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# From Conflict to Coexistence: The Role of Education in Promoting Global Peace

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### ABSTRACT

Since its inception, human has been battled against the inborn capacity for violence and conflict as a biological species that occupies an uneasy place in the ecosystem. Long ago, it was understood that only stable coexistence could guarantee the continued progress of humanity free from conflict. But for those who attempted to realize it through various means, putting it into practice has always been a herculean task. Since they've actively sought to undermine the desire for harmony among those who value peace, the world's lengthy history of wars, uprisings, and conflicts serves as a stark example throughout this regard. Various approaches were used to instill the value of peace in humanity as humankind evolved. The negative effects of various forms of violence are highlighted through the use of religion, music, painting, folklore, architecture etc to promote the message of peace. However, it has been observed that none of these modes had the desired impact. The intensity of violence and conflict has not decreased despite their widespread use in various cultural contexts in their own distinctive ways, as it results in two world wars in a very short period of time. Following careful consideration, appropriate frameworks have been established in the educational systems of various nations to reduce the likelihood of violence while also fostering peace. This essay aims to draw attention to those initiatives of education to promote world peace. The paper was concluded by highlighting the shifting goals of education that revolve around achieving real peace through various means.

**Keywords:** Education for Peace, Conflict Transformation, Global Citizenship, Peace building through Education, Coexistence Strategies.

### 1. Introduction:

"Education shall be directed toward the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace" (Universal Declaration of Human Right, 1948)

Humans are social creatures. A person's birth, education and other activities take place within the society. Therefore, people cannot exist without society. Human complete their socialization process through education. Socialization is a process of adaptation, through which an individual becomes familiar with social norms, values, etc. These values are the foundation of a society. Each person chooses an ideal path for his life by analysing the balance between personal needs and social peace. Values are at the heart of his sentiments with this ideology.

Moral values are very important in the life of a person. Moral value plays a special role as the foundation of human life to keep humanity alive. No person is born with moral values, after birth everyone learns values from his family, school and culture. Without moral values man's life is like an animal.

In human life, education is absolutely crucial. It begins in a person's early years. The heart of the UNESCO mission is the promotion of peace through education. Through global educational, scientific, and cultural exchanges, UNESCO promotes world peace and the welfare of all people, as stated in its 1945 constitution ('UNESCO Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy'). Our human values are to follow the path of truth, to be honest, to have dedication, to be obedient, to respect elders, to be loyal, to be helping others. In fact, for a person to progress in life, it is very important to follow these human values. The promotion of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavioral patterns that reflect and inspire these values is a goal of education for peace and non-violence.

In the 21st century, scientific and technological advances have led to social changes. The development of information technology and communication system has brought changes in the social system. In this context, The Kothari Commission said this in its report – The adoption of a science-based technology is the most defining characteristic of a modern society in contrast to a traditional one. The present society has become modern. This modernization is a dynamic

process. As a result of this process, social infrastructure changes as well as values and consciousness. Modernization does not mean that we discard our civilization, culture, values and adopt new ones. Modernization means moving forward while maintaining manners, values, ethics of own's culture. As a result of modernization, there has been a massive change in the prevailing concepts of education. In modern education, all-round development of the student has been given importance, so the current education curriculum has been greatly expanded for the physical, intellectual, social, spiritual development of the student in the curriculum formulation. Modernization has changed the needs of the individual resulting in emphasis on vocational education. Nowadays, the use of technology is increasing to make the learning process worthwhile. As a result of this rapid change in technology, there is a lack of values in the current modern education system. To overcome this lack of values, moral lessons are being inculcated in the curriculum.

Education is the way of life. Therefore, along with education, it is necessary to give place to moral values in life. If courtesy, morality, order and dignity are to be maintained in life, then the message of peace, non-violence, tolerance and brotherhood should be spread in the world. We have to be compassionate and protect the plants, greenery and environment and all the animals and birds. Crimes are increasing every year due to the deterioration of character due to lack of moral values. Without human values, a person has to face a lot of difficulties in progressing in life. Therefore, everyone should understand the importance of human values and adopt honorable values. The internalization of this moral lesson is not new today. Also seen during Vidyasagar's time, he included value education in the school curriculum. Because he felt that without values, reforms, a student cannot become fully mentally socialized.

### Concept of Peace

"We need an essentially new way of thinking if mankind is to survive. Men must radically change their attitudes toward each other and their views of the future. Force must no longer be an instrument of politics. Today, we do not have much time left; it is up to our generation to succeed in thinking differently. If we fail, the days of civilized humanity are numbered".

—Albert Einstein

Like many theoretical concepts, peace is challenging to define. Peace is something we frequently identify by its absence, just like pleasure, harmony, justice, and freedom. As a result, Johan Galtung, a pioneer in the fields of peace research and studies, has put forth the crucial distinction between "positive" and "negative" peace (Galtung, 1981). Harmony, justice, equity, and other desirable social and mental states are all present at the same time in "positive" peace. In the past, "negative" peace has been used to describe the absence of war and other types of extended, violent human conflict. One of mankind's greatest problems is war; Peace is almost always desirable for this. This peace must include the establishment of life-enhancing values and social structures. Social harmony and harmonious living are the basic conditions for peace. Peace essentially refers to the cultural and moral development of every individual and society. Peace in society is established on the basis of compassion, sympathy, empathy, self-restraint, welfare of individual-society etc. According to a review of the relevant literature, man appears to be losing his ability to be at peace on three different levels: inner level, social level & peace with nature (Agnihotri, 2017). Before continuing, it would be preferable to understand the essence of all three levels in order to develop a proper perspective on the necessity of peace.

**Inner peace:** The term "inner peace" describes a state in which a person is spiritually and mentally at ease and has sufficient knowledge and wisdom to maintain their strength in the face of stress. Inner peace appears to us when we are able to keep ourselves free from all negative desires and thoughts. Self-satisfaction comes in the form of inner peace. We experience this inner peace when the mind is calm despite all of our sorrows and is unaffected by any negative feelings like fear or anger (Baskey, 2019).

**Social peace:** Social peace is developed in the co existence of all within the society. In talking about this social peace, Delors commission talks about 'learning to live together'. It is one of the crucial four learning pillars, as stated in the UNESCO report "Learning: The Treasure Within" (Delors, 1996). Humans are social creatures, so it is not possible for any human being to live alone in the society. Each of us is dependent on everyone living within the society. So, maintaining a good relationship with each Other is absolutely essential for survival. This relationship will continue as long as there is peace in the society. Social peace implies harmony in interpersonal relationships, conflict reconciliation and resolution, love, friendship, unity, mutual understanding, cooperation, brotherhood, and tolerance of differences, as well as democracy, community building, the upholding of human rights and morality, among other things.

**Peace with nature:** From the womb to the tomb, every human being is inextricably linked with nature. For survival of our own life, we collect all elements from nature, so it is our responsibility to maintain the balance of this nature, to maintain peace among the elements of nature. Over time we turn away from this responsibility and the environment no longer maintains its peace.

### Concept of Peace by Gandhi

The idea of the unity in existence serves as the foundation for the Gandhian philosophy of peace and harmony. It has roots in the Yajurveda. Gandhian philosophy, which is based on Vedantic idealism, emphasizes the primary importance of the principles of justice and eternal truth (S. K. Roy, 1966). Gandhi is universally known as a preacher of peace and non-violence. We see the reflection of this attitude of Gandhiji in his Satyagraha movement. He has always valued both the negative and positive aspects of peace. Talking about the negative side, he said the elimination of war, the absence of all the conflicts between different castes, religions that are going on in the society. On the other hand, about the positive side, love, emotional balance, unity and harmony are said. He distinguishes between truth and falsehood and says that the root of every non-violent conflict is falsehood, and that conflict can only be resolved by truth. In search of this truth, he says in his satyagraha, and that is possible only through non-violence (Bose, 1981).

### Concept of Peace by Vivekananda

According to Swami Vivekananda, peace is not like a silent desert or crematorium. It is alive like the sea. Even though the waves are restless on the surface of the ocean, there is an unbroken silence deep within it, so is the nature of peace (Atmapriyanda, 2017). Peace is nothing but contentment and peace in our mind. Peace is the most powerful thing in the world. This power does not lie in fame, rank and name. This power lies in our peace of mind. If we are experiencing that satisfaction and the calmness of our mind, then we can say that- I am a powerful person. These concepts were clearly stated by Swami Vivekananda in his well-known poem, "Peace".

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## 2. Education for Peace Building and Peaceful Coexistence in Indian Perspectives

The search for peace is nothing new in the history of mankind. Since the birth of mankind, they fought their violent instincts to sustain their existence, gradually choosing the path of peace. Even then, two world wars took place in the world, none of the methods that were used to maintain peace in the society could produce the expected results. So finally, with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations 1948) in 1948, peace was significantly and internationally recognized as a human right.

India has always been conceived as a peaceful place. Despite being repeatedly attacked by outside forces, India was not the first to do so. The philosophical foundations of independence and fearlessness served as the foundation for India's administrative framework, which has continued to evolve overtime (Majumder, 2018). India is renowned as a proponent of peace in a world, where other nations are renowned for their military might or skill in war. Indians find peace in sacrifice and self-control, not in the materialistic world as do Westerners.

Globalization has affected India like other countries of the world. As a result, the social and economic structure of India is slowly decaying and the peaceful atmosphere is slowly disappearing. Present India is going through a deep crisis. Foreign forces are increasingly active in creating danger in the border areas of the country. As in ancient times, peaceful living in modern India has become erratic. Many have yet to recover from the seeds of division that the British planted among the people. There is a lack of renunciation, restraint and yogic practice among the masses, as a result of a large section of people is becoming self-centered. In this context, education for peace has become especially important for India. Education teaches us tolerance, honesty, global brotherhood. Education, or peace education, is the way out of this state of social poverty and discrimination. However, education should be designed in such a way that the abolition of violence leads to universal unity of knowledge and universal unity of humanity.

India being a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic country, there is a great need for peace education to prevent conflict and violence between different groups divided by their respective languages, traditions and beliefs.

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## 3. Critical Considerations on the Impact of Education on Peaceful Coexistence Challenges to Using Education as an Influencer for Peaceful Coexistence

The role of education is very important for peaceful co existence; in fact, education has failed to do the same anywhere. Since curriculum, pedagogies, and evaluation can only have a large-scale impact through education, it seems appropriate to transform education into a potent tool for promoting peace. It seems crucial to use education as a means of fostering peace in the modern era, especially with the focus on education for all. The reality, however, is quite the opposite. Due to numerous interventions at the sociopolitical and economic levels, modern education breeds more unrest than peace in the system. In light of the rising incidences of violence, corruption, and erosion of ethical values within the educational system, it is necessary to investigate the barriers that are preventing education from fulfilling its potential as a means of ensuring a peaceful environment.

### Social Level

Progress and national integration are absolutely necessary for peace. The knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and values that make up a culture of peace can be cultivated or inculcated in order to promote peace. The pursuit of values like love, truth, justice, equality, tolerance, harmony, togetherness, and self-control is required for peace. Peace is not achieved through any ideology; it does not depend on legislation. It only happens when we, as individuals, start to comprehend our psychological process. Any nation that wishes to assist its citizens in coexisting peacefully with people of different religions and cultures should start "education for peace" in the classroom. Belief that education can help people adjust personally, change their attitudes to keep up with evolving social conditions, and reshape society (Elmer H. Johnson, 1978). The main ingredients for peaceful coexistence should be fostered among India's youth through formal education, including adaptation, tolerance, creating an environment that promotes harmonious living, teaching about religions rather than religion itself, and nurturing universal and eternal values.

### School Level

Anywhere we think of the school system, tension, anxiety, fear, insecurity, and a lack of warmth come to mind. Whether it be a teacher, students, or principal, there is a lack of respect, trust, and cooperation among all parts of the school community. Due to formalities, pressure, and obligations, each element forces you to complete all of the tasks in a mechanical manner from the beginning of the day until the end of the school day. As a result of the system's unrest, which

is exacerbated by overcrowded classrooms, unfair treatment, a lack of infrastructure, in experienced teachers, unmotivated students, etc., peace appears to be more of an idealized utopia than a reality. In addition to outlining the challenges education faces in promoting a peaceful environment, the position paper of the National Focus Group on "Education for Peace" in India from 2006 offers some food for thought. "The foremost challenge before education for peace that deserves special mention at the outset is the need to do justice to teachers. We expect a great deal from teachers; and the burden of expectations continues to mount. But the duty to do justice to teachers is overlooked. Teachers' day is observed; but we turn a blind eye to how teachers live their lives— underpaid and, in some states, paid erratically. In hundreds and thousands of cases, teachers are actually paid a great deal less than their salaries on paper. Many of them have had to pay huge bribes for their jobs and feel demoralized and aggrieved. Thousands live in smoldering resentment. Even the lowliest worker in the organized sector can have recourse to the labour courts for the redressal of grievances. There is no corresponding provision for teachers. It is necessary, therefore, to setup a constitutionally empowered National Tribunal for Teachers with branches in every State and Union Territory to address and redress the grievances of teachers. In large States like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar, it might be necessary to have more than one branch to ensure accessibility, affordability, and promptitude. Doing justice to teachers is crucial to implementing education for peace." ('Position paper of National Focus Group on Education for Peace, 2006').

### **Integration of Education for Peace with Peace Education Encouraging Peace via School**

The next best place for a child to learn morals, manners, and attitudes is at school, after their family. According to Dewey, "the good society is a cooperative society". Due to the fact this is where most students will learn how to think for other members of society, schools should encourage both competition and cooperation. The simplest and most efficient way to incorporate mutuality into the daily routine of school life is through cooperative learning. Education for peace must be promoted in a way that integrates students' facts, perceptions, and knowledge styles in order to create peace behaviors because learning is a highly individualized process. Since schools serve as agents for perception and culture and work to change both culture and individual acceptance, education for peace should be prioritized from the primary through the university levels (Deonanan, 1971). According to a suggestion from UNESCO, educational institutions such as schools should act as "zones of peace," protecting kids from neighborhood conflicts (Fountain, 1999). It was intended to provide student role models who could facilitate greater understanding with other students and faculty by creating a forum for greater understanding between youth leaders in order to promote as after and more peaceful environment in schools generally. A community event should be held at the school to advance environmental sustainability, human rights, or peace. All members of a learning environment, such as administrators, teachers, other staff, students, and parents, must respect one another in order for there to be peace and harmony. Policies and practices of the administration should be based on indiscriminate action and equality.

### **Education for Peace from a Curriculum Perspective**

People want a peaceful, harmonious society, so children need basic upbringing that should start in the very beginning of their development. Given the unique importance of maintaining peace in the upbringing of children and youth in the process of globalization, it is crucial that all educators, curriculum experts, and educational authorities' pay close attention to this crucial factor that affects learning and also provides the foundation for understanding. A strong and moral curriculum is a key element in promoting peace in any society. Both the philosophy of the curriculum and individual changes take place. The curriculum, in a formal sense, is just a schedule of the subjects that will be covered in class. In a broader sense, it relates to everyone's education, not just that of the school but also that of the neighborhood.

Nothing but the mainstream of peace education will result from the use of peaceful instructional methods and approaches. In essence, these approaches support collaborative group work, peer teaching, problem-solving, discussion, role playing, consideration, agreement-building, debate, imitation, and other learner-centered instructional strategies (Galtung, 1981). These help students become more effective at participating, supporting, and solving problems over time. These techniques are second-hand for promoting peace education in curricula. "Curriculum is just designed educational experiences set for certain group of learners in a certain time for achievement of certain goals," (Sani, 2013). The term "planned learning activities for students, run and monitored by schools in order to achieve its educational goals" can also be used to define curriculum. A curriculum teaches and communicates to students what is considered important in society. It functions as a kind of manual that instructs schools on how to instill in students' particular attitudes, beliefs, skills, and knowledge. Phase-by-phase re-evaluation of the curriculum allows it to remain current with societal demands (Sani, 2013). Every community has unique requirements regarding the curriculum's objectives and design. Learning goals, subject matter, and evaluation techniques are all included in the curriculum as components that together enhance the value of education.

Regulations and guidelines in the following categories may need to be taken into account when reviewing "curriculum policy" in the context of Education for Peace:

#### **i. Behavior and discipline in schools**

Every behavior management and discipline policy that is developed and promoted centrally should be in line with and reflect the values and tenets of Education for Peace. For instance, humiliating students with corporal punishment or other sanctions is not appropriate.

#### **ii. Community involvement in the school**

The degree to which the school aspires to be and is viewed as a member of the larger community is one trait of inclusive and egalitarian schools. Policies that promote community involvement in school activities and allow the institution to showcase its 'education for Peace' initiatives to a wider audience should be supported. In the long run, this will help Education for Peace's main messages reach people outside of the school.

### iii. Combining all of it: a process to ensure that Education for Peace.

One method of how to successfully incorporate peace education in to the curriculum is shown in diagram 1:

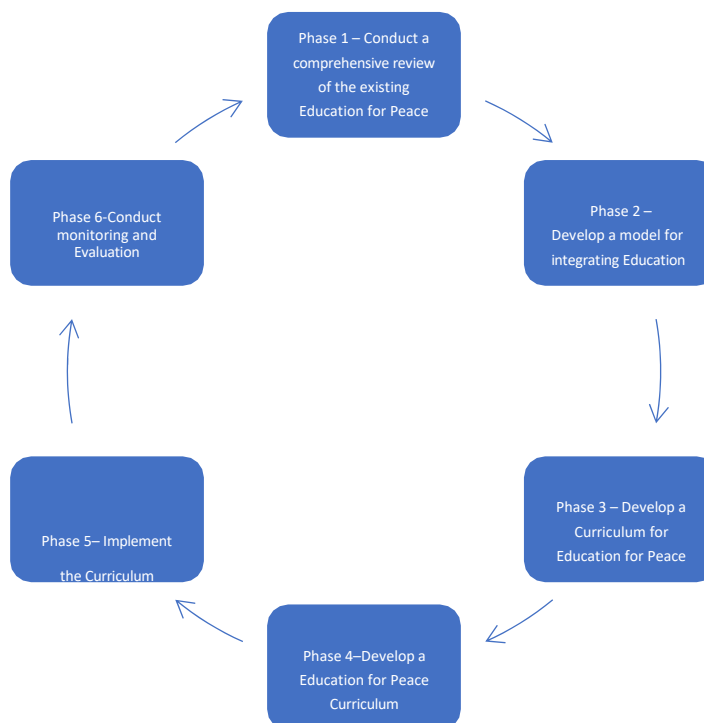


Diagram1: Overview of a process to ensure that Education for Peace is integrated into the curriculum

## 4. Conclusions

The purpose and goals of the curriculum should be to encourage teamwork in both teaching and learning because, as a result of individual performance and competition, one becomes indifferent to and insensitive to the feelings of others. Education should strive to advance real peace by fostering inner peace, social peace, and environmental peace. Pedagogies that encourage group work, such as project- or challenge-based learning, should be utilized more in the classroom in order to involve everyone in the process. Students should be made aware of the various peoples' contributions to advancing the relevant discipline in various pedagogy classes. The concerned teacher should share the biographies of notable reformers, scientists, and charitable organizations. An increasing number of efforts should be made to regularly practice yoga, meditation, and physical activity in order to foster a peaceful environment. Group-based learning should replace individual learning in the classroom. Behavior should be prioritized over academic achievement. Students' who volunteer to stop violence and promote peace and are punctual, sincere, and honest should receive special recognition. In this situation, it is important to take into consideration the parents of any students who exhibit any propensity for violence and provide them with appropriate counseling. The school should hold specific sessions to educate students about diversity in a positive way. The right orientation about the students from different cultures should be provided. To overcome stereotypes among the youth, prominent individuals from various backgrounds, including those related to gender, region, and religion, should be frequently invited. In order to maintain the value of peace, documentaries and films about peace or depicting the effects of violence should also receive adequate exposure.

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