

The value of the work of SCVP Jain School as described by community leaders in UK and in Kenya

Deepa Doshi, Shree Sthanakvasi Jain Sangh, Nairobi, Chair:

SCVP has had a profound impact on the understanding and practice of Jainism in Kenya, especially amongst children and the youth. When SCVP commenced in Kenya the only Jain religion classes available for children were at the Derasar in the form of Pathshala with the emphasis being primarily on following rituals without any understanding on the reasons for the rituals. As a child I remember my mother asking me to attend the Pathshala classes at the derasar. After attending one class I refused to go again. Nothing my mother said could change my mind!

I am glad to say that my daughter's path has been different: The introduction of SCVP classes in Nairobi and Thika has given children an opportunity to learn about Jainism in a fun way with the meaning behind the prayers, sutras and rituals performed. The interest created in children about basic Jain values led them to discuss these principles with their parents. Many parents felt that they didn't know enough to answer their children's inquisitive questions. Following many requests to start classes for adults, SCVP now offer adult classes in Gujarati and English. SCVP also carry out Pratikraman with meaning in English during Paryushan and this has renewed the interest in Jain Festivals.

Gurus of good child development tell us that for the holistic growth of a child, parents need to focus on the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual growth of a child. The current education system provides coaching for physical and mental growth and some emotional growth as well. However, spiritual growth is often lacking in children of today. SCVP provides a firm foundation in the spiritual growth of a child such that when they are adults they will have a sound set of values to guide them in their day to day living. Values such as compassion and non violence will be deeply embedded in them from a very young age.

As Shree Sthanakvasi Jain Sangh, Nairobi we have also received great support from the teachers of SCVP during Paryushan for leading the Pratikraman in English with meaning and giving discourses in English for our youth. We are truly grateful to SCVP for the work they are doing in Kenya. Congratulations to the SCVP team and keep up the good work!



Mahesh Shah (Religious Chair) of Oshwal Association UK (OAUK) North West:

OAUK North West (NW) were privileged to have SCVP deliver two key programmes for us during last Paryushan i.e. Pratikraman in English & Paryushan for Kids (P4K). It is very crucial to pass on the knowledge in a format and language that our young people who are the future can grasp, and that's what the SCVP are skilled in delivering. We greatly appreciate SCVP team for delivering such a wonderful P4K workshop where we had over 70 children participating in the workshop.

It was a first time for OAUK NW to have the English pratikraman for all 8 days, delivered by the SCVP team. This proved to be a great success with very good attendance averaging 150 with highest being 270 for the last day. Lots of positive feedback was received from the attendees.

We pray for the success of the SCVP team in imparting the Jain knowledge to our next generation.

Bhupendra Shah, Board of Advisors Chair, Navnat Vanik Association of the UK:

SCVP is best organised and efficient in promoting Jain values in United Kingdom. The dedicated voluntary service of its teachers and trustees is commendable. Its services are much needed by the community and have helped many children, youths and elderly parents to understand and practice the principles of Jainism. We wish further success to SCVP and recommend full support from all Jains.

Anjali Varaiya, Young Jains, Nairobi, Chair:

21 years and going strong....

Under the guidance of Acharya Shri Chandanaji and the sadhvijis of Veeryatan, Shri Chandana Vidyapeeth Nairobi was established in the year 1997.

It was one of the first institutions to provide structural course in Jainism in Kenya. It is successfully running for two decades. The current registered students' (adult and children) is 250, with over 300 who have graduated and more than a 1000 who have benefited from the classes that run in Gujarati and English for both children between the age of four and a half years to 16 years and for adults.

In the era of "Why, what and where" it is very important that all traditions and practices are communicated and explained in the most practical manner and I believe SCVP is doing complete justice.

The voluntary teachers are giving their selfless services to ensure that the message of Lord Mahavir and the principles of Jainism are well explained to the students via various fun, artistic and captivating mediums. I still remember most of the lessons taught to me almost 18 years back when I was attending the classes at SCVP, and these are the lessons that have guided me in various stages of life.

The modern approach has encouraged many to explore and understand the meaning and importance of our festivals, rituals and most importantly believe in the message of Lord Mahavir and Jainism at large. This I believe plays a vital role in shaping the life of our youth at a very tender age and will act as a support system in their future as the teachings will play the role of a "GPS" in their walk of life.

SCVP is also a platform whereby individuals are given an opportunity to discover their talents and build confidence, thus it is not only a school for spiritual growth but also personal growth.

I take this opportunity to thank the committee members, teachers, students, parents and donors for their invaluable support. To the rest – I urge and warmly welcome all to attend and benefit from the various classes.

Dr Mehoolbhai Sanghrajka, Director and Trustee of the Institute of Jainology:

I was part of the group that founded the SCVP School in the mid 1990s. At that time the school was unique in that it was the first to offer a Jain curriculum in contemporary English using modern day examples.

The children benefited greatly in learning this ancient faith using modern, western education techniques. The Jain community has benefitted too by having a generation that has grown up practicing Jain values and having a compassionate outlook on life.

It is very important that SCVP continues to provide such important learnings to coming generations and to continue to practice Jainism in a modern way that engages young people and teaches them our important faith.

We at the IOJ wish SCVP every success in this endeavour.