

EDUCATION: PEACE & HARMONY

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ABSTRACT

Education is synonymous with peace and harmony. Without them education does not have any sense. Education plays a very significant role in promotion of peace and harmony. A well educated person knows what behavior is expected of him by the society as a good human being. A real education apparently teaches a person to realize the difference between good and bad. The spirit of education is to promote and champion good causes. In this way education becomes a means to achieve the objectives. This results in the form of peace and harmony. Democracy is in a way dependent on peace and harmony and these are dependent on education. It won't be an exaggeration to mention that those countries which have got the real peace, both internal and external, harmony, both at the individual level and at the level of nature have the bright chance of being a really developed country. The more the world is peaceful and harmonious, the more the world will be educated in the real sense. Peace and harmony are rooted in education and vice versa.

KEYWORDS: Peace, Harmony, Education, Democracy.

INTRODUCTION

Mankind can survive only when there are peace and harmony in the world. Peace and war, harmony and disharmony lie in the mind of a person. Education plays a decisive role in molding the mind. Nobody can underestimate the importance of education. The more a person realizes the importance of peace, the more he tends to become peace and harmony oriented through the education.

Educated people are able to see if the government is doing things that are detrimental to the country, are immoral, or even illegal. Then they can exercise preventive measures. The citizens have the rights to speech but only well-educated persons can exercise this right properly.

'Peace cannot be achieved by force, it can only be achieved by understanding.' [1] The ability of the well educated people to have a voice in the running of the State, in the economy, health, education, infrastructural development, etc creates a bit-balanced environment for governance to thrive; this can only be achieved in a democratic government. Broadly speaking, the most developed and richest countries generally have well educated people. It is not in strict sense of the context we are discussing. But it is a fact that well-meaning and well educated persons have contributed a lot for peace and harmony. The UNESCO came into being 'to contribute to the building of peace' [2] and it was thanks to education only.

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The mutual survival of mankind is based on education. Education has sustained the mankind ever since evolution in civilization gave rise to organized structures in society. However, personal and sectarian motives have dominated over the democratic concerns and a quick erosion of democratic and social values has at times become rampant to such an extent that the future of mankind becomes a question mark. Despite all these things, education is normally considered to be an answer to the war, disharmony and destruction to ensure global peace, harmony and development and thus the survival of mankind. Education can foster fundamental and human values and can generate a 'caring and compassionate consciousness'. As long as in 1972, the UNESCO document "Learning to Be" mentioned that the 'aim of development is complete fulfillment of the man in all the richness of personality, complexity, forms of expression and various commitments' [3] 'Learning: The Treasure Within' (UNESCO, 1996) suggests two of the four pillars of learning as 'Learning to be' and 'Learning to live together'. 'Learning to be' hints at tapping through education 'the depth of our psyche ...to behave as responsible and creative citizens' (Karan Singh, 2000).

The educated society made sincere efforts to ensure peace and harmony through the world body like UNO. Some of the tangible results were the 'United Nations Charter' of 1945, the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights' of 1948, and the 'United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child' of 1959. These charters recognize the linguistic, cultural, religious and ethnic pluralism as a fact of life (Starkey'1992). Indeed as per as the international conventions on human rights, teachers are attending a number of tasks related to dignity, living with others, race or gender equity, enhancing opportunities for those with special needs and peace for mankind etc.

Education has witnessed important milestones in the post independence era of India. In the post independent India various committees and commissions have been constituted to revive interest and attitudes towards peace and harmony with an effort to democratize education. The memorandum on the Post War Educational Development (Sergent Committee Report, 1944) realized some religious and cultural bias in curriculum. The Religious Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of the C.A.B.E, 1945 has also said 'spiritual and moral teaching common to all religions should be an integral part of the curriculum.' [4] The really educated persons such as Mahatma Gandhi, Madan Mohan Malviya and other national prominent leaders have stressed the values such as Peace, Harmony, Non-violence, Truth, Love, Right conduct etc. The Kothari Commission (1964-66) has reiterated the rationale of 'democratic values in education system' [5]. Among a number of values stressed are the ideals of peace, harmony, truth, and compassion exemplified by spiritual leaders and prophets such as Saint Kabir, Guru Nanak, Lord Buddha, Mahavir, and others. The Commission has made important recommendations for the blending of science and technology for peace, harmony and development of mankind.

The common core of the National Policy of Education has been envisaged to be promoted through the subject areas with stress on peace and harmony through democracy, secularism, egalitarianism, equality of sexes, protection of environment etc. The instances of special concerns related to education have been obvious in a number of recent UN activities like announcing the UN Manifesto 2000 for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence, UNESCO prize for Children and Young People's Literature in the service of Tolerance, UNESCO-APNIEVE (2001) efforts at preparing training material for teacher educators in values, UNICEF (UNESCO supported) 'Living Values : An Educational Programme' (1999), etc. UNESCO Principal Regional Office,

Bangkok (1992) published 'Education for Affective Development: A Guidebook on Programmes and Practices.' The NCERT, New Delhi has established a National Resource Centre in Value Education (NRCVE) that is catering to value education needs of the country using multi pronged strategies to promote peace and harmony.

VALUES FOR PEACE & HARMONY

Education is the breeding ground for value system. Values of a human being are the virtues that guide us to take into account the human element for peace and harmony when one interacts with other human beings in any democracy. They are the many positive dispositions that create bonds of humanity between people and thus have value for building peace among all of us as human beings. It's both what we expect others to do to us and what we aim to give to other human beings ("Do unto the other what you wish for yourself"). These human values have the effect of bonding, comforting, reassuring and procuring serenity for building peace, harmony and development in any democracy. They are the foundation for any viable life within society: they build space for a drive, a movement towards one another, which leads to peace and harmony in any society. Human values thus defined are universal: they are shared by all human beings, whatever their religion, their nationality, their culture, their personal history. By nature, they induce consideration for others and thus they build peace in any democracy.

VALUES FOR PEACE & HARMONY

The following values are very essential for inculcation of peace and harmony through education: brotherhood, friendship, empathy, compassion, love, openness, listening, welcoming, acceptance, recognition, appreciation, honesty, fairness, loyalty, sharing, solidarity, civility, respect, consideration etc.

Respect is one of the most important human values for establishing relations of peace and harmony and yet it remains elusive. Its understanding varies according to age (child, teen, adult), to one's education and surrounding culture. It is better understood when combined with other values: a disposition that is deeper than civility, very close to consideration.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR PEACE & HARMONY

In school, children are members of a small society that exerts a tremendous influence on their moral development. Teachers serve as role model to students in school; they play a major role in inculcating their ethical behavior. Peers at school diffuse boldness about cheating, lying, stealing, and consideration for others. Though there are rules and regulations, the educational institutions infuse the value education to the children in an informal way. They play a major role in developing ethical behavior in children, leading them to believe in peace and harmony.

APPRECIATION: The teacher should appreciate the children for developing pro-social behavior, especially for any specific action they have done to help others

EMULATION: The educationists are the role model to the children outside their family. When the children see the model showing concern for others, motivating them for their good deeds and cooperating and helpful with their academic issues, the children learn them by observing and imitate it with fellow peers.

ASSISTANCE: The children should be taught by emphasizing the idea through many activities, stories and tales, which will encourage them to engage in more helping behaviors. The rights of every human being are safeguarded now a days and 'the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' [6] have details on this issue.

RESPONSIBILITY: They should be encouraged to be responsible for their own actions and should learn to respect and treat others kindly.

INDIAN PRINCIPLES TOWARDS PEACE & HARMONY

In India the five human values of '*Sathya, Dharma, Santi, Prema* and *Ahims*'[7] can be compared to the five life principles of man, viz., *Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana* and *Samana*. A true human being is one who practices the five human values. He is really educated. He can be the true follower of the dictum, 'Education that liberates.' (Sa Vidyeyavimuktye). When we lose any of the five human values this amounts to compromising human values. If we do not speak the truth, we lose one of our life principles. Truth is our *Atma*. So, till we breathe our last, we should uphold truth. The culture of Bharat teaches, *Sathyam Vada Dharmam Chara* (Speak truth and follow righteousness). These values are the same for one and all. People all over the world are praying for peace and harmony. They can be achieved through the practice of *Sathya* and *Dharma*. *Sathya* and *Dharma* can result in peace (*Santhi*) and harmony and they are possible through education. Education mentally prepares a child to inculcate these values in their personality.

PEACE EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

Peace scholar Kevin Kester writes that, 'The inclusion of youth in peace building initiatives brings vibrancy and creativity to peace building efforts. Believing that youth offer creative energy and active potential for the transformation of violent conflict in the world -- and believing that education is a space for nurturing cultures of peace or cultures of war -- peace educators maintain that practitioners have a responsibility to dialogue with youth on knowledge, values, skills, and behaviors conducive to fostering global harmony and social justice. Peace is described as the absence of physical and structural violence,

and the presence of justice; therefore, students should explore the root causes of conflict, know international humanitarian and human rights laws, envision alternative structures of security, and learn skills for managing micro/macro conflict without violence.' [8] In this regard Vijaya Laxami Pandit has rightly expressed the view thus, "The more we sweat in peace, the less we bleed in war". [9]

ROLE OF EDUCATIONISTS IN PEACE & HARMONY

In ancient India the great rishis and saints were the educationists. They propounded the theory that the whole world was your family. The family is the dearest thing for any human being and when he treats the whole world as his family, it goes without saying that there he will ensure peace and harmony as much as possible on his part. In the west, peace education as a practice in schools is attributed to Maria Montessori, John Dewey and Paulo Freire, though earlier thought on education for peace is traced back to Erasmus and Socrates, among other scholars. Montessori worked to foster peace on three inter-related levels: the individual, community, and globe. The individual level relates to person-centered awareness of the self (i.e. body, mind, emotions, and spirit), whereas the community level refers to interpersonal relations (i.e. trust, openness, and interdependence), and the global level concerns cultural and environmental consciousness (Montessori 1949). Dewey informed peace education through his work on the relationship between education and democracy, stating that one role of education is to foster active citizenship through the participation in processes of democracy (Dewey 1916). Freire (1970) centered education on revealing systems of oppression, particularly through the exploration of language and identity and by challenging the banking-model of teaching and learning. All three educators sought to create

education that was learner-centered and autonomous.

This concept of classroom education represents social outcomes relevant to democratic political systems. Again borrowing extensively from peace scholar Kevin Kester, he argues that 'autonomous learning relates to individual and national autonomy and democratic classroom participation models active citizenship in a democracy. Peace education is also found philosophically in the work of authors (e.g. Tolstoy, Thoreau), social thinkers (e.g. Mead, Foucault, Adams), social learning scholars (e.g. Bandura and Walters) and activists (e.g. Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Aung San Syuu Kyi). In practice, peace education is problem-posing education that attempts to build in every person the universal values and behaviors on which a culture of peace is predicated, including the development of non-violent conflict resolution skills and a commitment to working together to realize a shared and preferred future.

Many scholars in the field address violence and the war system as the core problematic inhibiting peace and seek to propose viable solutions to violence in all its manifestations (e.g. social, economic, political, environmental, spiritual, and ethical). Violence might be defined as "avoidable, intentional harm, inflicted for a purpose or perceived advantage of the perpetrator or of those who, while not direct perpetrators, are, however, advantaged by the harm"[10](Reardon 2001, 35). Education for peace raises dialogue on critical issues at the heart of the community in order to transform oppressive systems from a violent orientation toward a culture of peace. Thus, through education for peace educators and students critically discuss manifestations of, and justifications for, violence, identify the actors involved and propose peaceful futures (Boulding 1988, Hicks 1994).'

In a way educationists tries to stress the significance of peace and that is also known as

Peace education. This includes the cultivation of peace building skills (e.g. dialogue, mediation, artistic endeavors). Peace educators, then, teach the values of respect, understanding, and nonviolence, present skills for analyzing international conflict, educate for alternative security systems, and use a pedagogy that is democratic and participatory. 'Peace is not merely a distant goal we seek but a means by which we arrive at a goal.'[11] Educationists are very active to prevent the miserable eventuality. The Learning to Abolish War emphasizes four strands of learning: root causes of conflict, international law, conflict management and global disarmament. The conceptual framework of this model places violence at the core of cultures of war, and non-violence and international understanding at the center of cultures of peace.

This framework is particularly concerned with the role of international law in maintaining global justice, the construction of peace building mechanisms, and the formation of personal lifestyles and behaviors conducive to fostering a culture of peace. In this framework education for peace is education for the abolition of war. This education relies on an exploration of what constitutes peace, dialogue at the intersection of identity and violence, and a process of re-defining human security in terms of needs and social welfare in place of national security, the armaments industry and militarism. Peace education through this framework seeks to foster a commitment among educators to educate for non-violence and generate active citizenship among learners

Besides, the conceptual frameworks outlined above, there are a number of normative frameworks (i.e. international standards) that serve as the basis for developing peace education programs. One such normative framework is the *Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights, and Democracy* (1995). The *Declaration and*

Integrated Framework suggests “basic guidelines which could be translated into strategies, policies and plans of action at the institutional and national levels according to the conditions of the different communities”[12]. The guidelines stress that:

- Teaching should be with an international approach.
- There should be teaching about forms of conflict, their causes and effects.
- There should be teaching about democracy and civic participation.
- There should be teaching about development, de-colonization and globalization
- The histories of nations and States should be taught.
- There should be teaching about the United Nations and international institutions
- Human rights and international standards (e.g. Constitutions, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) should be taught.

GLOBAL INITIATIVES FOR PEACE & HARMONY

In the modern era, educators have been striving hard to cultivate a culture of peace for several decades. The United Nations, as facilitator, has promoted this dialogue. The UN General Assembly passed the *Declaration and Integrated Framework of Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy*(1995), *Declaration on a Culture of Peace* (1998), and declared the year 2000 as the ‘International Year for a Culture of Peace’ and 2001-2010 as the ‘UN International Decade on Education for Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World.’ The 1995 and 1998 resolutions articulate necessary components of education for peace and a culture of peace, respectively. Each includes education on knowledge, values, skills, and behaviors that support peaceful societies and unpacks thinking that supports the war system (Fig.1). Furthermore, the UN implemented peace education into its educational bodies (i.e. UNESCO, UNITAR, UNU, and UPEACE) to serve as a model for mainstreaming peace education into organizations and agencies.

Table 1. Toward a Culture of Peace

From a Culture of War	Toward A Culture of Peace
Straight male domination	Gender equity and equality
Having an enemy, dualism, dichotomy	Tolerance, solidarity, and international understanding
Authoritarian governance	Democratic participation
Secrecy	Transparency, free flow of information
Armament	Disarmament
Exploitation of people	Human Rights
Exploitation of nature	Sustainable Development
Power based on force	Power based on mutual agreements

(Source: Kester 2010) [13]

Besides, the *Declaration and Integrated Framework of Education for Peace* (1995) underlines the fact that education for peace and harmony must be trans-disciplinary and included in all learning spaces. Education for peace should not be limited to a single classroom or subject. Yet, the institution or space in which education for peace operates should be in harmony with

the goals and lessons of peace education and peace education should be integrated into all learning spaces. That is the learning space should foster intercultural and international dialogue and respect, knowledge of national and global systems of governance, respect for all life, and a commitment to non-violence. Authoritarian and exclusive learning spaces work counter to the

cooperative and inclusive goals of peace education.

VARIOUS MODELS FOR PEACE

Again borrowing extensively from Kevin Kester, the International Institute on Peace Education (IIPE), under the directorship of Betty Reardon, has been leading education for peace through a model of community learning since 1982. Every year IIPE brings together international educators to discourse on current themes related to peace, violence and the war system. IIPE has 3 goals: to develop peace education through identifying new and challenging themes, to form new institutional alliances among NGOs, universities, and agencies, and to generate regional cooperation toward transforming society (Jenkins 2007). Peace education communities foster peace through dialogical exploration of critical contemporary issues, sharing best teaching practices, and brainstorming methods for individuals and education to respond to the critical issues at hand. The program considers violence through the lens of education and the political systems in which conflict plays out. IIPE begins with the Freirean philosophy that all community members are at once teacher and student. This horizontal and dialogical process of community learning and shared responsibility among learners forms a learning community that both represents peace education and participation in a democracy.

Kevin Kester continues that through dialogical community learning, participants learn with and from each other toward political action possibilities to address the social issues under study in order to transform institutions of violence (Jenkins 2008). In 2002, the United Nations University for Peace (UPEACE), through consultation with leading international peace educators, including Reardon, began formulating a framework and strategy for offering a master's degree program in peace education. The culminating document from the consultation (Jenkins 2002) designed the master's degree

program around eight organizing principles: peace education as ' 1) comprehensive in scope, 2) holistic in organization, 3) values-laden, 4) inquiry-based, 5) conceptually designed, 6) practiced with learner-centered pedagogy, 7) intended to develop peacemaking skills, and 8) as intentionally-directed learning.' [14] The eight principles of peace education underscore a holistic and comprehensive model of peace education. Students at UPEACE interact with concepts of peace through exploration of the values, beliefs and worldviews present among cultures of the diverse student body. This approach to peace education embodies a symbiotic relationship between education for peace and multicultural education; for, both multicultural education and peace education aim to raise global awareness, respect for all life and a re-humanization of the "Other."

In multicultural learning communities learners deconstruct their previously held prejudices and beliefs about others and formulate models for greater cooperation in the future. The pedagogy used in peace education is cooperative, participatory and active, including case-studies, storytelling, role-plays, empathy activities, negotiation and mediation practice, journaling, reflection circles, and alternative futures exercises. The learning objective of peace education aims to transform conflict through dialogue and nonviolence, and particularly where peace education affects youth conflict is transformed across generations.

CONCLUSION

As much as education is spreading, it is generating the awareness about peace and harmony. Earlierman held that war was indispensable for peace. He geared himself for struggle, conflict, war etc. He did not have any positive agenda. But education has enabled him to contemplate that the permanent state of conflict and war deprive him to enjoy life. He has started to realize the significance of family,

society. In a way he is realizing the significance of co-existence. Then he is made to contemplate the problems from a different angle thanks to education at the broader level. Now education is making him think about the big society. The country, the world or the mankind are covered under the society to an educated person. The concept of society is expanding. Democracy is always based on peace and harmony. In the democracy every country man has a role to play directly or indirectly to elect a democratic government. Education is making him realize that this system is conducive for peace and harmony. It is a right move in the right direction that the concept of the world parliament, the world common language, the world uniform code of conduct etc is being heard more often than ever before. This is all because of education only. In brief, education widens the mental horizon of a person that ensures peace and harmony.

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