



शोध भूमि

शिक्षा एवं शिक्षण शास्त्र विषय की पूर्व समीक्षित शोध पत्रिका

Peace Education: An Oxygen for Breathing Society

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Abstract

Peace has remained a core element of Indian society from time immemorial. Hence our forefathers have envisioned the eternal concept of "VasudhaivKutubmkam". It means the entire earth must be our family and we must live in harmony with everyone, every creature, and even our nature. Our gurukulas were the storehouse for peace-building and spreading the philosophy of being virtuous and harmonious. However, in a global scenario, the term 'peace education' comes only after the Second World War to resolve the conflict, violence, and issues among nations. The world is facing constant tension, violence and war among its countries. Hence it is a global call to include education for peace throughout the educational system to make our globe a better, peaceful, harmonious and joyous place to live. Such type of education will act like Pran Vayu (oxygen) for a society that has become lifeless. The present article will deal with the conceptual understanding of peace education, factors responsible for conflicts, remedies for conflict resolution and strategies to introduce peace pedagogy in the educational system to make society breathe.

Keywords- *peace education, conflict, conflict resolution, harmony and peace pedagogy*

Introduction- Bharat has remained a path bearer to the entire world when it comes to the viewpoint of peace-making and peace-building. With the inception of our society, our forefathers have stated that the whole earth must be the native place of every individual so that each of us remains in harmony with Mother Earth and each other.

This view has automatically solved the problem of erosion of our natural resources and eventually, we were in a state of absolute sustainability. In addition, another prominent characteristic of the ancient era was the concept of *Ramrajya*, which meant the formation of an ideal society where each one must have equal benefits of justice, resources and profits. Ours is a peaceful nation and has always taught everyone lessons of peace. Even in modern Bharat, many thinkers like Gandhi, Aurobindo, Vivekananda & Tagore have followed a path of ahimsa, peace, justice and universal brotherhood and have shown this way of living to the world. However in the contemporary world, the concept of 'peace' was introduced quite late in the 1950s, when the world witnessed the terror of two world wars. Then it has been a matter of discussion in the academic fraternity that there must be an inclusion of peace, and peace-making strategies through formal, informal or non-formal means of education to combat issues of conflict, tensions and violence in our family, community and society. The concept of peace has witnessed a paradigm shift in understanding and meaning. Earlier, the absence of war and conflict has been stated as the concept of peace (negative peace) but later it became more progressive and its connotation has the meaning of being peaceful and in harmony with one another (positive peace) in addition to the absence of conflicts. Notable peace thinker, Johan Galtung has evolved this concept of negative and positive peace in the literature. This shift is similar to the evolution of positive psychology from the concept of psychology to the mere absence of psychological disorders to being mentally balanced, satisfied and happy. But these discussions will remain on paper and policies and nothing has worked. Even today, the situation of society is far from satisfactory or we can say that it has become even worse with each passing day in a so-called 21st century new technologically advanced society, where we call ourselves modern and advanced. Globally, the world is witnessing wars or warlike situations like never before among many polaroids like Russia-Ukraine, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, U.S.-China tensions, India-Pakistan tension etc. Every day newspapers are flooded with news of rampant violence, fanaticism, unrest, strikes, corruption charges and the same. This indicates it is high time now, that 'peace' must be the core component of each programme, course and discipline from a very early age of education in a fully-proof concrete manner. As Maria Montessori rightly said, "Preventing war is the work of politicians, establishing peace is the work of educationists".

Need for peace education- No doubt, this is a technology-laden world today, which is highly advanced technically, we have done miracles in every field including the integration of AI in education, business, entertainment, communication, commerce, defense and many more. But on the other hand, gradually this world became a restless and vulnerable place to live. Hence it is a global call to embrace education for peace in addition to all the technological amendments required in our instructional strategies. Each individual must imbibe the concept of peace internally to create harmonious relationships with his/her classmates, family members, neighbours, community members and the whole society. Peace is an internal concept. One has to remain

peaceful with oneself first to be peaceful with others. The idea of peace must be intermingled with society as a “peace culture” through the invisible or visible acts of parents, guardians, teachers, community members and leaders. Then only students can imbibe it unconsciously through socialization by any means of education. But it is not as easy as it looks. It requires an overhauling of our educational system so that it can produce students that have different traits, thinking patterns, behaviour, morality, spirituality, rationality and the like, one can say each dimension of their personality must be groomed in the alignment of peace at its core. How can we achieve this herculean task? Firstly, we must look at the factors that can cause conflict. These are the main barriers to the attainment of peace by individuals.

Conflict and its causes- Conflicts in society are as natural as their other characteristics. We must accept that conflict is and will remain inevitable in society. Nature has made each one of us different in our way. There are racial, societal, political, and cultural differences among individuals. Unequal distribution of power, resources and wealth has paved the way for conflicts. Those who remained in power exploited the less powerful by all means. The result is a conflict between haves and have-nots. Many sociologists, educationists and political activists, have understood this condition and have suggested ways to make an equitable society like Marx and Freire. But we must accept another fact too, that conflict is inevitable but violence is not. There may be conflicts but they cannot and must not be ended in violent acts. Conflicts are necessarily resolved through mutual talks and negotiations by teachers, and this philosophy must be reflected in their instructional strategies, in every discipline in each class and at each level of education. As educators, we must know strategies for conflict resolution like good communication, negotiation, tolerance, accepting differences overcoming gender stereotypes, understanding, sensitiveness, kindness, sense of fraternity, love for the nation, working for a bigger and nobler cause, empathy, healthy competition, mediation, conciliation, cooperation, accommodation and collaboration, among the students. These must be practised and disseminated in the educational atmosphere of institutions, in classrooms and beyond it.

International initiatives- After the Second World War (1939-45) there was a felt need for inculcation of peace culture in the society via means of institutions in general and by education in particular. In this regard, many international bodies have been established with peace as their core element. Some of them are:

- **Establishment of UNO (1945)** - Devastated countries of the world have established this body to establish peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet, i.e., earth. Its objectives were to maintain international peace and promote friendly relations among nations, human rights, international cooperation and social progress.
- **Establishment of UNICEF (1946)** - It was established originally to help and protect children throughout the world whose lives have been severely affected

by the terror of war. Initially, it was called as United Nations International Children Emergency Fund, to date, it has intact its name and works for the betterment of children, their education and security.

- **Declaration of UDHR (1948)** - Peace can only be established whenever there is no violation of rights. The most comprehensive document worldwide regarding the protection of human rights is the UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) and it was accepted by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948. In 2023, UDHR turns 75 and has been celebrated throughout the world. This document has affected many treaties, documents and declarations for humans positively. This document stated that all humans must have access to freedom, justice, education and many such equitable actions on this ground only that they are humans. No one can deny these rights to them. All human rights are universal and interdependent. It is needless to say the maintenance of equal rights to everyone is the foundation stone for the establishment of peace in society.
- **Recommendation on Education for International Understanding, Peace, Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom (1974)** - This document was formulated by UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization) in 1974 as guidelines for all stages and forms of education. Its main principles were such that education must be loaded with the intent of UDHR, Article 26 which states that Education shall be directed to the full development of the personality and the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Later this document has also included the concept of global citizenship and sustainability/sustainable development in itself to cater to the global needs.
- **Action plan for education for peace, human rights and democracy (1994)**- Based on 1974 recommendations, UNESCO adopted an integrated action plan for all levels of education throughout the world to transform the education system in such a way that education must cultivate respect for cultural diversity, value-oriented and focused on culture of peace, human rights and democracy. Such education must include the resolution of conflicts through non-violent acts and the concept of global citizenship so that students can accept the value system of every nation and expand his/her level of tolerance.
- **Delor's report (1996)** - This report has been published under the title of "*Treasure Within*" and it is the report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century. This beautiful document has been written in the backdrop to cope with the challenges of the 21st century. It has advocated four pillars of education, which are- learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together. Learning to live together has a direct linkage with learning of peace-making and peace-

building. In this sort of learning, learners must learn the ways of conflict resolution with the spirit of mutual understanding, peace and harmony.

National concerns- Bharat has remained an admirer of peace from time immemorial. Hence our guiding principles for modern India have reflected values for peace-making in our preamble like sovereignty, socialism, democracy, justice, liberty, equality, fraternity, the dignity of the individual and last but not least unity and integrity of the nation. It has meant that all functions of the society must follow these principles in their governance. Here we are concerned with the educational system only. Values enshrined in our preamble are eternal and can make any society peaceful, justifiable, prosperous, harmonious and equitable. Mahatma Gandhi was most noticeable person in this world who has advocated for non-violence and peace. To disseminate his teachings various peace studies program have been established in the country and abroad. But the actual problem lies in non- implementation of these principles. Our policymakers and educationists have recommended many suggestions to be incorporated into the curriculum and its execution from time to time regarding the establishment of a culture of peace. As it is the responsibility of NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) to make curricula for school education. The national curriculum framework for school education has suggested changes and modifications in sync with the requirements of society from time to time to NCERT. One such document is NCFSE 2005.

- **NCFSE (National Curriculum Framework for School Education) 2005 on peace education-**The NCF 2005 in its position paper on education for peace has proposed, “Education for peace is education for life, and not merely training for a livelihood. Equipping individuals’ with the values, skills and attitudes they need to be wholesome person who live in harmony with others and a responsible citizens is the goal of education for peace. Moral education and value education are subsumed in education for peace. Education for peace involves greater effort and orientation than the concept of peace education. In peace education, peace is a subject in the syllabus but education for peace demands peace at the core of all educational principles and functions. Hence NCF 2005 goes for, education for peace in its position paper
- **NEP 2020 on the establishment of peace-** NEP 2020 has its roots in integrating IKS (Indian Knowledge System or Bharatiya Gyan Parampra) with the contemporary education system. Its motto is to rejuvenate our eternal values to attain sustainability in each aspect and peace. NEP has emphasised that the education system must connect with our ancestral roots, students must feel proud in accepting our traditions, and simultaneously we must march towards advancement with modern technology. This policy emphasises social justice, equity and cohesion and value-based experiential education. When NEP talks about multiculturalism, teaching in local languages, global citizenship,

acceptance of cultural diversity, equitable education, and measures of inclusivity (special provisions for disadvantaged sections like learning disabled, minorities and girls) then actually, it recommends the formation of a culture of peace by accepting the differences peacefully in society through educational measures.

Conclusion- It is evident that society is on the verge of explosion. Individuals have the least tolerance for other's values, customs, rituals and traditions. There are rampant issues of hatred, injustice, exploitation and subordination. It must be the responsibility of the education system, policymakers, educationists and teachers to transform the society in a better, peaceful and harmonious way. We all know education can bring social change and teachers are the actual social change agents. The key here is to embrace peace education and in a broader way education for peace to transform students into better human beings who have the inner strength to deal with conflicts in positive manner and be calm and peaceful with themselves and others. Several international and national resolutions and policies have issued key recommendations from time to time to acquire peace pedagogy for curriculum transactions at all levels of education. As teachers and guardians, we must follow these guidelines and become better human beings first, because peace is no such thing that can be taught it can be grasped by the students only by following the character and integrity of their elders in the society. If this happens, society will breathe fully and become a far better place to live.

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