

# **The infusion of Peace and Justice Education as a Focus of Study throughout the Entire Educational Experience**

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## **Abstract**

This paper examines the infusion of Peace and Justice as a focus of study throughout the entire Educational experience. The definition of peace education according to various authors is given. The Educational Practices and Justice are explained. An examination of how Peace Education can assist Students in working for Non-Violence and peace in their own lives in the world is done. Details on what educationists need to know, model and teach about peace and nonviolence are explained. The paper also discusses what needs to be included in a peace, non-violence and Justice Curriculum. It was observed that an un-conducive environment can never encourage any worthwhile development. Wars, riots and all types of violent situations can cause untold hardship, separation and death of members of families in many communities and nations. Since peace education is so important it is advisable that learners go through the study of peace education from the primary level of education. Therefore the implementation of a culture of peace projects requires a thorough mobilization of all means of education, both formal and non-formal and of communication; a culture of peace requires the learning and the use of new techniques for the peaceful management and resolution of conflicts.

## **Key words**

Conflict, Cooperative learning, Educational Practices, Experiential education, Holistic learning, Justice, Methodology of peace, Nonviolence, Participatory education, Peace Education, Pedagogy of peace,

## **The Definition of Peace Education**

At the Global Campaign for Peace Education, which was born at the Hague Appeal for Peace conference in May 1999, it was agreed upon that: Peace Education is teaching for and about human rights, gender equality, disarmament, social economic justice, non-violence, sustainable development, international law, and traditional peace practices. The methodology of peace education should include critical thinking, reflection and participation; they are elements that should be integrated into the pedagogy of all teaching at all levels of education. Peace is a holistic concept and a state of being and that it cannot be learned in the traditional lecture-note

taking-testing framework. Indeed peace education can be integrated into many disciplines (UNESCO, 1999).

### **Educational Practices and Justice**

Peace and non violence are values expressed by most nations, held by most spiritual traditions, and often found in the missions of educational institutions, students of all ages should therefore have the opportunity to study, reflect upon, and practice aspects of personal, community, national, and global peace in their educational experience. To counter propaganda about patriotism, combat, war, empire, militaries, and related issues of ethnocentrism, white and male supremacy, educational institutions have an obligation to provide students with accurate and critical information upon which to make momentous, everyday life, and global citizenship decisions. Peace and justice education should exist as a focus of study as well as infused throughout the entire educational experience (Sturman, 1997).

According to Sreeja et al. (2009) it is necessary that children are taught pedagogy of peace that includes recognition and rejection of violence, understanding of differences through dialogue, critical awareness of injustice, social justice and imaginative understanding of peace. The prime responsibility of a teacher is to help students become good human beings, motivated to fulfil their true potential for their own benefit as well as for the betterment of the society as a whole. Developing capabilities for peace through broad based education involves behavioral, cognitive, spiritual and attitudinal components. Discourses of empathy and reconciliation in curriculum and pedagogy are critical components of peace education goals.

Peace education is the transmission of knowledge about the requirements of the obstacles to and the possibilities for achieving and maintaining peace training in skills for interpreting the knowledge and development of reflective and participatory activities for applying the knowledge to overcoming problems and achieving possibilities (Reardon, 2000). He further notes that the skills of peacemaking to life, children and in their world rely on 4 basic concepts: accepting self and others, communicating effectively, resolving conflicts and understanding intellectual differences. Peace education can be taught vigorously through practical procedures and encouraging learners to form habits of tolerance and appreciate one another's culture and religious practices.

## **Students Working for Non Violence and Peace in Their Own Lives in the World**

Students can create a safe home and school environment, community, a peaceful nation, and a nonviolent world by: Investigating, comparing, and critically analyzing to counteract censorship and propaganda and to identify the root causes for war. They can also evaluate which aspects of culture, socialization, and media support violence and conflict, or support peace, compassion, and harmony. They can also learn varied ancient traditions of ancient wisdom intellectual thought on nonviolence and peace, topics of social justice and environmental preservation integral to them. They also need to develop skills in personal mind training, decision-making and non violent actions to increase calmness and compassion for those creating harm as well as those that are suffering. Practicing life skills of generosity, sharing, cooperation, selfless motivation, patience, and compassion with an overall focus and doing no harm (Andrzjewski, 2009).

In addition Peace Education will help learners in Contemplating the Towers of Violence and Peace to consider how personal decisions and actions influence and are influenced by larger policies and actions of war or peace. They can also practice the art of engaging with others across differences with respect, empathy, equity, peace, and advocacy in all settings. Learners will investigate critical information about military recruitment, military training, military interventions, and the consequences of combat for civilians and soldiers, treatment of veterans, conscientious objection, and the rights of students, parents, schools, and committees before making decisions about military service (The Peace Alliance, 2007). Finally they will seek out and engage with non - governmental, non- profit citizen action organizations implementing innovative actions for peace and non-violence.

## **What Educationists Need to Know, Model, and Teach about Peace and Nonviolence**

Sreeja et al. (2009) state that education for peace is the education in order to create preconditions for the achievement of peace and education about peace involves the developmental and practice of instructions and processes that comprise of peaceful social order. Recent global events in the political, cultural and religious spheres have caused division, discrimination and distrust among the masses, thereby unsettling the mantle of peace and harmony between communities. Sowing the seeds of peace and justice in classrooms could nurture a new generation of world leaders and

ordinary citizens to have a vision of peaceful and just world and who have both the skill and will to bring this vision to reality. Education at all levels is the key to building a culture of peace.

Good teachers are models of peace values such as the art of listen in, the humility to acknowledge and correct ones mistakes, assuming responsibility for own actions, sharing concerns and helping each other (Sreeja et al. 2009).

Peace education is comprehensive interdisciplinary in nature and embraces a wide range of programmes and initiatives. It can be classified under five main headings among them are: Environmental Education; Human Rights Education; International Education; Development Education; Conflict Resolution Education (Harris, 2003). All the five are partners in the same educational effort. These types of peace education may be productively combined that originally thought n the youth based programmes.

According to Andrzejewski et al. (2009) educators can model and inspire peace and nonviolence in their classroom and schools by: Participating in a process of re-education to critique socialization and indoctrination supporting jingoism, nationalism, colonialism, imperialism, militarism, ethnocentrism, patriarchy, and other beliefs promoting hierarchies of status and privilege; Integrating principles of peace and nonviolence into aspects of the school environment to foster personal and global peace and well-being; Learning, practicing and modeling mindfulness, compassion, love, kindness, patience and generosity towards all students and colleagues especially in conflictual or tense situations; Integrating ancient wisdom, intellectual thought and practices of peace and nonviolence appropriately into particular grade levels, subject matter or communities involved; Experimenting with creative methods to support student learning of peace and non violence and to address controversial issues that may arise in this context; Engaging other educators, administrators, parents, community members, non-profit organizations, and faith communities interested n sharing ideas and plans for nonviolence and peace education.

### **How might Educational Institutions foster new paradigms and life skills for peace with justice, integrating them into everyday policies and practices?**

Andrzejewski (2009) states that educational institutions have to create a mission that reflects education for democracy, social justice, peace, nonviolence, environmental integrity, and

interspecies responsibility, implementing a regular evaluation process to assess how the school is meeting this mission. In addition they have to establish a socially just and respectful environment creating safety rather than relying upon external controls, surveillance, and punishment. Another key factor is the hiring of a diverse faculty, staff, and security personnel with credentials and commitment to fostering peace and nonviolence so that every student sees role models in the school leadership able to work across differences or address conflict successfully and model a peace agenda. There is also need to hire administrators and security personnel who have demonstrated success with the creation of a positive nonviolent environment, who operates with vigorous fairness and due process for dispute resolution, and who set the standard for respectful treatment of faculty, staff and students.

Providing faculty and staff development for advanced knowledge, skills, and practices in the principles of peace, nonviolence, justice, and non-judgmental compassion. Establishing a reward structure that recognizes contributions toward meeting this mission (Andrzejewski et al, 2009)

Explaining on critical thinking, problem solving, language and life skills as well as open mindedness, expressiveness, peacefulness, flexibility and sensitivity towards various global issues provide comprehensiveness to peace education. Various strategies recommended are integration of theory and practice to the potential of practical programs offering courses in peace education security studies, developing a relevant pedagogy for peace practitioners in higher education setting, collective varieties and deeply rooted historical memories and societal beliefs, art-making activities, employing think-aloud strategies and mind/body oriented methods, setting up solidarity camps among others are suggested (Sreeja et al, 2009).

The destiny and future of humanity depends on peace and justice. Peace is shaped by our world view- our views of reality, human nature, purposes of life and human relationships. Peace education is a holistic, multifaceted and life affirming process of skill building that empowers children with creative and non-destructive activities. These emphasize teaching of peace, non-violence, conflict resolution, social justice, economic wellbeing, practical participation and environmental concerns. Peace education is a psychological, social, political and ethical and spiritual state with its expressions in intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, international and global areas of human life (UNESCO, 1999).

The “how” is as “important” as the “what”. Hence the teaching-learning approaches that are compatible with the goals of peace education are holistic, participatory, cooperative, experiential and humanistic. The holistic education promotes cognitive, affective and behavioral goals of learning. In peace education the goals are threefold. First is the building of awareness on the realities, roots and consequences of violence, and the building of awareness on the roots of peace. Second is the building of concern and the development of the values of empathy, compassion, hope and social responsibility. Harris and Morrison (2003) call it development of moral sensitivity culminating in the building of the capacity of learners to care for others. Third is the call to action beginning with the resolve to change personal mindsets and attitudes and doing something concrete about situations of violence.

**Holistic education promotes cognitive, affective and behavioral goals of learning. In peace education, the goals are three-fold. First is the building of aware**

Participatory education allows learners to enquire, share and collaborate. Teachers encourage students to articulate their own perspectives before inviting them to take appropriate action on the issues discussed (McGinnis, 1984). Participatory education also means veering away from the traditional indoctrination style. The observance of democratic processes in the classroom can contribute to the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for democratic citizenship (Harris and Morrison, 2003).

Cooperative learning increases motivation to learning, improves relations among students, challenges individualism, and lessens divisiveness; and feelings of prejudice. In cooperative classroom, students learn to rely on each other, and the success of learning activities depends upon the contributions of each one. If students would experience cooperative processes in the classroom, such habit could be brought by them into their larger spheres of interaction (Harris and Morrison, 2003).

Experiential education means learning through the processing of one’s experience from activities initiated in the classroom. Learners build ideas and form their own concepts from the experience or activity or activity they went through. Constructivist teachers are flexible and process oriented. Another type of education is humanist. A humanist classroom emphasizes the social, personal and affective growth of the learners. Individuals are accepted for what they are. It

develops the notions of the self to promote a sense of self-esteem. It sends the message that all are valuable and gifted McGinnis (1984). He further says that “without a positive self-concept or self-image, no one takes a stand, ‘goes public’, or works for change”. Teachers in a humanistic classroom are empathetic and affirming. They show interest and concern for the wellbeing of their students.

### **What might be included in Peace, Nonviolence and Justice Curriculum?**

Andrzejewski et al. (2009) state that peace, nonviolence and justice curriculum should include instructional practices that respect developmental, cognitive and intellectual capacities. It can empower and inspire learners and bring a healthy balance and diversity to activism. Any curriculum of peace must have at its core, teaching of empathy. An infusion or integration of principles of peace into the teacher education programmes is advocated. Discourses of empathy and reconciliation in curriculum and pedagogy are critical components of the reformation of peace education goals. Emphasis should be on critical thinking, problem solving, language and life skills as well as open mindedness, expressiveness, peacefulness, flexibility and sensitivity towards various global issues.

Use of mind and body oriented methods to develop non-violent attitudes and behavior. Using cooperative and reflective learning strategies for acquiring peace values and skills in a large and diverse class are appreciated. Public education efforts such as media campaign and problem-solving workshops are to be promoted. Emphasis should be laid on peace education programmes that use dialogues to foster mutual understanding and respect.

There should be an aim to nurture students’ knowledge of peace with art making activities that enable them to discover the dynamic events that can develop within its presence. Students and teachers should employ think aloud strategies as they read literature, compose poems and create artwork related to the theme of peace collaborative teaching among classrooms, art and technology.

Help to recognize contributions and success, act with respect, share power to build a community with peace effective strategies include reflective listening, reading and storytelling, journal writing, creating drama, dramatic play and problem solving techniques.



Language and literary experiences can foster peace. Students are introduced to critical thinking, problem solving and peacemaking strategies. It aids them in developing a range of skills, including research, mapping, dialogue, debate, role-playing and appreciated, storytelling, game playing and use of metaphors are encouraged.

The need to employ sustainable practices which emphasize self-awareness, awareness of others, conflict resolution, problem-solving, global awareness and appreciation of arts of science are stressed. Skills and strategies of problem solving, conflict resolution and peace making can be learnt through well organized and frequent exposure to literature. Solve problems peacefully through the use of activities such as role-playing, modeling, reading, writing, publishing stories with conflict and peace themes, brain storming, doing group projects with peace themes and group discussions are appreciated.

Focus should be on easy- to- implement strategies. Importance of positive role models, visual reminders providing aesthetic experiences that promote peace, telling stories about problem solving should be incorporated properly. Focus on self-awareness, community awareness, cultural awareness and environmental awareness should be developed. Peace education is enhanced by a comfortable stress free classroom environment and by literature – based, creative-arts, compassion-building and conflict resolution. The teacher is the key element in creating the environment and modeling. Curriculum based on the peaceable classroom model which emphasizes cooperation, appreciation of diversity, healthy expressions, feelings responsible for decision-making and conflict resolution is emphasized. Curriculum design needs to be informed by a holistic approach (Toh, 2007).

Displaying posters, conducting project works, expanding children's global awareness, teaching conflict resolution, modeling how to use it when a problem becomes evident, clipping articles from the newspapers are all advisable. Setting up solidarity camps that brings together children of different cultural groups for recreational activities, sports activities that build character and promote a spirit of teamwork, cooperation and sportsman spirit, media awareness to reduce violence and increase the peace- content in radio and television programmes, magazines focusing on peace themes, using dance, drama, songs to educate the community on peace values, puppetry and animation to popularize the values of fairness, non-violence and social harmony, participation in role plays, dramas, composing peace poems, peace songs, participation in various



community Human Rights Day, United Nations Day, Environmental Day among others are to be promoted (Andrzejewski, 2009).

Cawagas (2007) maintains that those students from previously conflicting groups interact and have the opportunity to build positive relationships with each other. Cooperative learning techniques should be encouraged as it has immense value developing peace culture. Students should be taught how to engage in integrative negotiations and per mediations to resolve conflicts constructively. Civic values should be inculcated that focus students in the long-term common good of the society. Set up state level agencies to that monitor the implementation of peace education and promote appropriate research in peace education in order to review and reform the curriculum in the light of unfolding data and experiences. Ancient and global knowledge and age appreciate curricula can provide students with alternative perspectives and skills to critique and counteract the culture of violence and advocate for peace and nonviolence towards all peoples, all species, and the environment.

According to Andrzejewski et al. (2009) a curriculum meets this standard by: Teaching critical analysis and investigation of media, censorship and propaganda; Offering multiple opportunities to study philosophies, spiritual traditions, histories and practices of peace, pacifism, non-violent resistance, non-violent action, and social justice; Developing skills and habits of compassion, kindness, equity and advocacy for other peoples, other species, and the environment; Studying international documents on war/peace, the environment and social justice; Studying social movements working for specific components of peace and non-violence. These components of peace include establishing universal international procedures for war crimes and human rights laws; Protection and reparations for victims and environmental damage created by war; Campaigns to stop use of child soldiers; Protection for advocates, humanitarians, peace workers and whistle blowers; Establish a universal system for habeas corpus; Shift weapons production/sales and military budgets to positive human and environmental needs; Work for disarmament and non proliferation of all types of weapons: nuclear, depleted uranium, weapons in space, landmines, biological and chemical weapons,

In addition Andrzejewski et al. (2009) assert that there is need to hold nations and corporations accountable for damage to life and the environment by: Developing skills in democratic citizenship including methods of evaluating candidates, exercising voting rights, monitoring

campaigns and elections, investigating government decision-making and accountability; Developing knowledge and skills for global citizenship and demonstrating connections between everyday individual actions, collective organizing, and global wellbeing.

Toh (2004) reminds us that while peace-oriented environmental education teaches people to be personally and socially green (i.e., undertake “recycle, re-use and reduce” programs, etc.), Environmental Education should be able to make them question over-materialistic lifestyles and the consumerist ideology propagated by the dominant modernization paradigm as well as advocate simplicity, earth rights and equitable development.

In order to succeed in infusing peace and justice education teacher education programmes at all levels are to be reformed and radically reorganized. Education and training alone may not offer immediate remedies to the local and global challenges that face human kind but it can contribute to addressing challenges over time. It has a crucial socialization function through the shaping of personal and collective identities, the formation of responsible citizenship and the promotion of critical social participation, based on principles of respect for life, human dignity and cultural diversity. Conflict – sensitive education and training policies contribute to the development of skills, values and knowledge for peace building. It is the role as the lever for peace and development, education and training should be seen as a comprehensive framework resting on four pillars: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together. (Andrzejewski, 2009). Education and training should also be accessible to all, be of high quality and facilitate the achievement of a just, peaceful and sustainable future.

## **Conclusion**

Introduce students to the holistic and critical understanding of the theory and practice of peace education and explore ways in which Peace Education contributes to social justice. As a result the participants should be able to answer political, social and cultural issues related to the emergence of development of peace education. More so they can be able to explain various perspectives and models of peace education and related educational fields that enhance social justice and cohesion. In addition they can be able to explore challenges, issues and problems of using peace education as a tool for social justice and cohesion. Finally they should be able to apply pedagogical principles of holism, dialogue, values formation and critical empowerment.

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