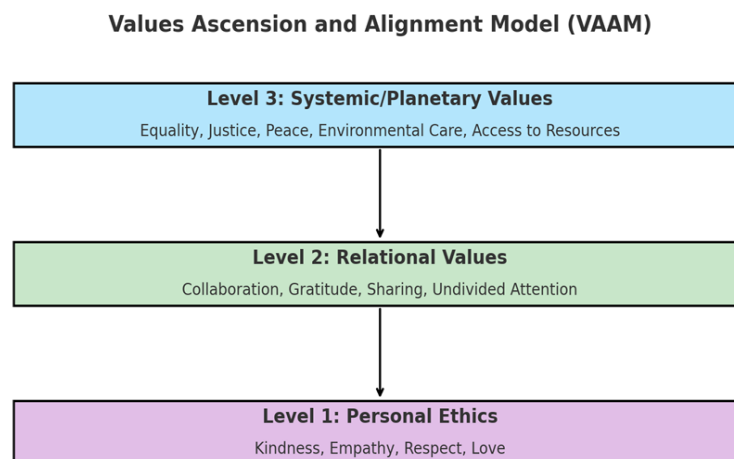
### 5. RESULTS

Three central findings emerged from the workshops, supported by artefacts, surveys, reflections, and follow-up interviews.

- ***The Values Ascension and Alignment Model (VAAM).***
- Across all workshop locations, teachers' values consistently clustered into three domains:
- *Personal values* (e.g., kindness, honesty, patience, and respect).
- *Interpersonal Values* (e.g., collaboration, attentive listening, gratitude, and fairness).
- *Systemic/Planetary Values* (e.g., equality, peace, environmental care, and dignity).

These value domains were not only articulated conceptually but were also visually represented through participants' artefacts, which functioned as "aesthetic texts" encoding moral imagination. Representative examples illustrating personal, relational, and systemic value domains are presented in Annexure E (Figures 1–3).

This categorised structure of values was not pre-specified but emerged from participant mapping. Survey data reinforced the clustering: when asked to categorise values, 74% of teachers grouped them into "self", "others", and "society/planet". The organic consistency across the artefacts and survey responses provided a strong basis for presenting VAAM as a conceptual framework. (Figure 1)



#### 1. Aesthetic Mapping Anchors Values Emotionally.

Colours and patterns assigned to values generated both engagement and memory. Frequencies indicated clear trends:

- Purple was chosen for compassion by 68% of participants.
- Green was linked with equality by 54%.
- Gold spirals were repeatedly used for dignity (41%).

Participants' artefacts expressed visual metaphors that mirror the quantitative patterns. The symbol of a 'hand' was depicted frequently by the teachers for care, responsibility, and collective action. Luminous orbs represented innovation and shared insight. Hearts, spirals, and interlocking patterns-recurring aesthetic motifs-were used to express empathy, dignity, and collaboration. Such visual metaphors served as meaning-making devices that transformed abstract ethical ideas into embodied and emotionally resonant forms.

The anecdotal notes suggested that aesthetic mapping activity transformed abstract value concepts into lived experiences. A participant observed, "Seeing compassion in a colour was helpful, as it feels more alive." Another teacher noted that, "to assign values, a shape made them easier to talk about."

## **2. Integration of Values with SDGs Changed Perceptions.**

Prior to the workshops, only 42% of teachers agreed with the statement, "*I see the SDGs as directly connected to my own teaching values.*" Post-workshop, this rose to 81%. Open-ended responses revealed that the shift happened from the "SDGs are government or UN policy" to "SDGs reflects what I already try to practice." This data revealed a significant perceptual shift.

The artefacts they produced confirmed these connections. Compassion was frequently mapped to SDG 16 (Peace & Justice), equality to SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and environmental care to SDG 13 (Climate Action). Teachers described this mapping as a process of "alignment" rather than "compliance".

Personal interviews a month after the workshops provided evidence of sustained impact. Several teachers reported that they tried simplified VAAM activities with students. For example, they assigned colours to values like honesty or teamwork and then linked them to classroom rules or broader sustainability themes. While integration varied in depth, the presence of classroom adaptation confirmed that the workshops' influence extended beyond the immediate sessions.

## **6. DISCUSSION**

That aesthetic mapping can transform how teachers perceive and engage with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was amply evidenced. The findings carry significance for theory and practice.

### **6.1. VAAM as a Conceptual Framework.**

The layering of values into personal, interpersonal, and systemic domains emerged consistently across artefacts and was reinforced by survey responses, where nearly three-quarters of teachers independently grouped their values along the same dimensions, suggesting that VAAM is not a facilitator-imposed schema but a naturally occurring pattern of value organisation. Such a triadic structure echoes developmental psychology frameworks such as Bronfenbrenner's ecological

model while also resonating with moral education literature that emphasises self, community, and society as interconnected domains proposed by Lovat and Toomey.

In this sense, VAAM can be understood not only as a workshop methodology but also as a conceptual model of ethical cognition, illustrating how teachers move from personal moral awareness to relational responsibility and ultimately to systemic or planetary consciousness aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

## **6.2. Aesthetic Mapping as Pedagogical Anchor.**

The use of colour and pattern strengthened teachers' engagement. The frequency with which these patterns were used clearly highlighted associations such as compassion with purple, equality with green, and dignity with gold, providing sensory clues that made values memorable. This pattern is in line with Dewey's notion of aesthetic experience as meaning-making and with Eisner's argument that the arts provide forms of cognition otherwise unavailable through purely discursive modes. Teachers' reflections confirmed this, describing values as "alive", "visible", and "easier to talk about". In short, the arts-based approach converted abstraction into embodied cognition and moral imagination.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors structure how individuals conceptualise abstract ideas by linking them with sensory experience. Teachers demonstrated it by associating colours and patterns and meaning-making. Similarly, Nussbaum (2010) highlights the role of imagination in expanding ethical understanding and empathy. The aesthetic mapping process observed in this study enabled teachers to connect personal values with broader social and planetary responsibilities represented by the SDGs.

## **6.3. Reframing SDGs from Obligation to Resonance.**

A significant outcome was the perceptual shift captured in the surveys. Participants' agreement with the statement "*I see the SDGs as directly connected to my own teaching values*" from pre-post-workshop nearly doubled. The VAAM helped reframe SDGs from being perceived as external directives to being understood as extensions of personal and professional ethics. Teachers commented that SDGs no longer look like a "policy burden", and it now looks like "what I already try to practise".

Several teachers during the interviews reported adapting VAAM activities for their classrooms in simplified forms. The fact that teachers attempted to carry the method forward indicates both retention and applicability. This sustained engagement makes VAAM a longer-term professional development model that can potentially influence classroom practice at scale.

## **6.4. Positioning Within the Literature.**

The findings of the study make a significant contribution to the existing debates on values-based education and global citizenship education. UNESCO's GCED framework links local realities with global responsibilities. This, however, has been critiqued for remaining too abstract by Andreotti, 2006. VAAM addresses this by grounding global goals in teachers' personal values and providing an aesthetic method for alignment. Similarly, Oxfam's global citizenship guides and ESD competency models lack methods for emotional or aesthetic anchoring, though they emphasise awareness, skills, and participation.

## **6.5. Civilisational Resonance: VAAM and the Panchakosha Framework**

The triadic structure of values that emerged in this study—personal, relational, and systemic—also shows an interesting resonance with classical Indian philosophical frameworks. The *Taittiriya Upanishad* describes human development through the Panchakosha model, which conceptualises the individual as comprising five concentric layers: Annamaya (physical), Pranamaya (vital energy), Manomaya (mental-emotional), Vijnanamaya (wisdom), and Anandamaya (blissful or universal consciousness).

The empirical patterns observed in the workshops reflected the spirit of the Values Ascension and Alignment Model (VAAM). Teachers recognised that personal values such as honesty, patience, and compassion correspond to the reflective and emotional domain aligning with the *Manomaya Kosha of five sheaths described in Panchkosha*. These values then extended to relational ethics such as collaboration, attentive listening, fairness, and discriminative wisdom associated with *Vijnanamaya Kosha*. Participants elevated their conceptual imagination and connected these values to planetary concerns such as sustainability, justice, and global responsibility, which parallels the expansive ethical consciousness associated with *Anandamaya Kosha*.

The aesthetic mapping process itself may be interpreted as activating the intermediate layers of experience. The use of colour, pattern, and metaphor engages affective and sensory dimensions of learning—akin to the energising function of *Pranamaya Kosha*—while the subsequent translation of these values into classroom practice anchors them within the lived and material domain comparable to *Annamaya Kosha*.

The associations of the layers of values with the layers of *Panchakosh* do not imply that the concept of VAAM emerges as a direct application of the Panchakosha doctrine. Rather, it suggests that contemporary pedagogical innovations grounded in teacher experience may naturally align with deeper Indian philosophical insights about human development. Such a dialogue between practitioner research and civilisational knowledge systems opens new possibilities for culturally rooted approaches to global citizenship education.

## 6.6. Implications for Policy and Practice.

India's NEP 2020 emphasises holistic and experiential learning. VAAM provides an actionable pathway to implement it. The approach is a low-cost, replicable method for embedding values into professional development. In this model teachers perceive values and SDGs as meaningful rather than imposed. Moreover, the aesthetic dimension may appeal to diverse learners, including those who struggle with abstract or policy-driven frameworks.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

1. *VAAM's Efficacy*: Findings of this study enable teachers to meaningfully integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into their professional practice. First, the emergence of three value domains, personal, relational, and systemic, indicates that teachers naturally organise their ethical commitments in layered ways. This pattern provides a conceptual bridge between inner values and global frameworks. Second, the process of assigning colours and patterns to values functioned as a pedagogical anchor. Frequencies across artefacts showed strong trends (e.g., compassion as purple, and equality as green), and teachers' reflections confirmed that such aesthetic forms made abstract concepts emotionally resonant and easier to recall. Third, personal interviews a month later demonstrated that some teachers had begun experimenting with simplified VAAM activities in classrooms, providing clear evidence of transfer and sustainability. The results of the study answer the research question affirma-

tively that aesthetic mapping of values can indeed help teachers internalise and align SDGs with their own moral frameworks, moving the discourse from compliance to resonance.

2. *Limited Scope*: The workshops were conducted over a relatively short duration, and therefore they captured only the early patterns of engagement rather than long-term pedagogical transformation. The study relied primarily on teachers' self-reported reflections, surveys, and interviews, which may introduce elements of self-report bias in interpreting shifts in perception and intention. In addition, the research design did not include a control group, as the workshops were conducted as part of practitioner-led professional development rather than a controlled experimental intervention. The participating teachers were largely drawn from urban and semi-urban school contexts across three cities, which limits the representation of rural educational settings. Future studies may benefit from longitudinal designs, broader geographic participation, and comparative approaches to examine the long-term impact of aesthetic value mapping on classroom practice and student learning.
3. *Aesthetic Pedagogy*: The study demonstrates that when teachers are invited to imagine values in aesthetic terms, the SDGs become less of a distant policy framework and more of a personal-professional commitment. This shift from external obligation to internal resonance has important implications for professional development, curriculum design, and global citizenship education. In that sense this study makes a significant contribution to aesthetic pedagogy by offering both a conceptual model and a practical method.
4. *Policy perspective*: The findings suggest that VAAM can be embedded within existing in-service teacher professional development programmes as a scalable, low-cost module for operationalising NEP 2020's emphasis on values-based and experiential learning without requiring additional infrastructure or curricular overload.

Future research exploring the potential for a digital/AI-enhanced VAAM is recommended to be carried out in two phases.

- Phase I (Immediate): Use the established aesthetic data to create an online, interactive visualisation tool. This would allow teachers globally to use the aesthetic mapping process digitally and instantly compare their value-to-colour-to-SDG alignment with the corpus of the Indian teacher data.
- Phase II: Evaluative research to test the VAAM in different cultural and national contexts (e.g., Southeast Asia, Africa, Europe). Specifically, research on how cultural, linguistic, and climatic differences affect the choice of aesthetic metaphors for universal values (e.g., does "sustainability" map to "green" universally, or does it shift based on local environmental concerns?) can be carried out.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The author extends sincere gratitude to GEMS Education India and the teachers from schools in Delhi/NCR, Hyderabad, and Indore for their participation and thoughtful contributions.

## **Ethical Considerations**

Participation in the reflective exercises, surveys, and follow-up interviews was voluntary. No personal identifiers were collected, and the data used in the study were analysed in aggregated form to protect participants' anonymity. The purpose of the research was explained to participants, and

the artefacts and reflections generated during the workshops were used solely for academic analysis and research reporting.

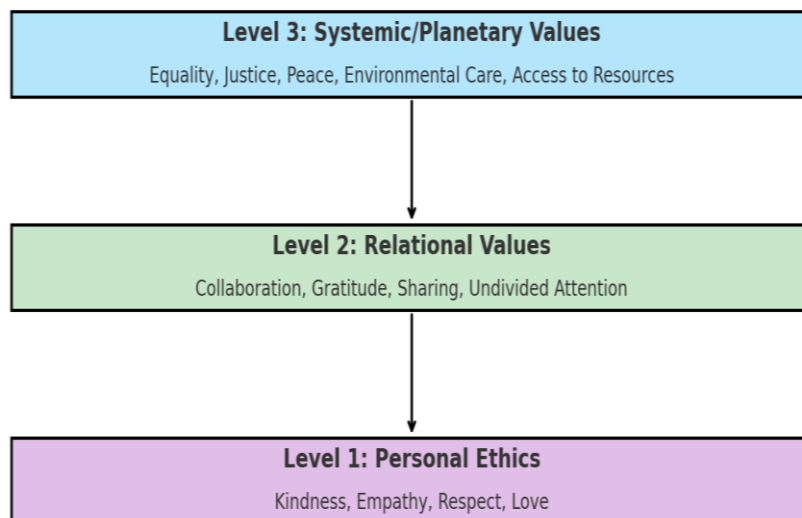
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### Annexure A: The Values Ascension and Alignment Model (VAAM)

The Values Ascension and Alignment Model (VAAM) gives teachers a three-level framework to think about essential human values, show them in a way that looks good, and gradually link them with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It starts with figuring out your own morals, then continues on to your values in relationships, and then to your values for the whole system or planet. The concept connects moral imagination with global responsibility by giving each value a colour and design and putting them on SDG icons. The VAAM approach helps teachers connect with their students on an emotional level and use SDGs in meaningful ways in the classroom every day. It is both a way to think about things and a way to teach students how to connect their values to their aims.

#### Values Ascension and Alignment Model (VAAM)



## Annexure B. Values-SDGs Mapping

Value	Assigned Colour	Suggested Pattern	Aligned SDG Goal	SDG Icon Description
Compassion	Purple	Soft swirl	Goal 16: Peace & Justice	Dove, balanced scales
Collaboration	Green	Interlocking rings	Goal 17: Partnerships	Linked circles or shaking hands
Equality	Blue	Horizontal lines	Goal 5: Gender Equality	Gender symbol, equal sign
Environmental Care	Teal	Leaf motif	Goal 13: Climate Action	Leaf, Earth, rising arrow
Dignity	Gold	Upright spiral	Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities	Equal sign, ascending bars

## Annexure C.

### Questions for Reflection after the Workshop

As a teacher, what are the three most important things to you? What would these values look like if they had a colour and a pattern?

- How can you put these beliefs into practice in your classroom?
- Can you remember a time when one of these ideals was put to the test?
- What did you do? Which of the SDG targets is most in line with your basic beliefs? Why?
- How could expressing values through colours or patterns improve pupils' perception of lived values?

## Annexure D.




### An overview of the session structure

- Welcome and Getting Started (15 minutes): Putting things in context: values, SDGs, and imagination
- Thinking on your core values (20 minutes): Silent thinking and sharing about personal beliefs in pairs
- Aesthetic value mapping (30 minutes): Giving values colours and patterns; sketching or making symbols
- Values Ascension Exercise (30 minutes): Discussion and chart making about personal, relational, and systemic values
- An Introduction to the SDGs (20 minutes): A visual guide to 17 goals and the colours and icons that go with them.
- Values to SDG (30 minutes): Mapping and aligning personal values with the SDGs through group work
- Sharing and Thinking (15 minutes): Gallery stroll, sharing by participants, and final thoughts

## Annexure E

Representative artefacts produced by participants captured the emotional and symbolic dimensions of value visualisation. Three samples are presented here (Figures 1–3) to illustrate the emergence of the Values Ascension and Alignment Model (VAAM) through aesthetic expression.

Then you can caption and reference the visuals as follows:

Figure	Title	Illustrative Interpretation (1–2 lines for caption)
<b>Fig. 1.</b> <i>Earth Held in Hands</i>	Represents <i>systemic values</i> , planetary stewardship and ecological responsibility aligned with <b>SDG 13: Climate Action</b> .	
<b>Fig. 2.</b> <i>Heart of Compassion</i>	Symbolises <i>personal values</i> , love, empathy, and gratitude linked with <b>SDG 16: Peace and Justice</b> .	
<b>Fig. 3.</b> <i>Illuminated Dialogue</i>	Expresses <i>relational values</i> , collaboration, innovation, and shared understanding resonant with <b>SDG 17: Partnerships for Goals</b> .	

## AUTHOR

**Ashok Pandey** is a distinguished educationist with over three decades of experience in school leadership, educational policy, and teacher development. As an advisor to GEMS Education, India, he is leading the institution’s efforts in high-quality research.