

WAR IS IN MINDS OF MEN: ROLE OF PEACE EDUCATION

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Abstract

Today's man is living in the age of violence. Every day, thousands of people are dying in armed as well as in non-armed violence. Everybody is in search of peace. Peace is a state of human mind. Nobody can be trained for peaceful life. It is an inner characterization of mental process. Conflicts reside in human mind and in the absence of conflicting thoughts, peace appears. When it appears inside, it also blossoms outside. Therefore, education is only a way to teach and reach to peace by nourishing the human minds in positive directions. Peace education as being the soul essence of whole human education that can create the shield for human survival on the planet. It is through peace education that men can be trained for tolerance, caring, cooperation and justice and ultimately the peace can be installed in human mind as an antidote to 'War is in the minds of men'. Peace education is a doorway towards a violence free world.

Keywords: Peace, Peace Education, Violence, Nonviolence



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CONCEPT OF PEACE AND PEACE EDUCATION

Wikipedia defines peace as a state of harmony characterized by the lack of violent conflict and the freedom from fear of violence. Commonly understood as the absence of hostility, peace also suggests the existence of healthy or newly healed relationships, prosperity in matters of social or economic welfare, the establishment of equality, and a working political order that serves the true interests of all.

As being a state of mind, everyone can experience peace for oneself. It is question of feeling and experiencing it. It represents whatever good there is in life. In the words of **Panda (2013)**, "Peace is the ultimate, absolute, everlasting and most desirable thing for any human being."

According to **Jane Addams**, "Peace is a dynamic social process and it also a great scope for use the need for society". No doubt, we are living in the era where whole world is going to be a global village, where people are getting closer to each other but we have not drawn closer in hearts. Peace depends upon non-violence, ethics, solidarity and mutual understanding. Peace is not just the absence of war and conflict. It is somewhat more than

that. Simply transferring the world's nuclear weapons to a museum cannot create a peaceful world. The nuclear weapons of mind must be removed first.

Peace education may be taken as a process by which individuals can be fostered with all those values and attitudes which are necessary to live in harmony with one self as well with the outer world. Peace education is a participatory holistic process that includes teaching for and about democracy and human rights, nonviolence, social and economic justice, gender equality, environmental sustainability, disarmament, traditional peace practices, international law, and human security (**Hague Appeal for Peace Global Campaign for Peace Education**). It further pointed out that, *"A culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems, have the skills to resolve conflicts and struggle for justice non-violently, live by international standards of human rights and equity, appreciate cultural diversity, and respect the Earth and each other. Such learning can only be achieved with systematic education for peace"*.

According to United Nations-Peace education has developed as a means to achieve these goals. It is education that is directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom.

According to **UNICEF**, *"Peace education is an essential component of quality basic education and it is the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of human beings"*.

Ian Harris and Gohn Synott has described peace education as a series of "teaching encounters" that draw from people:

- their desire for peace
- nonviolent alternatives for managing conflict, and
- Skills for critical analysis of structural arrangements that produce and legitimize injustice and in equality.

James Page suggests peace education be thought of as *"encouraging a commitment to peace as a settled disposition and enhancing the confidence of the individual as an individual agent of peace as informing the student on the consequences of war and social injustice : as informing the student on the value of peaceful and just social structures and working to uphold or develop such social structures-as encouraging the student to have the world to imagine a peaceful future and as caring for the student and encouraging the student to care for others"*.

As the whole world is in a state of conflicts, it may be in form of armed conflicts as well as non-armed conflicts; every nation across the globe is in struggle to find out the ways for peace. Since the early decades of 20th century, Peace Education Programmes around the world have represented a spectrum of focal themes. Anti-nuclearism, international understanding, environmental responsibility, communication skills, non-violence, conflict resolution techniques, democracy, human rights awareness, tolerance of diversity, coexistence and gender equality are some of highlighting and most discussing programmes for peace education. NCERT of the Govt. of India calls it education for peace and aims at having it replace value education in Indian school education system.

RATIONALE OF PEACE EDUCATION

As our time is demanding, peace education has become imperative to achieve the targets of non-violent environment around us. If we wish for a safer planet for our upcoming generations then we must have to learn to live in harmony with our physical and non-physical environments.

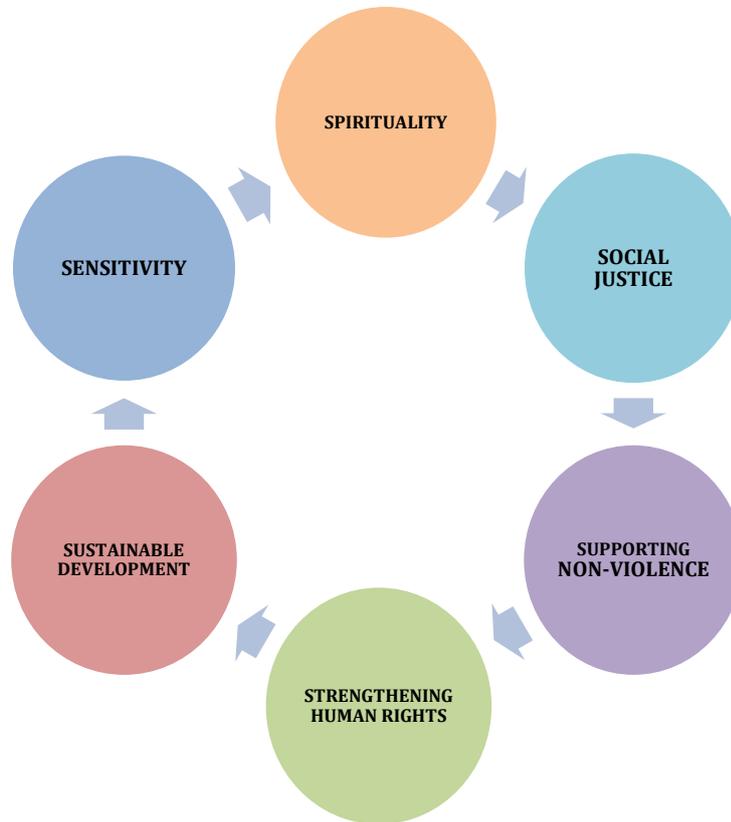
Art. 29 of the convention on the **Rights of the child (1989)** states: “..... *the education of the child shall be directed to.....the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes and friendship among all people*”.

The UNICEF ‘Anti-War-Agenda’, set out in the state of the world’s children 1996, asserts: “*Disputes may be inevitable, but violence is not. To prevent continued cycles of conflict, education must seek to promote peace and tolerance, not fuel hatred and suspicion*”.

Therefore, peace education is important in today’s global economy. It is essential because it provides culturally rich inputs to every learner that alone generate respect for everyone (human as well as non-human beings). Social cohesion, respect for traditions, cultures, beliefs and practices is only possible through peace education. Peace education is a remedial measure to protect children from falling into the ways of violence in society. It aims at the total development of the child. It tries to inculcate higher human and social values in the mind of the child. In essence, it attempts to develop a set of behavioural skills necessary for peaceful living and peace building from which the whole of humanity will benefit.

PEACE EDUCATION WITH 'SIX S' AND CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

As recommended by a handbook on 'Integrating Peace Education in Teacher Education: A Teaching Guide' (Commission on Higher Education- Govt. of Philippines), a 'Six S' framework is taken as a roadmap towards peaceful global environment.



Sources: Commission on Higher Education (Govt. of Philippines)-2013

- ❖ **Spirituality** : For cultivating inner peace
- ❖ **Social Justice**: For living with compassion and justice
- ❖ **Supporting Nonviolence**: For dismantling the culture of war
- ❖ **Strengthening Human Rights**: For promoting human rights and responsibilities
- ❖ **Sustainable Development**: For living in harmony with the earth
- ❖ **Sensitivity**: For intercultural respect, reconciliation and solidarity

Peace education need not be taught as an independent subject. It can be integrated in the regular school subject. Also, various extramural activities can form part of a well-designed experiential curriculum as follows:

Peace Education Curriculum Framework



Peace Education Through Curricular Approach	Peace Education Through Co-curricular Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social Studies ➤ Science ➤ Home science ➤ Mathematics ➤ Language ➤ Art ➤ Music ➤ Computers ➤ Vocational Subjects ➤ Psychology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Extramural activities during assembly, lean periods, or Saturdays in form of ➤ Special Lectures ➤ Games ➤ Celebration of national and international days ➤ Film shows ➤ Discourses and debates ➤ Presentation of related project/reports/seminars/exhibition ➤ Community campaigns ➤ Club activities

In a peace education programme, the sumum bonum is to develop an individual grow into a peaceful person. UNESCO’s World Heritage in Young Hands: An Educational Resource Kit for Teachers (1998) provides a complete section on Culture of Peace and approaches the problem from the angle of World Heritage. The culture of Peace through World Heritage specifies the following objectives under the categories of knowledge, attitudes and skills:

Knowledge

To help students develop knowledge and understanding of:

- World Heritage sites as a testimony of peace, human rights and democracy,
- The ethical message of UNESCO and the world Heritage Convention,
- The importance of racial non-discrimination, tolerance and respect for all people and their cultures.

Attitudes

To encourage students to:

- Respect other people and their cultures, and motivate them to search for peaceful conflict resolution in their lives,
- Cooperate in the spirit of solidarity in support of World Heritage conservation.

Skills

To help students develop their ability to:

- Work together as a group (teamwork),
- Resolve conflicts peacefully among themselves and help others learn about peaceful conflict resolution,
- Participate democratically in political and civil life,
- Contribute to UNESCO's World Heritage conservation efforts. It provides coverage to the sites that symbolize peace
- The Waterton Glacier International Peace Park – situated on the border between Canada and United States of America
- The Hiroshima Peace Memorial, Japan
- Old City of Dubrovnik, Croatia.

Except integrating the peace education with curricular and co-curricular activities, a number of educational initiatives have areas of overlap with peace education, and with each other. These include children's rights/ human rights education, gender training, life skills education, and psychosocial rehabilitation. Each can be thought of as providing another lens or perspective through which to examine how peace can be mainstreamed in basic education.

CONCLUSION

Peace education is essential for human survival. It is needed for individual, national and global peace. In the world of physical and structural violence, peace education has to be compatible with the idea of peace which excludes direct and structural violence both. It is a

state of mind. This is beautifully expressed in the Preamble to the UNESCO Constitution: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defense of peace must be constructed".

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