



# Relevance of Peace and Value Education in the Modern World

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## Concept of Peace Education

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### **Abstract**

*Peace is a state of mind of an individual and living together in a community, society and nation with understanding and co-operating each other in good and bad times. Human civilization cannot progress without a feeling of togetherness and oneness. As all of us are inhabiting the globe and for its sustainable development to happen, co-operation and peaceful co-existence is very essential. It is said and true that war germinates in the mind of man. Therefore, how can we develop human beings to live peacefully and allow others to live peacefully is essential. This has been realized since ancient time and thinkers and policy makers have been developing rules and regulations to promote social order for peaceful co-existence. It is therefore essential to understand the concept of peace and the need of promoting it among the young mass i.e., the students in our educational institutions. Peace concept as has been reviewed in this paper, reveals that it is ability and quality among people to tolerate, share responsibilities, cooperation (unity) and freedom to its members. It is also reflected in our Constitution in the form of certain words like "Equality, Fraternity, Justice, and Liberty". Democratic values like tolerance, fellow feelings, secularism, participation of people in all activities and their responsibilities for the nation and fellow beings promotes peace among individuals and society. In this regard, educational institutions have a great role to play to see that the values and ideals that promote peace among individuals are taken care of by the curriculum that is being designed and practiced.*

### **1. Introduction**

Peace is a never-concerned theme of human civilization. Systematic efforts have been made by men in all ages to live together in peace without thinking and harming one another. In this regard international forums have developed different guidelines to collaborate with each other, help each other in difficult

time, and educate people to think in positive terms and have internal peace (self) and help others to live happily. In this regard education process, specially the school education at early of child that is formative the stage, have a major role to play in any society. In India, since ancient ages, efforts have been made to help people to live happily in peace. In this regard, certain axiological questions like; what is the purpose of life, purpose of human existence, and means of meaningful co-existence are noteworthy by Indian monks and philosophers like Gautama Buddha, Mahavira, and in religious text of Gita, and Ramayana. Indian Constitution is also an embodiment of rules and regulation about human rights and duties of a citizens towards peaceful living. It guides us for leading a peaceful life. In this regard, today it is essential to study the concept of peace, and how is it reflected in the school education to help our children to lead a life of peace. Any school curriculum devoid of peace concept has severe lacunae to prepare the citizens for a peace-loving society.

## **2. Concept of Peace**

Peace is an elusive concept. Literature reveals that the interpretation of this concept ranges from absence of war to the ability to cope with war. It relates to the idea of political stability of nations. Another aspect of the concept as mentioned in the teachers' training package of NCERT in 2004, 'peace has also been associated with peace of mind or inner peace throughout the ages' (NCERT, 2004). Everybody wants peace for their nation, human society, in their vicinity, and in their inner self. It is also argued, does peace means be quiet, calm and silent? Then humans shall not talk, speak loudly. In order to let there be peace, we have put up with negative qualities and not fight against lethargy, hatred, indifference and total apathy to environment. We shall tolerate insults, cheating, stealing, falsehood, egoism and not raise our voice against them. So, can fighting against these be termed as conflicts? Is absence of war means peace? These are certain basic questions that comes to mind when we think of peace concept.

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 lost when there is physical violence or assault on an individual or a group (causing physical injury, pain, and torture or terror) or when violence is done to people by oppressive cultural, economic, legal, political and social systems. In this situation injury is not done to one person (body) as such but to their aspirations. Such examples are plenty in any society. If we cite some examples, it can be racism, mob lynching, apartheid, and can be bullying in a classroom.

If we examine the concept, we can find that peace originates in mind, depicted in human behaviors, and operates in a process and resulted in harming

or disturbing somebody. Therefore, peace is not just as an end result or goal but a dynamic process. As stated by Mukalel (1997), 'peace in the right sense is not a negative state of lack of conflicts and problems within oneself. Peace is a positive and dynamic state of integrating in the right manner the diverse elements, conflicts and problems in the personality and obtaining a holistic state of quiescence'.

### **2.1. Concepts Related to Peace**

Harmony, Tolerance, Equilibrium, Balance, Security, and Satisfaction are some concepts close to peace. According to 'Shri Aurobindo quiet (achanchalata) is a condition when there is no restlessness or disturbance. Calm (sthita) is still unmoved condition when no disturbances can affect – it is less negative condition than quiet. Peace (shanti) is more positive condition; it carries with it a sense of settled and harmonious rest and deliverance. Silence (nischalatanivarvata) is a state in which there is either no movement of mind or vitals or else a great stillness which no surface movement can pierce or alter' (NCERT, 2004). The concept can be clearer if we consider some concepts opposed to peace. The following words express some notions that are opposed to peace. Disturbance, Conflict, Quarrels, Fights are concepts that are not indicative of peace. War, violence, strife, and such hostile interaction aimed at dominance and differential benefits are those instances detrimental to peace.

### **2.2. Ancient Wisdom of India on Peace**

History reveals that India was looked upon for its sense of tolerance and acceptance of differences. 'India has a history of promoting Peace, International understanding, Tolerance and Self-restraint. Towards this, evidence can be found in the Vedas, Puranas and Upanishads'. That educating for peace minded individuals is the fundamental obligation of education could be derived from Indian philosophy and major Indian philosophers. India has always worked for peace and understanding among nations. Peace for the entire world is what the Vedic hymns sang about. It believed in treating the whole world as one family, reinstated in the well-known saying 'VasudhaivaKutumbakam'. The ancient Indian Rishis (sages) visualized the Earth as a Global village. Family as an institution is built on values of sacrifice, tolerance, sharing responsibilities, cooperation (unity) and freedom to its members. Religion and religious books to educate us in gaining of peace and happiness. 'In one of the Upanishads, the guru advises his disciple, who desires peace of mind, to take 3 fold path of (a) knowledge to end conflict with nature (b) service to end conflicts to with other human beings (c) renunciation to end the internal conflicts which goes on in the mind when many pleasures are greedily sought from life' (Pandey, 2007).

### 2.3. Philosophers of India on Peace

Philosophers in India too have stressed on values to be included in education. 'According to Mahatma Gandhi, the antonym to violence is non-violence, which has eight components: peace, equality, fearlessness, humility, love, self-control, truth and tolerance' (NCERT, 2004). Swami Vivekananda, the illustrious apostle of Sri Ramakrishna whose great mission was to preach unto mankind their divinity and how to make it manifest in every moment of life. Swami highlighted the ultimate aim of education to establish internal Peace and security by strengthening the spiritual foundations of different nations. He preached tolerance in religion which essentially leads to Peace. He preached the Universal Brotherhood of man. Swami Vivekananda says the aim of education is man making. The betterment of man and humanity was his deepest concern. He believed in universal brotherhood. Tagore felt that harmonious relationship with nature was essential for integral development of an individual. He desired to bring harmony in all aspects of human relationship – in *man – man* relationship, in *man – nature* relationship or *man – god* relationship. The inner peace can be attained only by removing the ignorance that clouds and hides the truth. This idea is articulated by Shri Aurobindo who proclaims that 'Man, being essentially a soul and divine reality, is capable of casting away the sheaths of ignorance and become conscious of his true self' (Pani, 2007). Spiritual leaders of India like Sri Satya Sai Baba, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar of Art of Living are the apostles of peace and harmony.

### 2.4. Indian Constitution-A Road Map for Peaceful Society

In early years of India's independence, the founding fathers of the nation pondered on the path that India must take. By declaring India as a secular democratic society, the Constitution provided for simultaneous flourishing of different castes, religions, groups and communities. Indian constitution declared in its preamble that it shall secure to all its citizens, 'JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation'. It suggests that the values of justice, liberty (freedom), equality, fraternity for unity of nation must be guiding the functioning of social, political and economic systems including education. These commitments are outlined in the fundamental duties mentioned in Indian constitution. The highlighted values have been prioritized and recommended in Education commissions of India too.

The Fundamental Duties (Article 51A) enshrined in the Indian Constitution exhorts, among others, all Indian citizens: to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending

religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women; to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture; to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, reserves, wildlife and to have compassion for living creatures; and to safeguard public property and abjure violence. It suggests that priority is given to living together in spite of variance among the people of the country. Fraternity (Unity), equality (Gender), valuing natural environment, compassion (non-violence) are the fundamental duties of Indian citizens.

An individual being a true democrat will accommodate diversity and being secular will be tolerant of all religions, being a true follower of justice ensure equality and freedom is made accessible to all, being a rationalist having scientific temper shall engage in critical thinking and take proactive initiatives, also generate new knowledge. Unity, justice and tolerance are the underlying values in fulfilling this commitment for an egalitarian society.

### **3. Peace Education as Reflected in Indian Educational Documents**

Since India is a country of diversity, its economy and social development needed urgent reforms. Therefore, sensitivity to diversity and inclusion of the disadvantaged should be a part of the education process. The neglect of these two issues give rise to undesirable conflicts among the people of the country. The commissions that were set up to guide the education in our nation have some pertinent thoughts on it.

According to University Education Commission (1948), education should aim at 'strengthening democracy, promoting social justice, promoting equality, promoting national and international fraternity, and valuing liberty'. It suggests that in a democratic set-up, individuals are considered as assets and opportunities are made available equally to achieve their potentials. They get to develop desirable personal and interpersonal values. Democracy can flourish if all sections of the society are allowed equitable development. Fraternity suggests unity in spite of diversity.

Developing democratic citizenship is one of the central aims of education according to Secondary Education Commission (1952). The aim of democratic citizenship can be fulfilled only if individuals learn the art of living in the community. Consequently, the qualities like discipline, cooperation (unity), social sensitiveness and tolerance are to be developed in students. It also observed that growth of character of students would depend to a large extent on religious and moral instruction and in 1959 a Government Committee on 'Religious and Moral education' suggested a well-defined programme for different stages of education.

Kothari Commission (1964) in its report states that among the many aims of education character formation based on social, moral and spiritual values is important for our national development. It means development of citizens of strong character possessing and practicing social, moral and spiritual values is the essence. These values encompass unity, equality, responsibility, justice, tolerance and nonviolence. Education commission (1964-66), stressed on moral education and inculcation of sense of social responsibility in the students. It commented that there was the need for harnessing science and make sure that it is at service of man. It recommended an emphasis on noble ideals of Indian heritage, values of peace, freedom, truth, justice and compassion, propounded and promoted by great Indians like Buddha, Mahavira, Nanak, Kabira, Vivekananda, Ramana Maharishi and Gandhiji being incorporated in curricula, programmes and activities of schools, colleges and universities.

The first National Policy on Education in 1968 recommended and emphasised on deliberate steps to inculcate moral and social values in students. It came to the conclusion that the basic objective of educational system must be to produce young men and women of 'character and ability', committed to national service and development.

In 1979, the NCERT in a publication entitled, '*Documents on Social, Moral and Spiritual Values in Education*' compiled a list of eighty-two sub-values on the basis of detailed study of constitution of India and reports of Committee and Commissions on Education till 1979. The inculcation of which can lead us in the path of peace. In 1981, the Ministry of Education organised a high-level seminar on 'Moral education'. This seminar recommended adaptation of an integral approach to value orientation. It recommended that the subject should be handled in a comprehensive manner under broad spectrum of social responsibility and development of human personality rather than being tackled in a piecemeal manner dealing with areas such as awareness of ecology, environmental protection, community development, national integration, international understanding etc.

National Policy on Education, 1986 sought all-round development of learners. It entails both physical and spiritual development of students. 'In the Indian way of thinking, a human being is a positive asset and a precious national resource, which needs to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness and care, coupled with dynamism' (NPE, 1986). It also suggested modification in the mind set and value system of individuals for promoting the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy. 'Education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit, thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our constitution'

(NPE, 1986). The National Policy on Education (1986) outlines the importance of education in acculturating youngsters in peaceful way of life.

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) and Programme of Action (POA, 1992), in its scheme of assistance for strengthening culture and values in education identified the goals of educational development and strategies to be adopted for their achievement. It had identified that education about India's common cultural heritage as one of the core areas and laid stress on the need to bridge the schisms between formal system of education and India's rich and varied cultural traditions. Education should foster universal and eternal values oriented towards unity and integration of our people and that value education should eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism.

National Knowledge Commission (2005) considers education as a potent force for any developing state. It is education which can question existing socio-economic arrangements in manner that leads to innovation, change and development. It presumes that thinking and questioning, in other words critical thinking ability to find better solutions to problems, a vital aim of education.

The promotion of respect for cultural diversity in the country, in other words respect and do justice to the cultures of other communities is focused in National Curriculum Framework 2005. It is important here to remember that peace education is not an additional academic subject we add to the existing educational system. It has rightly stated that 'Education for peace is not envisaged as a separate subject that would further augment curriculum load' (NCF, 2005) instead, it is the general orientation that we introduce in the existing subjects, textbooks and teacher discourses. Peace education sees to the construction of defences of peace and justice in the minds of the younger generation, and to make the youth hold to peace individually in life. Accordingly, 'Every topic/lesson has peace-laden (hidden or explicit) components, which need to be transacted with deliberate planning from a positive and humanistic perspective' (NCF, 2005). The presence or absence of peace laden components would point out whether peace perspectives are taken into account.

The National Education Policy, 2020 of the MHRD, Government of India has clearly stated that the main focus of education is development of human capital by emphasizing on just and equitable society. Promoting ethics and human & Constitutional values like empathy, respect for others, cleanliness, courtesy, democratic spirit, spirit of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equality, and justice; Social justice, equality, and scientific advancement are the main guidelines that one can see. Ensuring inclusive and equity with quality education for all is being emphasized. Education must build character, enable learners to be ethical,

rational, compassionate, and caring. This shall be achieved on the basis of Indian culture and traditions. So, the policy has highlighted the goal of quality education for all with the cultural values, moral and ethics needed for a peace-loving society.

Directly or indirectly pointers are given in the national level documents for promoting peace and harmony regardless of the diversity prevalent in the country. They suggest that values like responsibility, equality, freedom, justice, critical thinking, human initiatives, unity, non-violence, tolerance and safeguarding nature are some of the most relevant and pertinent among them. There are qualities like equality, respect, compassion, cooperation, nonviolence, and kinship which ought to be developed in students going through the curriculum in schools. By instilling these values in youngsters through the teaching learning process, teachers play the key role of moulding the students' character and personality.

#### **4. Peace Education as Reflected in International level**

Education for peace is education for life, and not merely training for a livelihood. Equipping individuals with the values, skills, and attitudes they need to be wholesome persons who live in harmony with others and as responsible citizens is the goal of education for peace. We live in an age of unprecedented violence: locally, nationally, and globally. Individuals need to be educated on how human survival and welfares depends on peaceful co-existence. In the Middle ages, peace education expanded beyond religion into education. The experience of world war established the fact that such wars would be a disaster of human life on this earth. In the western countries the concern for peace developed into peace movements during 1950s. 'The first academic peace studies program was established in 1948 at Manchester College in Indiana' (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). In the 1960s, concern about the possibility of nuclear war resulted in modern peace education. Over 300 colleges and universities now have peace studies programs, and in many countries, elementary and secondary schools have programs that could be described as peace education. 'By the end of the sixties, many universities in western countries started their own peace programmes, peace centers and intervention programmes' (Devi Prasad, 1984). Education for peace according to **IPCRI (2005)** seeks to enable the student to:

1. To understand the nature and origins of violence and its effects on both victim and perpetrator;
2. To create frameworks for achieving peaceful, creative societies;
3. To sharpen awareness about the existence of non-peaceful relationships between people and within and between nations;

4. To investigate the causes of conflicts and violence embedded within perceptions, values and attitudes of individuals as well as within social and political structures of society;
5. To encourage the search for alternative or possible nonviolent skills;
6. To be equipped with personal conflict resolution skills.

According to **UNICEF (2000)**, schooling and other educational experiences that reflect UNICEF's approach to peace education should be able to:

1. To develop a climate, within the school or other learning environment, that models peaceful and rights-respectful behaviour in the relationships between all members of the school community: teachers, administrators, other staff, parents, and children;
2. To demonstrate the principles of equality and non-discrimination in administrative policies and practices;
3. To draw on the knowledge of peacebuilding that already exists in the community, including means of dealing with conflict that are effective, non-violent, and rooted in the local culture.
4. To handle conflicts—whether among children or between children and adults—in a non-violent manner that respects the rights and dignity of all involved;
5. To integrate an understanding of peace, human rights, social justice and global issues throughout the curriculum whenever possible;
6. To provide a forum for the explicit discussion of values of peace and social justice;
7. To use teaching and learning methods that promotes participation, cooperation, problem-solving and respect for differences;
8. To allow opportunities for children to put peace-making into practice, both in the educational setting and in the wider community;
9. To provide opportunities for continuous reflection and professional development of all educators in relation to issues of peace, justice and rights.

Thus, according to **UNICEF**, peace education is defined as “the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behaviour change 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 interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level”.

Peace education is to make a conscious effort in educational institutions to bring about peace through curriculum. It is education that can create a safe and peaceful world. It is education that aims at creation of individuals with both 'inner' and 'outer' peace, who would have the courage to save the country from destruction through warfare and violence.

### **7. Need for Peace Education**

Individual to progress needs peace of mind and peaceful atmosphere to think and create innovative ideas. Therefore, inner peace that is a calm mind is essential for the progress of not only individual but also the society. Further an educated man can be more dangerous if his creative ideas are to be properly be used by the society rather than be used for destruction of the society. So, we need people to be social, tolerant, understanding, empathetic and compassionate. The education system has to design such process where these values are nurtured among its young people.

Scientists all over the world agree that our world is very fragile. Man, in his greed has over-exploited the available resources and this has led to imbalances on the earth's surface. Not only that, they fight amongst themselves for possessing the available resources. In this context, the earth becomes susceptible to destructive powers of man. Unless man learns to live in peace with others and his environment (peaceful co-existence and sustainable development), it will become an impossible task to sustain this life-giving earth. The sustenance that man gets from the earth has given him the chance to evolve continuously as a higher being.

We are in an era which has witnessed the tragedy of nuclear warfare. The experience of war established the fact that such wars would be a disaster for life on this earth. Therefore, there is an urgent need to create a culture of nonviolence and tolerance in all walks of life and thus creating a peaceful and sane society. In this context the need for peace education has gained importance. People must understand each other, live together, tolerate each other, and these values have to be germinated in the minds of the young at a very early age.

### **8. Means of Bringing About Peace**

Peace can be brought about in various ways. As Ian Harris in his book says, there are five strategies through which we can bring about peace. The five strategies are; (1) peace through strength, (2) pacifism, (3) peace with justice, (4) institution building, and (5) peace education (Harris, 1988).

Amongst all the ways in which peace can prosper through, education for peace is the best and long-lasting means of achieving peace in the world at large. Slavson and Schiffer (1975) say that 'Children (and teachers) spend more time in schools than anywhere else except home. For better or for worse, the

school represents a large part of their daily lives. The school is not only advantageously situated with respect to the identification of development (and relational) problems, but also has the potential for carrying on preventive and rehabilitative programs. The children (and teachers) are in a position to experience the effects of corrective measures in the same setting...' It suggests that schools are the best place for developing peace and harmony among youngsters.

Although international organizations like UN are working towards peace through multiple modes, education is one mode that can usher in peace for extended period. Among the various agencies that propagate peace, schools play an important role.

### **9. Schools and their Roles in Promoting Peace**

The men in the society are to a large extent the product of its educational system. Society has let them be directed by its wise and knowledgeable members, in other words the educators of its younger generation. The goal of education and educators everywhere is to promote peaceful living and harmonious relationship with families and friends, communities and social groups and schools; states and nations around the world. But we find even people who are educated find it difficult to deal effectively with everyday conflicts and stress and strife. Resolutions to conflicts can be achieved if we utilize the energies of younger generation in constructive and positive activities. It also depends on how they are shaped and fashioned in their basic values and knowledge too. It is the school that imparts such knowledge and values.

School is the place in which we have the future citizens of the world gathered in one place. The youngsters in the school are the ones who would populate the world and decide its future. If the schools can teach, give practice, make perfect certain competencies for living together and inculcate values of peace, there will be nothing better than that for creating an ideal society. Peace education must be a concern that permeates the entire school life – curriculum, co-curriculum, classroom environment, school management, teacher-pupils relationship, teaching-learning processes and the entire gamut of school activities. The school life has to contribute to children's sense of adequacy, satisfaction, tolerance and security.

Peace education has to become part of school curriculum for another reason too. There has been an increase in violence and hostile aggression in schools which has motivated educators to give importance to peace education and that 'the children learn to deal with conflicts in a just and peaceful way' (NCERT, 2004). They have less understanding about how to lead a harmonious and peaceful life. If the growing citizens of any country are not oriented for peace, such problems will perpetuate.

There is a value crisis among the young generation. Most of the youngster hail from nuclear families now in cities and towns, with both parents going for work to finance the expanding needs of the family. The children of these kinds of families often do not get proper direction towards leading a productive and meaningful life. Therefore, the responsibility has fallen on schools to promote right values amongst them. The personality and temperament of youngsters can be created in the schools where they spent most of their growing up years. The complete school environment should be conducive towards developing children into worthy adults.

Schools cannot function in isolation nor can they be passive observers. They need to proactively keep in pace with constant change. Researches show that there is a strong linkage between curriculum, teaching, and learning outcomes (Barlett, 2008; Kertyzia and Standish, 2019; Demeril, 2009). The educationists, teachers, administrators, future employers too feel that curriculum is the one that shapes the practices of schooling.

‘School curriculum for students in any school needs to prepare them for life. It needs to build skills and values that will help them in adult life’ (Kapur, 2007). Therefore, it should take into consideration what will be happening in the outside world when the students graduate after their twelve years of schooling. The students should develop an open mind; increase their awareness about their country as well as other countries of the globe. A curriculum designed with peace and harmony right from its elementary level will help to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

### **Conclusion**

Man is a social animal. The animal quality has to be changed and managed for peaceful co-existence. His greed and animosity have to be done away for self and others to live and let live. In this regard, the educationists, thinkers and philosophers have devoted their time for the welfare and social wellbeing of people. There is constitutional guidelines for regulating our activities and lead a peaceful life. The values essential for peace are, equality, tolerance, fraternity, understanding, empathy, compassion, and not thinking ill of others. There are ample scope to promote such values and ideals among the young ones at our educational institutions. In this regard, the curriculum are to be well designed and put to operation by the efficient teachers to transact it in classrooms and all instructional processes.

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