

Education for culture of Peace and Non-Violence

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Abstract

Globalization changes the power of developing countries to that of developed countries. It changes power relationship between government, business and civil societies. Most fundamentally it changed the prospects of peace both within countries and between them. Moreover in this era of globalization countries are residing on a 'heap of baroodh'. There is mad race of collecting weapons of destruction at national level as well as individual level. There is violence everywhere at every moment. Every person is intolerant and frustrated. Negative values are spreading like a vishdhar snake in each and every country. World war like situation is emerging at international level. When a war breaks out, it's on slaughter is not only on forces fighting with each other but also on the civilians and innocent children. It effects the whole eco-social cultural, psychological fabric of a nation. Human rights are violated. Due to development of information technology moral crisis are on increase. No peace everywhere. Now the question is how to secure our generation from these evil and moral crisis-the only answer is education that always plays a role of catalyst for change.

Keywords: globalization, education, peace, non-violence

Introduction

*Northern and southern,
Live Like Breathren,
Peace brings prosperity,
War destroys humanity,
Why to have burial fight,
Shed the motto might is right,
Rulers are fond of powers,
They can't have blessings to shower.
Violence shapes the future dark
Consumes the vitals of society like sharks.
Oh human beings so be wise,
Don't reduce humanity's size.
Give the future generation a gift.*

With deep concern to serious and long standing problems and issue of violence in all its forms including militarization, armed conflicts, social and economic injustices and other forms of violence, human rights violations and ecological destructions, intercultural divisions and personal peacelessness in society and wider world community, I take this opportunity to share some reflections on the work and challenge of culture of peace and non violence.

First of all let us discuss culture of peace.

Culture of peace consists of values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire social interaction sharing, based on principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights tolerance and solidarity that reject violence, endeavour to prevent by tackling their root causes to solve problem through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate in the development process of their society (UNESCO 1995).

It is all the values, attitudes, and forms of behaviour that reflect for life, for human beings and their dignity and for all human rights, the rejection of violence in all its forms and

commitments to the principles of freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance and understanding between people and groups and individuals (UNESCO 2000).

Why do we need to revive old past values? During this 21st century it is because of historical appeal to world community to transcend violence and destructive conflicts, which have caused tremendous suffering and pains. Moreover, in the age of mass media we see daily the horrors, destructions and tragedy of violence and armed conflicts in every corner of the world, killing millions of people creating trillions of refugees. Physical violence is found not only in wars and armed conflicts. Dreadful news of many victims battered or even killed through domestic violence and violence against women and minorities or shootings in schools in many countries.

After 50 years of universal declaration of human rights we are still confronted by grim reality of violation of rights of millions of men, women and children. We are also thinking of ecological crisis, which will result in very serious confusion for the survival of humanity and planet earth. Yet, the forces of maximum economic growth engineered by the modernization and no "globalization" paradigm continue or even escalate ecological destruction of world's forests, lands, oceans and air. We have been horrified and startled by episodes of inter ethnic violence in virtually all regions from Nigeria, Indonesia, Sri Lanka to northern Ireland, India, former Yugoslavia, Nepal, we are thus reminded that relationships between different cultural ethnic groups can sometimes result in deep disturbance violence.

Under such circumstances it can be easy to feel pessimistic still there is a growing number of people in the world who refuse to feel despair and hopelessness in the face of realities. They live with in, but are not overpowered by this culture of violence. They wake up daily and remind themselves, as individuals, as members of families, communities,

organizations and networks that we can learn to build a peaceful humanity and peaceful world. Govt. and official agencies are willing to play constructive roles. There is also growing consensus that an expanding civil society comprising communities, N.G.O.s, committed individual citizens, some sections of business, social institutions and regional international networks is vital in catalysing and sustaining a culture of peaceful building at all levels.

Education which is considered an agent of social change has to play indispensable role in this present scenario. The work of educators at all levels and modes of school may not be always as visible as participating in peace rallies, peace negotiations and other terms of non violent actions. Policies and strategies to transcend violence need complimentary educational processes at levels of society to cultivate values, attitudes, world views that are internalized by individuals, institutions, conflicting parties. Peace accords may be negotiated and signed, schools may declare some tolerance policies in violence but they cannot be effective and sustainable if citizens, leaders, teachers and parents are not engaged in a critically transformative process of peace education. Let me clarify word 'educational' in peace education and related movements and project is not limited to mainstream conceptions of education. It can not be just cognitive or development. It must be heart and spirit understanding that touches our inner being that is our emotional feeling. The norms values and aims of a culture of peace constitute the basis of a global ethics and show that fundamentally many of the most important levels are common to all moral traditions and there is no sharp cleavage between values of various groups of countries, between the north and the south, the east and the west. This concept was developed in 1992 at UNESCO as the organization response to "An agenda for peace at U.N. Security Council. Transition from the culture of war to a culture of peace was taken up as priority by 28 session of Cienerai Conference of UNESCO in 1995.

In the beginning of December 1995 U.N. General Assembly adopted resolutions on culture of peace almost every year, culminating with decisions to declare the year 2000 as International year for culture of peace, to declare the years 2001 to 2010 as the international decade for culture of peace and non violence for the children of the world and the declaration of programme of action on a culture of peace.

This conception has both theoretical and practical value. It provides a conceptual framework that emphasizes the importance of addressing the deep culture roots of war and violence and constitutes the basis for coherent strategy for a transformation to a culture of peace and non-violence. Strategy adopted by UNESCO has been on -1. partnership 2. Manifesto 2000 3. New information technology.

This provides the basis for a global movement for a culture of peace and non violence. Partnership between and among the various actors (members states Civil Society, United Nations system in particular UNESCO) are being encouraged and strengthened for "A global movement for a culture of peace (United Nations 1999)." During initial months of 2000 partnership agreements were being signed between international organization and UNESCO between national organization and national points. Similarly the partnerships are being developed at the levels of states in some countries.

(National Committees having representatives of the govt. civil society and united nations). In a few countries in form of govt. and non governmental organizations. Special importance is being given to partnership with cities, towns, national parliaments for developing action plans and making legislations in this direction.

The manifesto 2000 written by a group of nobel peace laureates on the basis of united nations resolutions has been circulated for signature during the international year for the culture of peace. Those signing the manifesto 2000 commit themselves to following the principles of culture of peace in their family and community: respect all life; reject violence; share with others; listen to understand; preserve the planet and rediscover solidarity.

New information technologies especially internet are being used extensively for information exchange. It is also providing up to date description of the movement. It is also used for participative interaction communication. It is used for getting signatures of international organizations on manifesto 2000. Another initiative for its development is news network of multilingual internet sites provides information on news and media events that promote one or more of eight action area for this purpose. Curriculum for culture of peace and nonviolence should be based on eight areas of action.

1. Culture of peace through education.
2. Sustainable economic and social development.
3. Respect for all human rights.
4. Equality between women and men.
5. Democratic participation.
6. Understanding tolerance and solidarity.
7. Participating communication and the free flow of information and knowledge.
8. International peace and security (disarmament etc.)

Here I am only taking the first area i.e. culture of peace through education. Education is always considered an effective weapon of change in each society i.e. social change.

It is the principal means of promoting culture of peace. This includes not only formal education but also informal and non formal education in full range of social institutions including the family and the media. The very concept of power needs to be transformed from logic of force and fear to the force of reason and love, it should be expanded so that basic literacy is joined by the second literacy of "learning to live together" our present system of education is a complete failure to fulfil this purpose of education. Therefore, we need education which should empower people with peace making skills of dialogue, meditation, conflict transformation consensus building co-operation and nonviolent social change. It should be based on the universal principles of human rights, democratic principles social justice and the same time build upon peace making traditions and experiences of each society. We need such education that must inculcate principles of tolerance and promote "intellectual and moral solidarity". When we are talking about principles of tolerance and moral solidarity, I can suggest the revival of indian scripture mentioning about universalization "Vasudev kurumbkam" Ramayan totally based on moral solidarity and tolerance. Indian philosophy is always stressing ethical code of conduct which confirm the basis for such education in which the more stress is on family as a basic unit based on the relationships as these relationships

depend greatly on intrinsic factors such as understanding, appreciation, integrity and attitude. Family is the stepping stone for the individual to face the huge world outside. So we need education which restores faith in this most sacred institution as today in the family situation there exist barriers because of lack of trust understanding and love. For removing these barriers we must adopt positive approach through positive mode like as understanding the individuality, appreciation of others strength and talents, honesty in dealings, allowing for the development of others, developing a loveful attitude.

Again education should propagate the philosophy of nonviolence and truth propagated by Mahatma Gandhi which compelled britishers to quit India. Even Buddha and Mahavira both exposed the virtues of nonviolence and an adherence to truth some 2,000 years before Gandhiji. Christ also practiced non-violence. Gueunanak the founder of Sikhism also praised the quality of non-violence in the cause of truth.

What is the philosophy of non-violence.....

It is not simply an absence of the negative emotions of anger and hate, in Gandhian philosophy but the positive existence of the forces of peace, love and compassion. It does not simply mean actual physical violence but also subtle violence which takes place in many forms on different levels that is in words, attitudes, thoughts, actions etc. Gandhiji's philosophy calls for non-violence in all above mentioned forms.

To discipline the mind is meditation through which we can create thoughts of goodwill for sections of society and community. Meditation, by making mind experience deep peace awfully creates a subtle vibrations of energy or peace. Hence the beauty of non-violence and peace is the true spirit of humanity a universal religion of self and of the world. Therefore, it is up to each one of us, as individual to put the power of non-violent resistance in the practice. Thus the Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence has the immediate relevance to the culture of peace and non-violence.

Let us discuss the relationship between purity and happiness also. Purity is not a denial of life but an affirmation of life's original dignity and worth. Purity brings compassion and transformation where it can. When we are pure we are happy. Happiness brings contentment. Purity of vision means having no bad feelings or negative reactions. It also brings independence. The proof of that independence is the ability to love and to come close to others.

Most of our problems at national and international level are caused by lack of good motive. People generally lay emphasis on careful intelligence, scientific development, courage and life full of joy but it is usually forgotten that if there is no good motive. Science and intelligence may be used to promote means of mutual destruction, courage may be employed for killings and joys may be gained in evil ways. On the contrary if there were good will towards all, there would be no arm race, no racial prejudice, no bridge burning, no exploitation, no poverty, no injustice to labour class. Without good will, conferences end in bickering, assemblies achieve nothing, resolutions are considered mere scraps of papers, economic remedies can not prove effective. Legal enactments can not bring social change.

Consider inherent worth of human personality. Do not treat individual as a means for gratification of desires of another.

No one has to be degraded top self ego. If we apply this principle in life then there will be no slavery, exploitation, poverty, ill treatment. These qualities can be developed among men and women through education based on moral and spiritual values.

Similarly we can use the science in the best way to promote love for humanity and love of truth. Unfortunately the scientist could not stop misuse of their inventions. The situation of scientists in today's society is more worse as they are working within the limits of different political and social system that divide the world rather acrimoniously. Science has given us technology to harness nature and overcome hurdles and solve difficult problems. But technology is only a tool. What is lacking is the will and wisdom to use it in the service of humanity. Moreover, science has given us the tools to solve humanity's physical problems. It has also opened the door into the realm of the spirit. How we use those tools and whether, we enter that door is up to us. The scientists of the world have given us a precious gift, so we need education which makes us wise enough to use all these scientific inventions.

Thus, The need for the hour is for such types of education for promotion of culture of peace and non-violence in the global context.

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