

THE PRACTICAL AND ETHICAL IMPERATIVES OF PEACE EDUCATION

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Abstract

Peace education calls on humanity's creativity, ingenuity, and compassion. To tackle terrorism, we must transform the culture of war and violence into a culture of peace and nonviolence. This is the goal of peace education. Peace education embraces the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social growth of children within a framework deeply rooted in traditional human values. Peace education celebrates diversity and difference, and at the same time, acknowledges that core values such as respect, honour, and dialogue are universal. Presently peace education is simply a tangential topic in most traditional educational institutions. It is difficult to educate about peace when the textbooks children are required to read are mostly on war. It is based on philosophy that teaches love, compassion, trust and reverence for the human family and all life on our beautiful planet. This paper highlights the fact that peace education is a practical and ethical imperative. Furthermore, classroom specific benefits of this program are outlined. Aspects about multicultural education, environmental education and education for global citizenship are also delineated in the paper. The paper also highlights benefits of Yoga with respect to peace education.

Key words - Education as a human right, The implications of gender on peace, Women as peace builders, Gender equality , Yoga

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Tagore rightly said "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high, into that kingdom of freedom my father let my country awake". Peace education is the need of the hour. In order for humanity to reach its potential, peace and mutual respect is essential

Education as a human right –

According to UNESCO, 2007 - The human right of education has three aspects:

- Access
- Quality
- Respectful learning environment

Education is considered as a human right but the statistics are concerning. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, over 3.7 million school-age children do not have an access to school. While 90 per cent children across the world can avail primary education, only half of the refugee children can get the same. Providing children access to fair, comprehensive and quality education is important to tackle the refugee crisis and work towards global peace.

Conflict –

Disrupts the social interactions of everyday life – men and women play different roles in society during conflict and how they relate to each other in society. This interaction between gender and conflict has major implications for how we should think about conflict, security and opportunities for peace. Gender-based crimes, such as sexual violence are common during conflict and have drastic effects on women and girls. It is important to conduct comprehensive

conflict analysis and understand root causes. Security concerns of stakeholders must be considered. Development projects must benefit different regions and groups equitably. Gender and conflict should be studied together. Conflict resolution must address gender dimensions of society.

A comprehensive peace education curriculum must consist of -

- multicultural education
- environmental education
- gender studies
- Non-violent movements around the world
- human rights education
- foreign policies of various countries
- refugee crisis
- case studies of peaceful protest around the world
- United Nation's role in achieving world peace
- Working of international Court of Justice
- Major international peace treaties
- Conflict resolution mechanism
- Global Citizenship
- Ideals of Mankind
- Domestic violence
- Self-reflection
- Global awareness
- Nuclear weapons
- Sharing and cooperation
- Self esteem
- Work ethics
- Shortcomings of human development
- Sustainability
- Laws concerning natural resources



- Interdependence of countries
- Global Diversity Studies
- Prejudice and discrimination
- Cultural pluralism
- Social justice
- Equality before law
- Promoting gender equality in classroom
- Emotional management
- Problem solving
- Effective decision making
- Anti-racist education
- Anti-sexist education
- Woman empowerment
- Global economy
- National economy
- Cyber crime
- Cyber ethics
- Dynamic and multidimensional curriculum
- Anger management
- Stress management
- Effective policy making
- Critical analysis of situations
- Intrapersonal education
- Sex education
- Hands on experience
- Out of school learning
- Field visits
- Interactive , productive and simulative discussion
- Cultural studies
- Geographical analysis



- Behavioural education
- Effective application of the learning in students' lives

Yoga and Peace Education -

Asanas help to calm the nerves and provide peace of mind. It helps to reduce stress and anger.

SUKHASANA – Helps to improve coordination and muscle movements.

NISHPANDABHAVANA - Releases tension and provides physical and mental relaxation.

VAJRASANA - Feeling of quietude and turning the mind inwards acts as preparation for meditation and concentration.

STITHAPRARTHANA - Adds to steadiness and one pointedness.

BHADARSANA - This Asana transforms physical energy into subtle psychic energy.

Steps that can result in effective peace education -

The school curriculum needs to get overhauled as it is difficult to educate about peace when the textbooks students read talk about wars. The curriculum must be globally relevant. However, it must be tailored to suit each country's sociology and history. Teacher training is crucial for the program's success. It must encourage students to acknowledge diversity, global perspectives and personal opinion. The textbooks must be unbiased and should provide students with viewpoints from all the parties involved in the conflict. Schools must be accessible for people with disabilities. Schools must celebrate Peace Day - September 21. Institutions must celebrate International Human rights day – December 10. Children all over the globe must get proper access to quality education. Students must be taught to face local problems effectively and respect the old and the sick. Schools must create an environment where students feel safe and relaxed. Students must think about schools as "Safe Haven". Schools and NGOs must strive to ensure that each student receive benefits of his rights stated in, Convention on the Rights of the Child. Schools must provide students with a forum to discuss about peace and conflicts resolution. To help students understand global perspectives and foreign policies of various

countries, the concept of “model United Nations “must be popularized. Schools must encourage students to think “globally and act locally”

Benefits of peace education -

- It enhances student’s social and emotional development.
- Improves teacher-student relationship.
- Encourages mutual harmony.
- Increases tolerance amongst students.
- Students learn to value diversity
- Teaches students cooperation and improves decision making skills.
- Promotes respectful and caring environment.
- Increases parental and community involvement.
- Helps student develop their communication skills.
- Creates a safe and constructive learning environment.
- Promotes positivity.
- Increases empathy
- Increases emotional awareness and management.
- Reduces aggressiveness and hostility.
- Decreases incidences of violence.
- Decreases anti-social behaviour and hence reduces conflicts.
- Decreases suspension, absenteeism and dropout rates.
- Increases academic performance and concentration.
- Improves public speaking.
- Helps to boost student’s confidence.
- Teaches students anger management.
- Increases perspective- taking.
- Increases work reediness.
- Teaches students importance of volunteering.

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