

The Peace Education: A Need



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Abstract

Peace education is an essential component of quality basic education that aims to build the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable young people to prevent violence, resolve conflict peacefully, and promote social conditions conducive to peace and justice. It is hoped that this paper will provide greater clarity as to the meaning of peace education and its need.

Keywords: Peace Education Programme.

Introduction

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 sense of trying to find peaceful ways to transform these conflicts from violent clashes to energies for social change. "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed. Thus for us to take that step, to move from a violence-habituated system to a peaceable society we need to understand the nature of social conflicts and the tools available for transformation. Everybody has right to live their life according to their choice. Peace will be the first requirement by which they can live happily. Today mankind is at the cross-road where he has to choose with courage, determination and imagination. Education is a better way to suggest how they choose a better life. Education is a tool of development. Any development is directly related to human beings and other natural creatures. Non living and living things are affected from development in a negative way too. It suggests that peace of society will be surely disturbed by some development programmes. It means education is also associated with peace. Peace education is a process by which we can change our attitudes and behaviour about violent conflicts, acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the skill and behaviours to live in harmony with others. It is a means by which we can change our thinking and approaches. Peace education is the education about how to make or to develop such type of society where justice and peace should be present and everybody lives with happiness.

A Definition of Peace Education

Peace education in UNICEF refers to the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behaviour 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 at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level. This definition represents a convergence of ideas that have been developed through the practical experiences of UNICEF peace education programmes in developing countries. It is UNICEF's position that peace education has a place in all societies – not only in countries undergoing armed conflict or emergencies. Because lasting behaviour change in children and adults only occurs over time, effective peace education is necessarily a long-term process, not a short-term intervention. While often based in schools and other learning environments, peace education should ideally involve the entire community.

"Social conflict is a phenomenon of human creation, located in relationships." That is people are actively involved in creating situations and interactions that they experience as conflict. These interactions are rooted in people's history, experiences, perception, interpretations, and expressions of their "realities". This intern is deeply linked to people's "common sense" or understanding and accumulated experiences, which allow them to react or respond to a conflict. Social conflict therefore is a "socially constructed cultural event".² It emerges through an interactive process based on a search for and creation of shared meaning. Shared knowledge and a group's ability to name the world and their reality are pivotal to its manifestation. In short, conflict leads to transforming and renaming of the world and its realities and thus not only is it evitable, but a

necessary force for a dynamic society. If conflict leads to evolution of thought and action and is a positive, inevitable force in the world, then what is needed is not the mere reduction or conclusion of conflicts but innovative mechanisms and interactions to transform conflicts into positive forces of social change, which education systems can help build.

Objectives of Peace Education

Objective of peace education can be stated as below:-

1. To grow ability in student for giving space to all living being.
2. To enhance ability in student for religious tolerance.
3. To inculcate positive attitude towards religious and moral values.
4. To develop interest in student about world wide knowledge and judicious thinking through broad mindedness.
5. To develop the emotional attitude of co-existence and positive attitude towards every human beings.
6. To create the awareness in children, young people and adults about justice and injustice

Education for Peace

The peace opportunities latent in the curriculum are maximized when the school atmosphere is imbued with the values and attitudes of peace. Teacher–student interactions, lesson designs in textbooks, the pedagogic approach, and the total life of the school must all be oriented toward peace. The pedagogic strategy for education for peace presupposed in this paper is that of integration. Integration is the ideal, especially since peace is an integrative and all-embracing concept. The integrated approach is to be understood from two angles. At the broader level, integration occurs when all the activities of the school, curricular as well as co-curricular, are geared toward education for peace. At the classroom level, peace dimensions are woven into the contents of the lessons, which are treated also as a means of helping students to imbibe peace values. Here, emphasis is not merely on acquisition of knowledge but also on the process through which peace is achieved. The integrated approach has an edge over the “separate subject approach” from a number of points of view— psychological, motivational, and pedagogical. From the cognitive and developmental point of view, constructivist psychology has established that children construct knowledge holistically. When knowledge is embedded in appropriate contexts, it becomes more meaningful and enjoyable for the learner. In the integrated approach, the lessons and topics become the vehicles to convey peace messages in meaningful contexts. This approach not only makes the subject matter wholesome and situated but also motivates students to learn and to relate what they learn to their own settings. It provides contexts and connections to explore, think, reflect, and internalise positive dispositions. The integrated approach must be reflected in the totality of educational programmes in schools and must permeate the school curriculum and co-curriculum. Thus, every teacher becomes a peace educator. Teacher–student interactions, textbook lessons and the pedagogy for teaching them, and the

school management and administrative staff must all be oriented to education for peace. Peace,

The primary stage of education is the ideal time for laying the foundation of a peace-oriented personality. These years comprise the formative period in the lives of the students. At this stage, students are comparatively less burdened. The number of students who could be exposed to education for peace is at the maximum during this phase. Thereafter, students begin to drop out. Therefore, this is the stage at which focused attention should be paid to laying the foundation for a culture of peace through education. As the saying goes, “It is easier to build a child than it is to repair an adult.” The values that make up a peace-oriented personality include: hygiene both of the self and of the surroundings, respect for others and for elders, recognition of the dignity of labour, honesty, love, sharing and cooperation, tolerance, regularity, punctuality, responsibility, etc. All children are naturally loving and kind, but they are also imbued with the potential to be otherwise. Hence, the need to affirm and fortify what is constructive and to forestall violent tendencies. Education for peace for primary school children is about helping them enjoy and celebrate diversity, beauty, and harmony in nature. They must be encouraged to develop the skills it takes to be at home with others (especially the art of listening) and with nature (aesthetic sensitivity and a sense of responsibility). As children grow older and reach the middle school stage, they begin to grasp abstract thoughts.

Peace education activities promote the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help people either to prevent the occurrence of conflict, resolve conflicts peacefully, or create social conditions conducive to peace.

Core values of nonviolence and social justice are central to peace education. Nonviolence is manifested through values such as respect for human rights, freedom and trust. Social justice is realised by principles of equality, responsibility, and solidarity.

In order to achieve these ideals, peace education programmes across the world address a wide range of themes. These include nonviolence, conflict resolution techniques, democracy, disarmament, gender equality, human rights, environmental responsibility, history, communication skills, coexistence, and international understanding and tolerance of diversity.

Peace education can be delivered to people of all ages, in both formal and informal settings. Programmes exist at local, national, and international levels, and in times of peace, conflict, and post-conflict.

To create public dialogue different factions of society are often brought together in peace education programmes – these typically include civil society groups, schools, tribal leaders and the media. Yet due to the many areas covered by peace education, initiatives are primarily determined by culture and context, as well as by the projects’ scopes and objectives.

Peace education and peace building are therefore intrinsically linked. The UN’s actions for peace building include education as one of its

principle components. For peace building initiatives to remain sustainable it is vital that attitudes towards war and violence are transformed and translated into long-term behavioural change which seeks alternative solutions to armed conflict.

Conclusion

Peace education is the process of promoting 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 at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, inter-group, national or international level. Peace education is therefore both a philosophy and skill that prepares people, young and old¹, to negotiate on behalf of themselves and the world in a peaceful

manner. It seeks to transform conflict using non-violent tools and bases itself in the values of compassion, interconnectedness, justice and harmony.

References

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