Cooperative Learning: An Approach for Imparting Peace Education among School Students

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Abstract

The contemporary societies across the world are facing globalised problem of peacelessess which is leading to violent actions not only at domestic level but also at national and international level. Therefore there is urgent need to transform the present global society from peacelessness to peaceful. For this, many educationists and policy makers advocate that peace education should be embedded in curriculum to live healthy life. Consequently, In Indian school system peace education is adopted in latent form in the curriculum at school level. It is not separate like other subjects. Hence, development of peace among students we have to focus not only at specific approach but also on different approaches for imparting peace education at school level. Keeping these views, the present paper discusses the concept of peace education, aim of peace education, need of peace education and the role of cooperative learning in imparting peace education.

KEYWORDS: Peace Education, Cooperative Learning, School students.

Introduction

Our present society is facing many serious problems and conflicts related to social, economical, political, and religious views. We know that in developed countries, there is increasing environmental deterioration and economic stagnation and unemployment, inflation and misery, hunger and malnutrition in less developed countries in many parts of Asia and Africa, but crime exists everywhere such as murder, suicide ,rape, robbery etc(Rajan, 2015; Focus Economics,2018) .The media and investigating agencies are regularly uncovering the cases of day to day corruption. Millions of people take alcohol, narcotics sleeping pills or pain killers for living (9 Fascinating Insomnia and Sleep Satistics, 2016). Are these events not indicating towards the absence of happy life or to such actions on our part that contradict essential values required for quality life? Otherwise, how can we express our present unpleasant or unrest?

People are responsible for happening such unpleasant in society. Maximum people forget universal values necessary for being human. These values are feeling of brotherhood, tolerance, sympathy, humanity, love, accountability etc. It can be analyzed through the human behavior that most of the people are not living at higher stairs of Maslow's need hierarchy theory. Therefore, under this unpleasant situation peace education can be used to eradicate uncivilized behavior of people towards other people, society, and with themselves today. Many educationists and policy makers advocate peace education today in curriculum. Also many great personalities like Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekanand and Ravindranath Tagore, promoted   peace through their actions (Biswal & Pandey ,2010).

The relevance of peace education was addressed by Fredick Mayor –Secretary General of UNESCO, when he said "If education is the only defense against human catastrophe , peace education is the soul of education that can create the shield for human survival on the planet earth .It is the only through peace education that peace can be installed in human mind as an antidote to war in minds of men''(UNESCO,2005).Also the International Commission on Education for the 21st century says "living together in harmony'' must be the ultimate goal of education. In the four pillars of learning given by Delors report, two pillars namely learning to live together and learning to be are concern with peaceful living(as cited in Singh,2013).

NCF (2005) advocates education for peace at all levels of school education as perspective   from which all subjects are to be thought and further emphasizes that education for peace must be developed as concern that overshadows entire school life – curriculum, school management ,student –teacher relationship and activities related to school . Hence it is important that we must focus on different approaches for integrating peace education in the curriculum. Dhingra (2018) presented 6 major media or approaches of integration of peace in curriculum are following:

- Subject contexts
- Teaching methods
- Co-curricular activities
- Classroom management
- Staff development
- School management

NCERT position paper on education for peace (2006) considers teacher as peace builder in class. Therefore, teacher has to play pivotal role in building capacities required for well being of humanity. Peace education is not a subject taught in school, but it is inculcated in latent form in the curriculum school .It is important that teacher have to give focus on teaching approach   for imparting peace education. Teacher should emphasis on instructional approach which is beneficial not only in imparting knowledge, but also provides practicing of value, attitudes and skills required for peace education. Maya (2015) the values ,skills and attitudes needed for peace education are as following:

- Commitment to equality
- Self esteem
- Empathy
- Non Violence
- Honest Talk and sensitive learning
- Respect for others without discrimination
- Effective Communication
- Problem Solving

Hence, teacher has to use teaching approaches which are compatible with peace education. Keeping these views, the present paper focuses on the role of cooperative learning in imparting peace education along with concept of peace education, aim of peace education, need of the peace education, and content of the peace education.

Concept of Peace Education

Ancient Indian education system was very bright in order to promote peace , international understanding, tolerance and self restrain which are evident in the Vedas, Puranas and Upnishads. The ancient Indian rishis visualized earth as 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. It means whole world is family (Sharma& Sharma, 2004) .There were many brand ambassadors of peace in modern India. Swami Vivekanand was one of them. According to him peace is eternal and spiritual. He says," You may enjoy the great peace in your mind''(Complete Work of Swami Vivekanand ,vol.8,446).Mahatma Gandhi is known for peace movement. His birthday is celebrated as 'International Day of Non Violence'. According to Gandhiji peace is absence of tensions, conflicts, and all forms of violence including terrorism and war. He emphasized to create a society to practice justice, equality, tolerance and non violence. He also emphasized to adopt lifestyles accommodate to ecological system (Shukla,2002).

Peace education has many divergent meaning for different individuals in different places .A variety of term used by different countries and organizations in the context of peace education like 'Peace building in schools', 'Global Education', 'Education for Peace', 'Education for Conflict Resolution' and 'Values for Life' (Fountain ,1999).

Peace Education is defined as many different ways in different context. There are some definitions according to the eminent educationist and international organizations: Freire (2006) defined peace education as mechanism for the transformation from a culture of violence to a culture of peace through process of 'conscientisation'. R.D. Laing (1978) noted that peace education as response against problems of conflicts and violence on scales on ranging from the global and national to the local and personal. It provides opportunity to create sustainable future(as cited in Rajaguru,2015).International organization UNESCO has defined peace as the process of promoting the knowledge ,skills ,attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create conditions conducive to peace ,whether at intrapersonal ,interpersonal , intergroup, national or international level(Fountain,1999).

Thus peace education is comprehensive term which only does not give various dimension about human struggle but also provides training about the solution about these conflicts or problems.

Aim of Peace Education

According to the UNESCO(2005) aim of peace education are followings:

- To understand the nature of conflict and peace.
- To learn joy in living.
- To understand the social responsibilities of own towards others.
- To enhance the knowledge of community.
- To understand the concept of gender equity.
- To develop ability to think critically.
- To develop problem solving in individuals.

- To develop empathy among individuals.
- To find out alternative method to solve problems occurring in day to day life.
- To develop effective communication skills to transform feelings and perspectives.
- To teach the individuals for preserving environment.

Need of Peace Education

Today, many educationist and policy makers recommend peace education. Need of peace education is highlighted by following point:

- Citizens must be trained with the capacities and values in order to maintain peace in their respective families, friends, community, work place, country, and within themselves.
- There is need to develop constructive approach among individuals to handle the situation after war or conflict.
- There is need to develop planet as better place for living of next generation. It cannot be denied that we are very careless towards the resources available on the earth .We have to make sure that every person should be sensitive for resources available on the earth.
- There is need to develop global citizenship among individuals in order to maintain peace worldwide.

Content of Peace Education

The concept and content of peace education vary with time and space. In India Peace education is known as Education for Peace. The content of education for peace comprises respect for human rights, justice, equality, tolerance, co-operation, social, responsibility, and respect for human cultural diversity (N.C.F., 2005). Maya (2015) after analyzing different psycho social factors behind intolerance identified the component of peace education are democracy, citizenship, spiritual intelligence, media and social networking ,population education, anticorruption education, conscientisation programmes, empowerment of women ,human rights, secularism, sustainable development, value education, national integration, international understanding, counter terrorism, and Indian philosophy & peace.

Position paper, National Focus Group on Education for Peace (2006) emphasizes on inculcating peace education through other subject in latent form in the curriculum but as separate subject and suggests what must be done on specific stage of school level are as following:

1. At primary stage of education, children are in formative years. The focus must be given on peace-oriented personality. The values regarding peace – oriented personality comprise of hygiene of both of the self and surroundings, respect for others and elders, recognition of the dignity of labour , honesty , love, sharing and cooperation, tolerance, regularity, punctuality ,responsibility etc. Hence Education for Peace for primary school children is about helping enjoy and celebrate diversity, and harmony in nature.

2. At the upper primary stage of education, children able to think rationally and relationally about various event happenings in their surroundings. At this stage children is anxious for status in peer group .Hence school responsibility is to bring children together from multiple religious, cultural, and regional backgrounds. It is needed to cognitive competence to children for understanding the values underlying democracy, equality, justice, dignity, and human rights. Children need to develop positive response towards cultural diversity and praise the peaceful coexistence. Also they need to develop qualities needed to live in harmony with group.

3. At secondary and senior secondary stage, students reach adolescence period of life. Here they want to make their identity .They are still immature. Due to this they always create conflict situation with parents, peers, and teachers .So there is need to give him training to resolve problems occurring due to day to day interactions through dialogue and negotiation. There is also need to develop wider perspective on peace, justice, and non-violence.

Role of Cooperative Learning in Imparting Peace Education

The role of cooperative learning can be understood by two ways:

1. Concept of Cooperative Learning

2. Researches on Cooperative Learning

Concept of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is a teaching approach in which small group of students work with one-another to achieve common Cooperative learning is dissimilar with individual learning. Individual is competitive in nature while cooperative learning provides learning with one other's resources and skills(Chiu,2008).Cooperative learning can be incorporated using various techniques like STAD,JIGSAW, Think Pair Share etc. Johnson, Johnson & Holubec (1987) identified five basic elements on the basis of various definitions   of cooperative learning :

1. Positive Interdependence

2. Promotive   Interaction

3. Individual and Group Accountability

4. Collaborative Skills

5 .Group Processing

Positive interdependence means the group member understand that they are attached to one another to accomplish a common goal. They must commit to personal success as well as the success of every member of group. Promotive   interaction occurs when every group of member share resources to contribute in the success of others. They need to help, support, and encourage each other's efforts. The group and each member must be accountable for gaining a common goal. No one can conceal him from

contributing group. The performance must be evaluated based on group except individual. Collaborative skills are required for functioning in group. These skills are social, leadership, decision making, and communication. Student must learn these skills to work effectively in cooperative learning. Group processing occurs when the group member participate to discuss about concerns and accomplishment of goal. They make decision about various changes according to goal.

The component of cooperative learning is consistent with the aim of peace education. Peace education aims to develop positive interdependence among people for realizing importance of each people, to encourage face to face interaction to solve the problem originated in day to day life, to make every person responsible towards global society, to train every people in collaborative skills for resolving problems without violence, and to create opportunity for group processing to discuss concerns about conflicts effectively.

Researches on Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning has been widely researched and used in classrooms around the world since the 1970's .Researches has proven this methodology effective in achievement in various subjects (Davidson, 1989; Slavin, 1990,). Cooperative learning also increases interest in mathematics (Mashina, 2015). Hart (1993) in his study found that cooperative learning also enhanced the mathematical problem solving ability. Jonson and Jonson(1985) conducted study to see the effect of cooperative learning on achievement and interpersonal attraction among handicapped and non handicapped students. Results suggested that cooperative learning promoted higher achievement and greater interpersonal attraction between handicapped and non handicapped students. It was also found that cross handicap interaction related to support and regulate efforts for learning and ensuring the involvement of all students in the tasks related to learning. Farivar (1986, as cited in satyaprakasha) examined the effect of cooperative learning on social relationships, students attitudes, achievement, intellectual academic attribution, and classroom climate .The sample comprised of third and fourth grades students, and three teachers..Results of the study revealed that cooperative class had more positive feeling towards classmates than did students in traditional class. They liked to work cooperatively rather than competitively Cooperation had made positive impact on interpersonal skills .There was no significant difference between achievement of two classes. Significant difference was found between two classes on all six subscales of classroom climate measure. Cooperative tasks strengthen cooperative behavior with passage of time. Martinez (1990) studied the effect of cooperative learning on achievement and self concept among bilingual third grade students. The study was compared to traditional lecture in other bilingual classes. Results indicated that cooperative learning increased the number of both the same and different sex students chosen on sociogram based on question 'Whom do you like to live?'.There was no significant difference was found between control group and experimental group with reference to self concept and achievement. Smith, Boulten and Cowie (1993, as cited in alexander) examined the impact of cooperative group work on ethnic relations by evaluating mainly White and Asian , as well as Affro-caribeen in three middle schools in U.K. .Results suggested that the students with cooperative group work curriculum liked

one another irrespective of race and gender. They behaved more positively towards other race students. The students preferred other race students to participate in assignment work. It was also found that there was lack of negative stereotypes of other ethnic group. Modaber & Far (2017) investigated the effects of cooperative learning on stundent's self esteem. The study was conducted on girls studying in Secondary Schools. Results showed that cooperative learning had significant impact on student's self esteem. Dees (1991) studied the effect of cooperative learning on problem solving ability. The Study was conducted in college remedial mathematics course. Result showed that students with cooperative learning performed better than the control group on every measure .The significant differences was found in problem solving in algebra and proof writing in geometry. It was concluded that cooperative increased problem solving abilities. Bilgin et al.(2012) studied the effect of cooperative learning on student's conflict resolution and empathic tendencies in science and technology course at grade five level. Student's who experienced cooperative learning showed significantly higher mean score in conflict resolution and empathic tendencies scales than students who experienced traditional instruction.

After analyzing various researches done on the cooperative learning following observation are made :

1. Implementing cooperative learning in classroom increases the cross relationship and understanding towards others. These are the compatible with the value named 'commitment to the equality' needed for peace education .

2. Cooperative learning in class room increases the problem solving related to the different subject. It is also a value needed for peace education.

3. Cooperative learning in classroom creates self esteem among students. Self esteem is also a value needed for peace education

4. Cooperative learning is found effective in the development of communication. Effective communication is required for peace education.

5. The student with cooperative learning understand the situation and feelings of others. It is related to the value named empathy required for peace education.

6. The students in cooperative learning know the success of classmate will increase the probability of their own success. Then every students see one another as facilitator rather than barrier. This is similar to the value named 'Respect for Others without Discrimination' needed for peace education.

Conclusion

Peace education is best to begin with school education in order to live healthy life for future generations. In India peace education is integrative perspective for the curriculum. It is not a separate subject. It is emphasized that education for peace must be reflected in every aspect of education. It can be integrated through the different approaches in school curriculum. These approaches are subject contexts, teaching methods, classroom management , staff development, school development ,and co

curricular .Here , it is need to adopt a approach for more relavent outcomes. Cooperative learning can be teaching method approach for imparting peace education. Because cooperative learning component are consistent with aim of peace education. Also the Researches conducted on cooperative learning shows that attitude, values and skills required for peace education consistent with the outcomes of cooperative learning. Cooperative learning has also positive impact on social relations, self concept, peer acceptance, interpersonal atrraction self esteem, empathy motivation ,and problem solving except on achievement in different subject with regard to different grade level. Here we can conclude that cooperative learning is beneficial to incorporate in classroom than traditional method, which is less beneficial. Therefore role of cooperative learning will be helpful in imparting peace .Therefore it is suggested that teacher should be trained to incorporate cooperative learning as mode of teaching to deliver his/her content in classroom and in other activities in respect to peace education.

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