



Role of Education in Establishing Peace and Integrity

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ABSTRACT

Peace Education is gaining popularity, among society, organizations, and government agencies recognize the importance of such education. The aim of peace education is to draw out, enrich, deepen and place in context students' thinking about the concept of peace. There are many approaches to peace education, many of which are based on ideology, practical experience, and good intentions. Peace may depend on educating future generations into the competencies, perspectives, attitudes, values, and behavioral patterns that will enable them to build and maintain peace in 21st century. The need for peace education is greater than ever before with a holistic approach to get credibility, status and accountability, peace education is more relevant in view of the recent terrorist attack on World Trade Centre on September 11, 2002, attack on Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001 and the mounting tension for show down between India Pakistan, US and Iraq at present. This article discusses the idea through which awareness about peace education can be created. The authors stressed on imparting peace education in schools.

Key words: Peace, Peace Education, Peace Transaction.

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi once stated, "If we are to reach real peace in this world we shall have to begin with the children." Lasting peace may depend on educating future generations into the competencies, perspectives, attitudes, values, and behavioral patterns that will enable them to build and maintain peace. To understand how to make peace education effective and sustainable, it is first necessary to define the nature of peace and peace education. In order to build programs to achieve the goals of peace education, it is necessary to understand the social science theories on which the programs need to be based. Finally, the steps of conducting an effective and sustainable peace education must be understood.

What is Peace?

- The word 'peace' in the English language is derived from the Latin 'pax'. Peace in the Roman Empire meant a cessation in fighting as well as rule over subject races. A modern equivalent is found in definitions of peace through deterrence. This definition describes peace in terms of what it is not, rather than what it is.
- The term 'peace' does not merely imply the absence of overt violence (sometimes referred to as 'negative peace'). It also encompasses the presence of social, economic and political justice, which is essential to the notion of 'positive peace' (Hicks, 1985).
- Peace is a relationship variable, not a trait. Peace exists among individuals, groups, and nations; it is not a trait or a predisposition in an individual, group, or nation.
- Peace is a dynamic, not a static, process. The level of peace constantly increases or decreases with the actions of each relevant party.
- Peace is an active process, not a passive state. Passive coexistence is not a viable path to peace. Building and maintaining peace takes active involvement.
- Peace is hard to build and easy to destroy. It may take years to build up a stable peace, then one act can destroy it.

Concept of Peace Education:

- Peace education is the process of acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the attitudes, skills, and behaviors to live in harmony with oneself, with others, and with the natural environment.
- Peace education is about helping students to understand and transform conflict in their own lives, in the community and in the world at large. It is part of all learning areas and is reinforced by people treating each other in positive ways in classrooms, playgrounds and in their families and communities.
- James Page suggests peace education be thought of as "encouraging a commitment to peace as a settled disposition and

enhancing the confidence of the individual as an individual agent of peace; as informing the student on the consequences of war and social injustice; as informing the student on the value of peaceful and just social structures and working to uphold or develop such social structures; as encouraging the student to love the world and to imagine a peaceful future; and as caring for the student and encouraging the student to care for others".

- Peace education is 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.

Imparting Peace Education in School in 21st Century: The world seems much smaller and almost instantly, global issues are becoming local, and the need for peace education becomes a necessity to build the maintain peace in students, families life, friendship groups, work place, neighbors, as well as within selves. Therefore, the need for peace education has arguably never been greater than it is today. Peace educating often includes an appreciation for diversity within a broad context of non-violence analysis and resolution. Teaching peace education in schools is a versatile and multi-disciplinary aspect. It includes teaching peace, non-violence, and conflict resolution, and social justice, human rights concern for preserving the natural environment (Smith 2004). Emphasizing peace education in schools is an essential need in our educational institutions. It starts first with an honest willing to engage educators in the learning process, which is an essential and powerful way to transform their selves individually and collectively. The students need the skills to create and maintain peace. The methodology of Peace Education therefore encourages critical thinking and preparing students to act on their convictions. Hence, there is no magical approach to peace education. It will evolve and grow only through practice. The peace education can be imparted by considering the following methodologies;

- Creating a supportive classroom
- Investing conflict, violence and peace
- Visioning peaceful futures

Creating a supportive Classroom Environment: Peace education makes special demands of teachers to make sure that their own classroom practices promote peace. According to the principles of peace pedagogy, pupils can learn how to bring peace to the world not only by studying issues of war and peace but also by learning certain skills, behaviors, and dispositions from classroom climate, which is established by the teacher structures his or her lessons.

Practical approaches to creating a supportive classroom: Ian Harris encourages that teachers should minimize or eliminate five unhelpful characteristics. In their place he advocates five peace-seeking qualities. Teachers could study the following table, thinking about where they would wish to locate their own practice along the continua:

S.No.	Unhelpful Characteristics	Peace Making Qualities
1	Teacher's claim to possession of the truth	Respectful dialogue among teachers and learners
2	Competitive classroom learners	Cooperation among climate
3	Student passivity	Problem solving approaches to learning
4	Student powerlessness	Affirmation of the worth of each learner
5	Teacher's use of authoritative force	Democratic boundary setting of classroom expectations

He also suggests that teacher is always also a learner. The teacher should celebrate diverse abilities and interests among students. He should also encourage cooperative attitudes and activities build knowledge, involve students in for setting culture in the classroom.

Practicing Peace:

It could be helpful to think, "Practicing peace" begins with a search for "inner peace". The search for "inner peace" has captured the imagination of many people today; particularly it seems in western societies where alienation and disaffection seem to sit uneasily alongside unprecedented levels of material possession and consumption. Thus, students need to be respectful and open-minded without being uncritically tolerant and accepting. They need to be cooperative and empathetic while still being assertive. Yet they need to be assertive without being aggressive or domineering. They need to develop a commitment to social justice, while realizing that can have a range of meanings. "Practicing peace" can be promoted through classroom activities that encourage self-esteem, trust, cooperation, empathy, assertiveness and an appreciation of differences and diversities. The peace-building approaches mentioned above can be matched by specific approaches to conflict resolution.

The Guiding Principles:

The following guiding principles have been taken from the covenants and agreements produced by the international community over the last 50 years. They are central to the education for peace program.



Schools are encouraged to explore and analyze these principles within their communities so that they are accepted as the foundation for building a culture of peace.

Conclusion:

While there are people of goodwill and conviction, there will be peace education. All, humans are social animals; their success in life is largely a matter of successful social relations. The use of cooperative learning, therefore, teaches students the competencies needed to build and maintain consensual peace. The essential elements need to be implemented at all levels of schooling to (a) institutionalize peace education in schools; (b) ensure that students from the formerly adversarial groups experience positive interaction for years; (c) ensure that the cooperative, controversy, and conflict resolution procedures become automatic habit patterns; and (d) ensure that the values underlying these procedures become firmly embedded. The personal experiences resulting from learning together with diverse peers to achieve mutual goals, making informed decisions on the basis of open-minded discussion of each other's perspectives and views, and seeking integrative agreements to resolve conflicts result in a personal understanding of the meaning and relevance of peace and justice and define a way of life.

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