

# Human Rights Education: Role of Teacher Education

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Education is the pathway for the progress of any nation. It is through proper education, an individual gets aware about his rights and duties. It has potential to inculcate and imbibe human rights values. It is through education human rights are actually put into practice. Human rights movement in India has come a long way and many Human Rights centered legislations have also been enacted by the legislatures but unfortunately most of these rights exist only in the statute books and ignored in reality. In the establishment of human rights education, the role of teachers is undoubtedly illustrious. Teachers can play the central role in the whole teaching-learning process in context of generating human rights awareness among students.

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The human rights movement in India has come a long way. Many human rights-centric laws have also been enacted by government, but unfortunately most of these rights exist only in legislative books and are actually ignored. According to the epic Bhagavad Gita, "one should performed one's duty, free from attachment." This shows that India's concept of rights is broader, more positive and more universal. Rights are conditions provided by the state. However, it is the wisdom of society that protects rights. Constitutional guarantees of human rights alone cannot guarantee individual rights. The success of the human rights system requires consideration of values and inherited culture.

Gandhi said, "Information without formation leads to deformation." What we need is internalization of knowledge and strengthening of people's values. Here, the role of education is literally important. Education is seen as a way for people to improve their quality of life and empower them to participate in decision-making processes that lead to social, cultural and economic changes. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "education should be directed towards the full development of human personality and the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms." Human rights education is defined as a training, dissemination and information effort aimed at building a universal culture of human rights by instilling knowledge and skills and forming attitudes.

Human rights education is reflected in the recommendations of major commissions and policy documents like the University Education Commission (Radhakrishnan Commission, 1949), Secondary Education Commission (Mudaliar Commission, 1952), Education Commission (Kothari Commission, 1964-1966), and National Policies on Education (NPE) (1968, 1986). The Ramamurthi Committee (1992) and the Chavan Committee (1999), were established to suggest reforms in the education system at different levels and for the integration of values education at all levels of school and teacher education. Stressing the importance of education as a powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation for the realization of national goals, the Education Commission (1964-1966) recommended that "[E]ducation should be developed so as to increase productivity, achieve social and national integration, accelerate the process of modernization and cultivate social, moral and spiritual values".

The NPE (1968) expressed the conviction that a national reconstruction of education was "essential for economic and cultural development of the country, for national integration and for

realizing the ideal of socialistic pattern of society". The NPE (1986) and the 1992 Plan of Action (POA), however, make a direct reference to the promotion of 'International Cooperation' and 'peaceful co-existence' as important objectives of education. They also lay emphasis on values education which 'has a profound positive content, based on our heritage, national goals and universal perceptions'. The appraisal reveals that 'the guiding principles of the UNESCO recommendation on the promotion of International Understanding, cooperation and peace and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms' have found a place in the legislative and educational policy documents of India. The NPE (1986) has remained as the guiding principles for formulating school curriculum and teacher education curriculum in the country.

This responsibility can be shouldered by teachers in the education system. Teachers undoubtedly play an important role in establishing human rights education. Teachers can play a central role in the entire teaching and learning process associated with raising students' awareness of human rights. A good teacher not only imparts knowledge but also motivates and inspires his students. A good teacher is one who makes his students aware regarding their rights, duties and responsibilities, as teachers must be trained regarding human rights pedagogy, so that they could further direct their students about the same and the process must go on.

Teacher education programs are under pressure to prepare teachers for these challenges. Teachers themselves need to internalize the values of justice, freedom, equality and secularism so that they can teach their students effectively. Teacher education programs are encouraging, supportive and humane facilitators in educational learning situations to empower learners to act as responsible citizens and to develop personality and desirable social and human values.

Many activities can be planned to provide human rights education, including related school projects, awards, cultural education programs, and out-of-system human rights education through mass media such as television, the Internet, magazines and newspapers. Human rights education should be developed in consideration of a person's developmental stage and its social and cultural context in order to give meaning to the principles of human rights. The focus of human rights education should be inward not only on external issues and events, but also on individual values, attitudes and behaviours. For the above reasons, it is important to provide human rights education with appropriate educational strategies such as brainstorming, creative expression, simulation and research projects. In other words, it should be included in the pre-service and in-service teacher training programs and student curriculum.

Various aspects of human rights education in teacher education programs can be used to evaluate textbooks in the light of human rights violations, evaluation of teachers' educational activities in the light of their children's rights, organization of activities such as one-act plays and street theatres that present various aspects of human rights.

The teacher education curriculum needs to introduce human rights and responsibilities. Teachers must know and respect children's rights, even before we talk about human rights education. Teacher training institutions need to revise their systems to raise awareness of the student community on various aspects of human rights issues. What is important as a teacher is not only what we teach, but what we do. In teacher training, value education and compulsory education should be prioritized. A teacher's positive attitude can greatly help raise awareness of self-esteem, self-discipline, respect and compassion for others, independence and cooperation.

Various governments and legal agencies around the world are making great efforts to make people aware of human rights. It is believed that human rights abuses can only be stopped through human rights education. As teachers are the best social engineers and cornerstones for tomorrow's citizens' social and

moral development, developing appropriate teacher training programs and promoting human rights awareness are essential. Human rights education must be the part of teacher's training programs.

Human rights education needs to be part of education that can lead to the development of human values and responsibilities. The curriculum should be reformed in the process of human rights education. Teacher training courses can develop learning packages that help turn learners who develop critical attitudes into active participation and the belief that human rights must be protected, respected and promoted. Teachers need to be well prepared to develop and communicate human rights perspectives and skills among their students. The role of teacher educator should change from knowledge facilitator to facilitator, implementer, community partner, action researcher and curriculum developer accordingly. Teachers Educators must be actively involved in the design of international education programs. Teachers should be prepared in the context of international understanding. Seminars, workshops, and symposiums should be conducted by NCERT and SCERT for in-service teacher education. It is necessary to reform the curriculum at the start of in-service teacher training. Students should be prepared in accordance with an international understanding of human rights and fundamental freedoms, peace, cooperation and education. Teachers Educators need to be able to acquire and update interdisciplinary knowledge, world issues, and international cooperation issues. Teacher educators should encourage students to celebrate Human Rights Day and related activities. Teacher trainers should encourage students to hold symposiums, seminars and conferences related to human rights education. Teacher trainers should encourage students to form an observatory club for human rights abuses in schools and societies. Teachers Educators need to encourage students to discuss or express their views and ideas on the promotion and protection of human rights education. Teacher educators should encourage students to incorporate teaching methods such as participatory, interactive and storytelling into their classes. Teacher trainers should encourage students to collect and identify cases, photographs, magazines, etc. related to human rights abuses. . Teachers should be prepared in the context of international understanding. Seminars, workshops, and symposiums should be conducted by NCERT and SCERT for in-service teacher education. It is necessary to reform the curriculum at the start of in-service teacher training. Students should be prepared in accordance with an international understanding of human rights and fundamental freedoms, peace, cooperation and education. Teachers Educators need to be able to acquire and update interdisciplinary knowledge, world issues, and international cooperation issues.

It is visible that education plays a crucial role for the strengthening and protecting of human rights. Education is a tool that could stop violation against human rights. Education must be imparted to each and every individual so that they could also understand the importance of human rights. Teachers must aware students about their fundamental rights and how to claim them when it is being violated. A number of cases are witnessed where education and awareness of

Human rights have helped people in claiming their rights from which they were being violated. Promotion and protection of human rights had its impact in widening the gap between the haves and the have-nots of the society, both at the international and national levels. Education is an important weapon to eliminate various kinds of ignorance. It is the responsibility of every educated citizen to carry the responsibility of promotion and protection of human rights on their shoulders to prevail over the present day modalities of country

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