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M.K GANDHI'S PEACE EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Education is the key to raise inner self of the individuals. It is uniting the nations, bringing human beings closely together. Now a day we are living in the digital era and many parts of the world, civil society suffers because of situations of violent conflicts and war. It is important to inculcate and recognize the crucial role of education in contributing to building a culture of peace. A culture of peace and non-violence goes to the substance of fundamental human rights of the present era.

Meaning of the peace Education:

The highest form of objective for any education is inculcating peace and it is an essential value to be cherished by every individual. The father and mother is the first teacher to their children and peace is nurtured in the family. The peace nurtured at home again enhanced at school.

Peace is a broad concept with practical and spiritual connotations. It can imply a state of inner calm or end of conflict. "Peace is what you think it is (or wants it to be). Peace has been understood to mean the absence of conflict or violence and conversely as the presence of states of mind and of society such as harmony, accord, security and understanding.

Peace education is a planning strategy of eliminating the conflicts and violence caused by in justice, inequality and human rights, violations, and implementing the ways and means of reducing the same through appropriate teaching and learning tactics by means of producing responsible global citizen to attain and spread the peace in the world. Therefore peace education is a goal of education.

Definition of the Peace Education:

There is no universally accepted definition for Peace Education. There is good number of definitions available on the basis of different perceptions and approaches. Some of the definitions given by eminent educationists are given below:

Webster defines peace "as a state of quiet or tranquility, freedom from disturbance or agitation, calm repose".

From the above definition it can be agreed that in the absence of elements such as tolerance, understanding, empathy, cooperation and respect for the difference in others, there cannot be peace. Any strategy or educational system helps to enhance the above said entities among the individuals could be known as peace education.

- According to Albert Einstein "Peace is not merely the absence of war but the presence of justice, of law, of order – in short, of government.
- According to Freire (2006) "Peace education is a mechanism for the transformation from a culture of violence to a culture of peace through a process of "conscientisation"
- Betty Reardon defines "Peace Education is the attempt to promote the development of an authentic planetary consciousness that will enable us to function as global citizens and to transforms the present human condition by changing the social structures and patterns of thought that have created it".
- "Peace Education is an attempt to respond to problems of conflict and violence of scale ranging from the global and national to the local and personal. It is about exploring ways of creating more just and sustainable futures said by Laing.R.D.(1978)



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- According to John Dewey “Peace education is grounded in active citizenship, preparing learners for assiduous participation in a democracy, through problem – posing and problem – solving education, and a commitment to transformative action in our societies.”

From these definitions it is understood that the peace education inculcates the higher order human values among the individuals. Further, “Peace education definitions” reveal that it aims at the overall development of the individuals and helps to enhance eternal values in their minds.

Concept of Peace Education:

Betty Reardon makes reference to the concept of positive peace and negative peace. According to Reardon to term negative peace refers to an absence of war or physical or direct violence while the term positive peace is used to refer the presence of non-exploitative relationships or conditions of social and economic justice diminished (Reardon, 1988) Reardon therefore recognizes that the problem of concern for peace educators are manifold, including diverse areas such as economic deprivation, development, environment and resources and universal human rights and social justice. Reardon concept of peace is further supported by many educationists. (S.H.Toh and Virginia Floresca – Cawagas et. al) According to the educationists, peace education covers diverse issues, learners, should not only acquire a fragmented understanding of conflict and violence.

Scope of peace education:

Peace education is concerned with helping learners to develop an awareness of the processes and skills that are necessary for achieving understanding tolerance and good will in the world today. Peace education brings together multiple traditions of pedagogy, theories of education and international initiatives for the advancement of human development through learning. The practice of peace education is an opportunity to promote the total welfare of students, advocate for their justice and equitable treatment of youth and promote individual and social responsibility for both educators and learners.

Aim and objectives of Peace Education

The aim of peace education is perhaps best summarized in the Hague Appeal for peace which states that a culture of its peace will be achieved when citizen of the world:

- Understand global problems
- Have the skills to resolve Conflict – Constructively
- Know and live by international standards of Human rights, gender and racial equality.
- Appreciate cultural diversity
- Respect the integrity of the earth

Declaration of the 44th session of the international conference on education held at Geneva in 1994 has listed the following aims of peace education.

- To develop sense of universal values in every individual.
- To prepare citizens to cope with difficult and uncertain situations and fitting them for personal autonomy and responsibility.
- To educate the individual and develop the ability to recognize and accept the values which exist in the diversity of individuals.
- To strengthen peace, friendship and solidarity between individuals and people.
- To develop the ability of non-violent conflict – resolution among the individuals.



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- vi. To cultivate the ability to make informed choices, basing their judgments and actions not only on the analysis of present situations and the vision of a preferred future among the individuals
- vii. To teach the citizens to respect the cultural heritage, protect the environment and social harmony.
- viii. To cultivate citizens in the line of solidarity feeling and feeling of equity at the national and international levels in the perspectives of a balanced and long-term development.

Therefore, peace education aims at wide variety of subject. Peace and education are in separable aspects of civilization. No civilization is truly progressive without education and no education system is truly civilizing unless it is based on the universal principles of peace.

Peace education can be taught in formal and informal school setting with following objectives.

- To foster changes in order to make the world a better and more humane place.
- To develop values and skills to assist the students in striving for the fullness of life.
- To help students develop a rich vision of peace to work for a visible global society.
- To create constructive behavior for dealing with problems so as to minimize and eliminate conflict.
- To explore peace both as a state of being and as an active process for the promotion of positive human relations.

Therefore, the peace education is actually a call for an inclusive approach to mutual coexistence and to a holistic way of living. Peace education applies to the contents of all curricular, at every level in the education system. Peace education should be extended to all learners, including refugee and migrant children, children from all social sectors and disabled with the objective of promoting equal opportunities through education.

Human Miseries in the Modern world and Quest for peace

As human beings we have achieved a level of material progress we would not have even dreamed of barely a century ago. The marvels of modern technology have given us enormous power over the forces of nature. We have achieved in many field and conquered many disasters but the ultimate question is: “are we happier than over ancestors were in the past?” The answer is ‘No’. the abuse of women, children and the underprivileged religious and racial discrimination, color bar, and caste distinction continue on unabated.

Never before in the history of the world, has the human race been in such great need to be free from conflict, ill-feeling selfishness, descent and strife. We are neither in need of peace nor only in our personal life at home and work, but also at the global level. The tension, anxiety and fear arising from the conflict are not only disruptive but continue to extent a constant drain on our well being, mentally and physically. The basic problem we face today is moral degeneration and misused intelligence. In spite of all the advances made by science and technology, the world is far from being safe and peaceful.

Gandhi an Concept of Peace

Gandhian principles and the promotion of peace education through Gandhian studies are part of the fundamental architecture of many Indian educational Initiatives, as well as those in a variety of other countries. By nonviolent action, Gandhi meant peaceful, constructive mass action. It is true that Gandhi did not write on peace education in any specific way, but his whole philosophy and life have been, of course, important in peace studies and peace education not only for India but for other nations of the world as well (Prasad 1998).

Gandhi’s concept of peace and non-violence is integrally related to his world view. Gandhiji evolved his world view from a concept of “self” and human nature. Acknowledging the inherent goodness of human beings, Gandhi emphasized the



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capacity of all human beings to develop their full potential of non-violence. He believed that all human beings are part of divine and they are interdependent and interrelated. Gandhiji's concept of peace is also a broad one. For him peace emerged from a way of life. Therefore peace is intimately linked up with Justice, development and environment.

Different Approaches of Peace

There are different approaches to peace and perceived by the different eminent personalities. The most of the researchers and educationists suggested the ways and means for attaining peace spin around five approaches. They are

- Power politics : Peace through coercive power
- World order : Peace through the power of law
- Conflict resolution : Peace through the power of communication
- Nonviolence : Peace through will power
- Transformation : Peace through the power of love

The first peace paradigm, power politics is the traditionally dominant frame work in the field of international relations. Advocates of this paradigm, who refer to it as "political realism", contend that there are no universal values that can be held by all actors in the international system

- World Order : Peace through the power of law

The second approach to peace explored by the class is the world order paradigm. This paradigm which views the "order" created by practices that sustained cooperation among states and other significant actors, such as non-governmental (activist) organizations and intergovernmental organizations, is both possible necessary. Peace can be actively sought through policies and efforts that build consensus, reduce injustice, create opportunity and provide multilateral frameworks for responding to common challenges.

- Conflict Resolution : Peace through the power of communication

The third paradigm, conflict resolution, offers a highly pragmatic approach to peace through the development and refinement of skills for analyzing conflicts and responding to them with effective strategies of communication and negotiation. According to this paradigm, conflict is natural at all levels of human interaction and organization, from the interpersonal to the interethnic and international. To manage and resolve conflicts effectively, we must become aware of our attitudes towards conflict and our attitudes towards conflict and our habitual conflict management styles (competitive, collaborative, avoidant, submissive, etc.)

- Non violence : Peace through will power :

One of the most common misconceptions about the fourth approach to peace and nonviolence is that it is a paradigm that enjoins passivity. As Gandhi, Martin Luther King and many others have underscored, nonviolence is action animated by principle and informed by the proposition that means and ends are inseparable. According to the non-violence paradigm, genuine power derives from will power and human solidarity rather than from violence, which undermines community and sows the seeds of its own destruction.

- Transformation : Peace through the power of love :

The final approach to peace making focuses on the centrality of education, cultural change, and spirituality in all genuine attempts to make peace a reality in daily life. From the stand point of the transformation paradigm, peace making is not only an effort to end war, remove structural violence, or establish the presence of external value conditions. It is also a profoundly internal process, in which the transformation of the individual becomes a metaphor for an instrument of broader changes.

Taken together, these five paradigms suggest that the path to peace is many and that traveled not only by statesmen and diplomats, but also by individuals with all walks of life.



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There are many organizations that are involved in promoting peace around the world. Some of the important institutions / organizations are:

i) United Nations

On October 24, 1945 the United Nations came to existence when 51 countries agreed to making peace. Today almost every country belongs to the United Nations. It helps to provide a way to help solve international conflict and creates policies on things that affect us the entire world. Some of the important institutions / organizations are:

(A) Purpose of UN:

The following are purposes of the UN defined in Article 1 of the UN Charter.

1. To maintain international peace and security and to take adequate steps to avert wars.
2. To develop friendly relations among nations on the basis of equality.
3. To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character.
4. To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.

(B) Principles of the UN:

The principles are the means to achieve the objectives of the UN. These are contained in Article 2 of the UN Charter:

1. All the member states are equal.
2. The member states shall fulfil their obligations to the UN honestly.
3. The member states shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means.
4. The member states shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against any other state.
5. The member states shall give to the UN every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the UN Charter.
6. The states which are not members of the UN, should also act in accordance with these principles for the maintenance of international peace and security.
7. No member state shall interfere in the internal affairs of any other state.

ii) Peace Corps

The peace corps is an organization filled with men and women who live and work in a different country for two years. The people serving in the Peace Corps are volunteers who help solve some of the most important challenges that face communities in the world. The peace corps was an idea of the 34th President of USA John.F. Kennedy (1961-63). Peace Corps work in a variety of different areas including education, business, health and nutrition, agriculture, community development and the environment. As the preeminent international service organization of the UN, the peace Corps sends American abroad to tackle the most pressing needs of people around the world Peace volunteers work at the grassroots level towards sustainable change that lives on long after their service – at the same time becoming global citizens and serving their country. When they return home, volunteers bring their knowledge and experiences – and global outlook – that lives of those around them.

The Peace Corps' Mission

To promote world peace and friendship by fulfilling three goals:

- To help people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women
- To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served
- To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of American



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iii) **Amnesty International**

Amnesty International was launched in 1961 by British lawyer peter Beneson, Amnesty International emphasis is on the international protection of Human rights. Amnesty Aims and objectives: Amnesty focus on:

- Stopping violence against women.
- Depending the rights of people living poverty
- Abolishing the death penalty
- Opposing torture and terror with human rights
- Freeing prisoners of conscience
- Protect the rights of refugees and migrants
- Regulating the global arm trade

iv) **Nobel peace prize**

The Nobel peace prize is an award given to people for their peaceful actions. The Nobel peace prize was instituted by a famous man named Alfred Bernhard Nobel. In India, Mahatma Gandhi and Mother Teresa have won Nobel peace award.

v) **The Lion and the Lamb peace Arts center**

It was established in the year 1987. It was established with the prime objective of promoting peace education for children through art and literature.

vi) **The Carter Centre**

Every day in countries all over the world people live with life threatening circumstances because of disease, poverty, war and starvation. The Carter centre tries to relive the suffering by promoting peace and health in nations around the world. In addition, the carter centre looks after the implementation of Human Rights, monitoring elections and safeguarding Human Rights.

vii) **International peace Bureau (IPB)**

The international peace Bureau is established with the vision of a world without war. It is in 70 countries together with individual members from a global network bring together expertise and campaigning experience in a common cause.

viii) **Pathways to Peace (PTP)**

PTP is an international peace building, Educational and consulting organization. The important objectives of the PTP are:

- To make peace a practical reality through local and global projects.
- To expand communication and build cooperation among existing organization It is also an official peace messenger of the United Nations.

ix) **Hague Appeal for peace**

The Hague Appeal for peace is an international network of organizations and individuals dedicated to the abolition of war and making peace a human right. The important objective of this institution is to develop capacities, in teachers and learners, to face challenges of unprecedented proportion armed conflicts between states and ethnic groups, the spread of racism, gender inequality, community violence, massive violation of human rights and the degradation of the environment.

x) **National Peace Foundation (NPF)**

NPF originated in 1975 and has spread its efforts throughout Eurasia, the middle east and Africa, continuing to maintain its focus on grass roots efforts and empowering citizens on a community level. At the heart of NPF is dedication to exchange, dialogue, and helping citizens building the institutions of Civil society.



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Pacifism and Education

Pacifism is a commitment to peace and opposition to war. The word “pacifism” is derived from the word “pacific” which means “peace making” (Latin, Paci-(from pax) meaning “peace” and fieus meaning “making”). A pacifist is a person who is opposed to war and violence. Pacifists believe that we should not kill or harm other people. And if killing is wrong war must be wrong – because war is basically a matter of killing. Bertrand Russell pointed out that ‘patriots always talk of dying for their country, but never of killing for their country. Yet that is ultimately what war means : being prepared to kill other people and inflict suffering on them. Therefore, pacifism and ideas of pacifists to be integrated with the educational curriculum. The education and curriculum at all levels should include the aspects of influencing to improve society and remove the causes of war – injustice, exploitation, the repression of minorities.

Conclusion

Education is the best way to earn a living and live a satisfactory life. However, it also has another motive. Peace education goes beyond the concept of making a living. It teaches the students how to maintain harmony and peace in the world and have critical and logical thinking. The main concept of peace education is to make people aware of the importance of peacemaking and to develop a positive environment.

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