CLASSICAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CULTURE OF PEACE EDUCATION

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Abstract

Peace education is an integral part and essential component of UNICEF Vision of quality basic education that aims to build the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable young people to prevent violence, resource conflict peacefully and promote social conditions conductive to peace and justice. Role of the teachers in teaching peace is to resolve conflicts without violence and to build and maintain mutually beneficial, harmonious relationship. This paper sketches the various opportunities and points out how a regional perspective on peace through education can be generated.

Keywords: *culture, peace, education, peace education*

Peace education is more effective and meaningful when it is imparted taking into account the social and cultural context and the needs of the country. It should be globally relevant. It should be enriched by its cultural and spiritual values and with the universal human values.Peace education is a remedial measures to protect children from falling into the ways of violence in society. It aims at the total development of the child. It tries to inculcate higher human and social values in the mind of the child. In essence, it attempts to develop a set of behavioral skills necessary for peaceful living and peace building from which the whole of humanity will benefit. Children need self-development, one of the important need is building an effective, integrated personality in the child with positive self-esteem. To live peacefully, an individual has to have many skills, like those related to affirmation, positive thinking, empathetic listening and communication, assertive behaviour, decision making and critical thinking. Teacher should help children to develop such skills so that they are empowered as individuals in the society. At the school level, the predominant need is to have a peaceful climate that is peace culture. In such a culture, children will naturally absorbed the spirit of peace. There is a popular saying that peace has to be caught rather than be taught. Peace education is the best method of education now. It is one means to find out the needs of the society. In today's world, one can see conflict all round. We should give peace a chance and there will be love, respect, understanding and prosperity for all.

Peace education must be included in the school curriculum by including one period in the class each week, conduct workshop for youth periodically, forming peace groups, emphasis on the role of teacher as counselor, teacher must serve as role model, teacher must practice punctuality, a learning atmosphere must be created to bring quality education and community participation.

Designing Peace Education

In designing a peace programme for the whole school, it is necessary for the members of staff to be involved to assure the validity and relevance. Parents also can provide good insight. The existing values programmes need to be analyzed in order to find their strengths and weaknesses.Reviews of research on effective school-based, skill-oriented conflict resolution programmes (which have been, to date, carried out primarily in western countries) suggest that important elements may include: Conducting a situation analysis prior to designing the programme, and planning for

monitoring and evaluation prior to beginning any intervention (WHO, 1998); Allowing ample time to train staff/teachers, so that they can both internalize concepts and skills of peace education themselves, and be adequately prepared to convey those concepts and skills to others(Metis, 1990); Using cooperative and interactive methods that allow for active student participation and practice (Stevahn, et. al., 1996); Teaching generic problem-solving skills through the use of real-life situations (Tolan and Guerra, 1994); Consistent reinforcing of conflict resolution skills learned at school in non-school contexts, for example, through educating parents and community groups in the same skills taught in the school (Metis, 1990); Ensuring gender and cultural sensitivity in programme design and implementation, as well as appropriateness for the age group (Blakeway, 1997); Incorporating analysis of conflicts in the community and/or the wider society, as well as of interpersonal conflict, in the programme (Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, 1994); Providing young people with the opportunity to engage in constructive, peace-building activities in their school and community (Tolan and Guerra, 1994); Enlisting broad-based community support for the programme from the outset, among politicians, educators, community leaders, public healthprofessionals, religious groups and business leaders (WHO, 1998).

Action Research

Teachers in every country have the opportunity and capacity to undertake some research. Such research carried out in the day-to-day work of the school, should be concerned directly with the problems of that school. It can properly concern itself with such matters as child development, class organization, teacher –pupil relationships, interaction with the community, curriculum matters, teaching techniques and many others. The head of the institution has to do many things to encourage, support and assist teachers who want to do research, to experiment, to improve themselves. Important points in this direction are creating of an atmosphere in the school that would make experimentation by teachers easier and acting as a research consultant to his teachers, providing advice and counsel at each step in the research process. Action research is distinguished from conventional scientific research by its goal of improving a social situation through an understanding of it (Hart, 1997).Rather than confine research to the activities of experts, action research involves the subjects of a study in investigating themselves, looking critically at their social conditions in order to change them. It is an approach that is thus uniquely well suited to research and evaluation processes in peace education. Teachers and other facilitators can carry out action research as a way of reflecting on their own personal and professional development with respect to peace education. Children and young people can also be involved in researching the development of their knowledge, skills and attitudes in their own social contexts. Over the last 2 years step, through peace education programme has conducted several Workshop and consultancies in Churachanpur district (flash point for 1997 violence) of Manipur. Over 300students, 50 teachers and 10 schools Principals have participated in these workshops. Since the W/S provide knowledge, skills, behavioralchange needed for conflict transformation.

Practice of Peace Education

Schooling and other educational experiences that reflect UNICEF'S approach to peace education should: Uphold children's basic right as enumerated in the CRC;

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; Use teaching and learning methods that promote participation, cooperation, problem-solving and respect for differences; Allow opportunities for children to put peace-making into practice, both in the educational setting and in the wider community; Integrate an understanding of peace, human rights, social justice and global issues throughout manner that respects the rights and dignity of all involved; Draw on the knowledge of peace-building that already exists in the community, including means of dealing with conflict that are effective, non-violent, and rooted in the local culture.

This vision of peace education is consistent with the UNICEF concept of rights-based, child- friendly learning environments (UNICEF 1999,E/ICEF/1999/14).This concept includes (among others) elements such as the realization of the rights of every child, gender sensitivity, responsiveness to diversity, the promotion of quality learning outcomes such as life skills and successful problem solving, and the enhancement of teacher capacity.

Life Skills Education

The Ministry of Education and UNICEF have collaborated on a holistic approach to AIDS education that focuses on learning a range of life skills, rather than only medical information about preventing transmission of HIV. The programme is planned around the actual needs and suggestions of Zimbabwean young people themselves. Activities explore issues such as self-esteem, coping with stress, gender roles, communication skills, decision-making with peer pressure through the use of role play and small group discussion. For example, in a section on preventing rape and sexual abuse, groups of students act out ways of coping with potentially dangerous situations.

For example

A stranger knocks on your door saying he is hungry and is in need of help. You are alone at home, you are doing very badly in science. Your unmarried teacher offers to give you extra lessons in his house in the afternoons after school. Through the course, students are encouraged to put their skills to use doing action projects such as carrying out surveys and interviews on the needs of the people with HIV/AIDS, their families, and young people at risk in their own community.

Curriculum development

A number of countries have developed peace education curricula, usual consisting of activities around themes such as communication, cooperation andproblem solving. Manuals have been produced to guide teachers in using these curricula with children in Burundi (1994), Croatia, and Liberia (1993). In theFederal Republic of Yugoslavia, a series of workshops on peace education themeshas been created for primary school children (1996). Teachers' manuals in SriLanka demonstrate ways of integrating peace education into the traditionalsubjects of the existing curriculum (National Institute of Education, Sri Lanka,undated, a, b, c). A series of readers has been developed in Rwanda for primaryschool children and adult literacy classes with stories and poems on peace themes.Sport and physical education have also been used in Rwandan schools as avehicle for developing skills and attitudes of peace. Operation Lifeline Sudan hasdeveloped activity kits for schools that build cooperation and respect

fordifferences through sports, art and science projects. Community service that isfacilitated by the school is another feature of some programmes. The United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF has produced a pack of teaching materialsentitled 'Children Working for Peace' (United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF,1995) introducing children to conflict resolution efforts through activitiesdeveloped in Lebanon, Liberia, Northern Ireland and Sri Lanka.

Conclusion

Peace Education has become a strategy for peace building. The goal of peace education is to imbibe in the population a culture of peace, values, attitudes, respect for life and end to violence .Peace education is not a part of formal course work. There would be no examination and certification. Its foundation is conviction, understanding and appreciating its need in the individual, community, national and global life. There are several sources from which students can acquire knowledge. Peace education cannot restrict its objective to understanding the concept of peace. Just as was in the mind of men, peace has to be installed in the mind of young men and women. In this new pedagogy, teacher's role undergoes massive change. Teacher is no more the reservoir and sole dispenser of knowledge. She is the planner, facilitator and guide, mediator, knowledge organizer, and evaluator. Peace education being essentially an applied subject, passive pedagogy would not serve the purpose. In the new pedagogy, both teachers and learners are active, indeed it is a joint venture. Lastly, peace education is an essential component of quality of good life.

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