



TEACHER EDUCATION IN PROMOTING PEACE AND HARMONY AMONG THE PEOPLE FOR A BETTER AND HAPPY LIVING

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Abstract

Education is the best weapon for peace.

Maria Montessori

Teachers play an important role in creating a world where peace, equality, diversity, and unity prevail. The teacher should develop qualities such as tolerance, respect and appreciation of others, being fair and open-minded, and being able and willing to consider other points of view looking beyond his or her own self-interest. Peace and harmony is high wisdom. It is the height of wisdom that determines the breadth of vision, the depth of exploration, the extent of progress and the limit of transcendence. None of the current major religions and major cultural traditions of the world does not love peace or pursue harmony. History shows that all the thoughts that are against peace and harmony are against the will of the people and shall perish by themselves. In other words, the teacher must be sincerely attempting to be free of prejudice. Peace Education is teaching the information, attitudes, values, and behavioral competencies needed to resolve conflicts without violence and to build and maintain mutually beneficial, harmonious relationships. Teacher educators are trained in handling student aggression, and to promote honesty, compassion and harmony, under the training for Peace Education to promote life skills among students. The Peace Education is now a part of the teacher-training programme of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), which formulates school curricula and teacher training programmes in

India. Today many training programmes in Peace Education are being conducted all over the country by the NCERT and other institutes. The paper discusses the role of teacher education in promoting Peace and harmony among the people for a better and happy living.

Key Words: Peace Education, Teachers Education, Harmonious.

Introduction

Education breeds confidence. Confidence breeds hope. Hope breeds peace.

Confucius

Education is the key to uniting nations, bringing human beings closely together. In many parts of the world, civil society suffers because of situations of violent conflicts and war. It is important to recognize the crucial role of teacher education in contributing to building a culture of peace and condemning instances in which education is undermined in order to attack democracy and tolerance. It is education that enables man to harness nature and utilize her resources for the well-being and improvement of his life. The key for the betterment and completeness of modern living is education. Today if the world is inclined to seek a long term means to build and promote peace on this planet earth, we have to opt for education and ultimately we should go for teachers as they will contribute by performing their role in building and promoting culture of peace among children / students and in their institutional environment that will further extend peace to the community, society, nation and lastly to the world.

Need for Peace Education

Today global peace has become a major concern. There is a general restlessness in the entire world which is leading to widespread violence. Empathy for others, democratic living, secular values have been relegated to the background. In their place fundamentalism and terrorism have taken control of the world. Educational process seems to have lost track of the original purpose of bringing out the best in each individual. Under these circumstances, there is a great need to reconsider our own objectives of education and ensure that the principles of right living and non violence are incorporated into the process of education. There is an urgent need for peace education so that globalization problems such as the violation of human rights, poverty, environmental destruction and structural violence can be alleviated and eventually eliminated. Peace education is necessary in order to resolve global issues, to preserve the environment, to safeguard human rights, and to ensure peace within and between countries.. Peace education can also assist in the development of social harmony, equity, and social justice as alternatives to tensions and wars.

Aims of Peace Education

The aims of education for peace are thus to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills which are needed in order:

- To explore concepts of peace both as a state of being and as an active process;
- To enquire into the obstacles of peace and the causes of peacelessness, both in individuals, institutions, and societies;
- To resolve conflicts in ways that will lead toward a less violent and a more just world;
- To explore a range of different alternative futures, in particular ways of building a more just and sustainable world society;
- To build, maintain and restore relationships at all levels of human interaction;
- To create a better learning environment where conflict and relationships may be explored;
- To develop positive approaches towards dealing with conflicts from the personal to the international;
- To build a sustainable environment and protect it from exploitation and war;
- To create safe environment both physically and emotionally, that nurture each individual;
- To educate every new generation of students to become peacemakers and to devote their talents, capacities and energies towards the creation of a civilization of peace based on the twin pillars of a culture of peace and a culture of healing.

Role of Education in Peace Building

Education is the key to uniting nations, bringing human beings closely together. In many parts of the world, civil society suffers because of situations of violent conflicts and war. It is important to recognize the crucial role of education in contributing to building a culture of peace and condemning instances in which education is undermined in order to attack democracy and tolerance. It is education that enables man to harness nature and utilize her resources for the well-being and improvement of his life. The key for the betterment and completeness of modern living is education.

Education for peace therefore includes a variety of issues like

- ❖ Human Rights Education,
- ❖ Environmental Education,
- ❖ International Education,
- ❖ Conflict Resolution Education and
- ❖ Development Education.

Education inculcates wisdom, sanity, rationality, patience, discipline, integrity, harmony and reconciliation within individuals, families, communities, societies and the world. Education can be the best tool to control, manage and resolve conflict; how could it be done effectively and efficiently comes next. The prime importance need to be given to curriculum, which needs to be blended with ethical values based on culture of peace and harmony. Teachers need to be trained to impart such education. Universities need to reach out societies surrounding them to get the real picture of state of human beings, especially the poor and marginalized.

Nature of Peace Education

Education for peace is fundamentally dynamic, interdisciplinary, and multicultural in nature and aims at developing knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to achieve and sustain global culture of peace. Peace Education or education for peace should be made part of the formal education at every level. Higher education, besides providing solid platform for professional life, helps in building positive mindset, bringing rationality and balanced thought, breeds reason and logic instead of asserting one's point of view, enables one to appreciate and observe moral and cultural values.

Peace Education at School / Institution

According to Baldo and Fumiss (1998) Peace Education is most effective when the skills of peace and conflict resolution are learned actively and are modeled by the school environment in which pupils are taught. Teachers must be able to foster positive social interactions among children, and establish and maintain positive collaborative relationships with families and the larger community to support students' learning and well-being. Teachers should be prepared with universal values, such as freedom, justice, human rights, gender equality, tolerance, and respect for the right to live. They should also develop an understanding of peace and a desire for an internalized peaceful culture. In order to achieve the objectives of Peace Education, a school system has to be prepared for drastic changes including setting new educational objectives, preparing new curricula, (re)writing school textbooks, developing instructional material, and training teachers to create a school climate that is conducive to Peace Education. According to Deutsch (1993) families and schools are the two most important institutions that influence children's concepts of hate and love. He argues that a cooperative learning environment, conflict management initiatives, the constructive use of controversy, and establishment of resolution dispute centers in schools will enhance a constructive relationship which will ultimately help prepare children to live in a peaceful world. Weigert (1999) suggests that the pedagogy of experiential learning can be instrumental for enhancing the knowledge about peace and violence, developing ideas, motivations and skills for making this world a better place to live. Hettler, Linda and Johnston, (2009) illustrate a more comprehensive and direct link between Peace Education and experiential learning. They argue that experiential learning can help in reorienting the school culture towards peace, provide the youth an opportunity to influence and educate the public, and practice conflict resolution and violence prevention programs. In the classroom, Peace Education aims to develop skills, attitudes, and knowledge with co-operative and participatory learning methods and an environment of tolerance, care, and respect. Through dialogue and exploration, teachers and students engage in a journey of shared learning. Students are nurtured and empowered to take responsibility for their own growth and achievement while teachers care for the wellbeing of all students. The practice of Peace Education is an opportunity to promote the total welfare of students, advocate for their just and equitable treatment of youth, and promote individual and social responsibility for both educators and learners.

Integrating Peace Education in the Present Curriculum

Peace Education brings together multiple traditions of pedagogy, theories of education, and international initiatives for the advancement of human development through learning. Peace Education need not be

taught as an independent subject. It can be integrated with the content of various school subjects like Social studies, Science, Home science, Mathematics, Language, Art, Music, Computers, Vocational subjects, Psychology etc. The subjects dealt in Teacher Training programmes like Sociology and Philosophy of Education, Education Psychology, History of Education, School plant, Teaching methodology, Psychology practical's, Science/home science practical, Work experience, Working with community, Teaching practice, tutorials, Educational Technology etc can imbibe Peace Education in their content. Also, various extracurricular activities like special lectures in assembly, games, film shows, discourses and debates, presentation of related project report/seminar /exhibition community campaigns, club activities can form part of a well designed experiential curriculum.

Teaching Methods

In the process of integrating Peace Education, how to teach is more important than what to teach. Classroom activities must attempt to give students an understanding of their traditions and teach them what they need to know in order to exercise their responsibilities as citizens. The teaching methods should be used deliberately to support learning aims to relate the knowledge, skills and attitudes of Peace Education. The methods which are helpful in making peace a subject of study, concern and action both in the classroom and beyond are:

- Cooperative learning
- Group discussion
- Peer teaching
- Brain storming
- Role play
- Energizers
- Storytelling
- Dialogues
- Service learning
- Experiential teaching
- Inquiry based learning and teaching.

Peace Education through Teachers / Teacher Educators

Teachers play an important role in creating a world where peace, equality, diversity, and unity prevail. The teacher should develop qualities such as tolerance, respect and appreciation of others, being fair and open-minded, and being able and willing to consider other points of view looking beyond his or her own self-interest. In other words, the teacher must be sincerely attempting to be free of prejudice. Peace Education is teaching the information, attitudes, values, and behavioral competencies needed to resolve conflicts without violence and to build and maintain mutually beneficial, harmonious relationships.

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India. This is one of the many training programmes in Peace Education conducted all over the country by the NCERT.

Suggestions for Teacher Educators

- Opportunities should be provided to the pupil teachers to identify and examine their views
- The pupil teachers need to develop their civil courage to make their own opinion and public voices
- Encouragement should be given to develop creative and critical thinking, to obtain information about the international relations and also of capitalism and also of capitalism and imperialism
- Pupil teachers must be aware of the democratic citizenship as to how to get involved in social, economic, environmental and political responsibilities in a democracy
- Students should be encouraged to prepare the social and environmental action projects
- Teacher training approaches should be revised and updated with the current development and happenings around the society.
- A forum should be provided for the explicit discussion of values of peace and social justice.
- Opportunities should be provided for the continuous reflection and professional development of all educators in relation to issues of peace justice and rights.

Conclusion

This is high time when Teacher Education programmes should combine knowledge, experiences and dreams pertaining to the building of peace and harmony on one hand, and joint effort of other people and agencies of education on the other, in such a way so as to change the culture of war to culture of peace and non violence in the world we live in.

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