Peace Education and its integration in curriculum: A need of the hour

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Abstract
Peace has always been one of the basic needs of human beings and yet it has been so elusive. Despite phenomenal progress in every domain of individual and collective life, man has not been able to find lasting peace, with him and with others around the globe. With the invention of weapons of mass destruction and relentless arms race amid hovering conflicts among groups and states, the need for peace and peace education has increased manifold. There is a high level of violence in the world today, both physical and structural. We thus need tools and techniques to respond to this phenomenon. With increasing levels of violence and conflict there is also an increasing demand of maintaining peace in the world and education is the best medium which can save the humanity from mass destruction. So, peace education is an essential component, the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether an intrapersonal, intergroup, national or international level. Thus, the present paper discusses some of the issues pertaining to peace education, importance of peace education for maintaining world peace, integration of peace education in the curriculum.

Key words- Peace Education, Integration, Curriculum

“An un-conducive environment can never encourage any worthwhile development. Wars, riots and all types of violent situations can cause untold hardship, separation and death of members of families in many communities and nations. In this 21st Century, all round the world people are seeking for peace. Peace is needed for development, for better living condition, and for better lying of foundation of things for the future generation.” Apebende (2010)

INTRODUCTION

Peace has always been one of the basic needs of human beings and yet it has been so elusive. Despite phenomenal progress in every domain of individual and collective life, man has not been able to find lasting peace, with him and with others around the globe. With the invention of weapons of mass destruction and relentless arms race
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Peace education encompasses the key concepts of education and peace. As education is a process of systematic institutionalized transmission of knowledge and skills, as well as of basic values and norms that are accepted in a certain society where as Peace is a term that refers to an absence of hostility, safety in matters of social or economic welfare, the acknowledgment of equality and fairness in political relationships. Peace is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence and justice.

Accordingly peace education could be defined as an interdisciplinary area of education whose goal is institutionalized and non institutionalized teaching about peace and for peace. Peace education aims to help student acquire skills for non violent conflict resolution and to reinforce these skills for active and responsible action in the society for the promotion of the values of peace.

**IMPORTANCE OF PEACE EDUCATION**

Martin Luther King, Junior had the perception that one day we must come to see that peace is not merely a distance goal we seek, but that is a means by which we arrive at that goal. We must pursue peaceful ends through peaceful means. True peace is not merely the absence of tension, but is the presence of Justice.

Therefore unlike the concept of Conflict resolution, which can be considered to be retroactive- trying to solve a conflict after it has already occurred. Peace education has a more proactive approach. Its aim is to prevent a conflict in advance or rather to educate individuals and a society for peaceful existence on the basis of nonviolence, tolerance, equality, respect for differences and social justice.

The understanding of the concept of peace has changed throughout history, and so has its role and importance in the educational system from the very beginnings of the institutionalized socialization of the children, when discussing the evolution of peace education, however there have been a few important points in history that defined its aims and actions. The end of World War
I brought about powerful support for the need of International Cooperation and understanding and helped instill a desire to include these ideas in educational system. The League of Nations and a number of nongovernmental organizations worked together on the ideas, especially through the International Institutions of Intellectual Cooperation, an organization that was the predecessor of the UNESCO. Moreover the World War II ended with millions of victims and the frightening of use of atomic weapons against Japan, at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. After the World War II, the cold war also necessities the importance of peace and thus arise the need on stopping the threat of nuclear war, halting the arm race and encouraging disarmament.

Across the World, Peace education programs are gaining popularity as States, International agencies and civil society Organizations increasingly recognize the importance of such education.

Learning to make a living is not the sole reason for getting education there is another, equally important by product: Learning to make a life, a life that is beneficial, useful and peaceful. After all humans are social animals, their success in life is largely a matter of successful social relations. Quite evidently student age is the crucially important period which enriches one’s personal life, nurtures social adjustment, fosters friendship and understanding and affects one’s whole life pattern. Seen from this perspective, one could very well understand the critical necessity of teaching students, youths and young leaders the art of living together in mutual respect, justice, love and peace.

With in the field of Peace education, therefore, one can find a variety of issues, ranging from violence in schools to international security and cooperation, from the conflict between the developed world and the question of human rights to the teaching of sustainable development and environment protection.

Peace education plays an important role in conflict resolution by teaching student how to take creative approaches to the conflict resolution. Thus, students’ gains knowledge and skills that encourage personal growth and development contribute to self esteem and respect of others and develop competence for a non violent approach to future conflict situations.

India is a secular country. This factor has a lot of implications on the unity of the country. Moreover the crisis between school children and school authority is rampant while political crises disrupt progress in all ramifications almost at all times. More over the common occurrences of terrorism, communism, and regionalism also adds to the peace of Indians. There is no doubt that there is a problem of peace in India. The need for solutions to the numerous problems that cause disturbances in India is, therefore, evident. Peace should be conceived as something common to all. Several efforts have been made towards making peace a reality in India. The National Policy on Education (1986), NCFTE (2005) also
highlighted the importance of Peace Education and its integration in the education system.

**PEACE EDUCATION AND ITS INTEGRATION IN CURRICULUM**

“If we are to teach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we should have to begin with the children.” *Mahatma Gandhi*

The objectives of peace education, according to, UNESCO (1981) are summarized as:

“Combining learning, training, information and action, international education should further the appropriate intellectual and emotional development of individual. It should develop a sense of social responsibility and of solidarity with less privileged groups and should lead to observance of the principles of quality in everyday conduct. It should also help develop qualities, aptitudes, and abilities which enable the individual to acquire a critical understanding of problems at the national and the international levels, to work in a group; to accept and participate in free discussion; and to base value judgments and decisions on a national analysis of relevant facts and factors.”

From the very beginning of the development of system, there has been discussion about whether Peace Education should be added as a separate program in the schools, or if the principles of Peace education should be achieved through other social subjects. The variety of approaches and attitudes on what peace education actually is leads to the introduction of a series of titles, such as multicultural training, education for democracy and human rights and education for development. Many in the field however believe that the implementation of principles of Peace Education into the institutionalized educational system is a better approach, especially with in the subjects encompassing the cultural heritage of the dominant society and the groups belonging to it.

Peace Education could be inseminated into the students using the existing subjects in the school curriculum. Subjects, such as History, Social Studies, Geography and Philosophy are relevant in this case. In History, students are made to understand the past and present happenings in their communities and use the knowledge to better their future. History would make students appreciate the factors that make for national unity and global understanding. The contributions made towards lasting solutions to peace problems studied in History cannot be exaggerated. Social studies is meant to transmit a body of knowledge, skill and values that aim at developing effective broad-minded patriotic citizen that will have as objective national integration, promotion of national unity and progress. It is also a very good area of specialization that impacts the values of Peace Education. It is a subject that teaches learners the development of an understanding of their immediate surroundings. It also makes students develop skills which will enable them deal with and
manage the forces of the world in which they live.
Social Studies would make learners learn how to live harmoniously in a society where many different groups co-exist. Students learn topics such as socialization, conflicts, co-operation, heroes, heroines, ethnic diversities, human rights and emergent problems in the society. Social studies is supposed to instill in learners the acts of discipline, tolerance and such acts that would encourage peaceful co-existence of people in the society.
Mainstreaming peace education across the curriculum implies the use of peace-prone instructional methods and strategies. These are methods and strategies that promote interactive learning processes and they include cooperative group work, peer teaching, problem-solving, discussion, role plays, mediation, consensus building, negotiations, simulation and other learner-centered instructional strategies. Apart from promoting participatory, cooperative and problem-solving abilities in learners, each of these instructional strategies is experiential based. These participatory instructional methods are used in the teaching of topics whose learning aims relate to knowledge, attitude and skills of peace education. Also when students participate in these types of learning strategies, they listen to one another and this develops in them respect for differences.

With regards to instructional materials, care is to be taken to ensure that instructional materials presented to learners are of such nature and condition that can promote participatory learning. Above all, instructional materials for implementing peace education curriculum should not present any biased information or message that may be derogatory to any person or group.

Another means for delivering peace education instruction in formal education is through the hidden curriculum and this can also be implemented using the integrative learning approach. The peace education hidden or the “incidental” curriculum embraces all activities out of class that promote the application of peace behavior. The formal education curriculum is always planned and implemented within the continuum of hidden curriculum which is unplanned, inherent and subtle. Elements of this hidden curriculum are being taught all the time. Experience has shown that what is learnt in the open curriculum is often forgotten immediately after examination while what is learnt in the hidden curriculum lasts a lifetime. Therefore there is need to ensure that the hidden curriculum presents to learners what the school wants them to learn or that the hidden curriculum complements the open curriculum. How do teachers in the school respond to students’ problems? How do teachers relate to one another in the school? How does the school administration resolve conflicts? Is there an atmosphere of a culture of peace in that institution? Answers to these questions indicate the content of the hidden curriculum presented to learners in that school. For learners to acquire knowledge, attitude, values and skills of peace and non-violent reactions to
conflict situations, effort must be made to ensure that what is presented to learners in the hidden curriculum does not contradict what is presented to them in the open curriculum.

**Ways to Integrate Peace Education.**
Let us now explore the possibilities of integrating peace education in the subject contents in schools and teacher education programs. By integrating peace education in the subjects in teacher education programs will serve as a demonstration that integration in the subject is possible and it is more effective.

UNESCO Handbook on Peace Education provides an excellent material on integrating peace education into School/Training Programs which is as under.

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<th>Teacher Training Programs</th>
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<td>• Mathematics</td>
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<td>Extramural activities during assembly.</td>
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<td>• Special lectures in assembly or otherwise – may be once a month</td>
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EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

It is in this regard that the following recommendations are made towards making Peace Education functional in school programs.

1. Orientation courses should be compulsory for teachers and emphasis should be laid on the teaching of values of peace.
2. Teachers need to be trained before they are allowed to practice in schools. The training should reach the university teaching staff, as it is the base where reconstruction of ideas along the line is most viable.
3. Curriculum planners should suggest ways and manners, which subject teachers should use to achieve their class goals.
4. Teachers should be well recognized. This would allow them the chance of performing their duties diligently and satisfactorily.
5. Schools should be well equipped. It is then that proper teaching could take place.
6. Education should be well funded so that student unrest would be reduced to the minimum.
7. Symposia, conferences, debates, seminars, talks and displays of instances of war and outcomes of peace should be encouraged in the field as the existing teachers will be saddled with the role.

Conclusion

Peace education is not a part of the formal course work. There would be no examination and certification. Its foundation is conviction, understanding and appreciating its need in the individual, community, national and global life. Further, peace education need not to be imparted as a separate subject in the timetable but it is to be taught via the existing subjects such as Geography, History, Government, Civics and Social Studies, it would not only relief curriculum planners of the problem of duplication of school subjects and concepts in the curriculum, it would also bring about an economy of teaching staff. It therefore means that subject associations in these areas should find a way of including peace components in their curricular. Rather, it can be the creation of dimensions across the curriculum, like a concern that may be explored in different ways with any age group and any subject. To make it effective and compulsory it is the business of everyone in the system to integrate it in our
curriculum and there is also a need to redesign and rejuvenate our curriculum with peace education.

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