

## **Chanting the Mantra of Peace in a new Avatar: Peace Education in combat with Global Unrest.**

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### **Abstract**

As the world tears itself apart with counteractive forces of violence all around, global citizens are in desperate search for a remedy to the violence all around as a survival strategy. And this is where Peace Education steps in. Peace education becomes a mode with a good deal of efficacy in countering the vogue of violence.

Peace Education works in manifold ways that take into purview a number of socio-psycho-political discourses into consideration. A burgeoning trend of seminars and conferences across the globe on Peace Education, and the efforts to introduce the same into academic curricula as early as school level could go a long way in “catching ’em young”, thereby promoting peace in a new way.

As violence, in both—its hard as well as soft forms surfaces in the social and personal levels of man’s life, Peace Education comes as the mitigator and mediator that could work wonders in bringing around world peace once more on a violence-torn world.

**Literature Review:**

In a world where everyone seems to be shrivelling more and more into a personalized cocoon of his own, alienation looks like the catchword of the day. Gone are those times when man stood by man in brotherly camaraderie and amity. In a world of competitiveness and rat-race, everyone seems to be writhing in the angst of getting left behind. And in this stubborn zest to stay ahead, man often shoves his fellow-mates out of his way, thereby ethico-morally slipping dangerously down the slimy downslide of violence and malevolence. The ideals of 'love thy neighbour' and 'Shantiroopenasanthitah' seem to have paled into some phantasmagoria of oblivion as man is now forever at each other's throats literally as well as otherwise.

The globe today seems to be in a vice-like grip of violence that seems to be working its way into the human sphere in a double routed modus operandi. Be it Iraq or France or Peshawar, violence racks the world from outside, attacking the public sphere in mass mayhem machinations like terrorist attacks and global wars. Inside, too, man is getting torn apart by forces of violence that are more inter-personal in their nature and working.

This is exactly where peace education makes a quiet but much-needed inroad into human lives as a savior factor that can lead maverick humanity back to the ways of peace and love.

**Overview:**

Peace education teaches man to acquire and practise the values, attitudes, skills, and behavioral patterns to live in harmony not only with oneself but also with his fellow beings, and with the socio-political milieu that he finds himself in. Peace education promotes as ideal, the notions of anti-nuclearism, international understanding, environmental responsibility, communication skills, non-violence, conflict resolution techniques, democracy, and human rights awareness, tolerance of diversity, coexistence and gender equality, along with discourses of inner harmony, in a bid to reach a state of socio-moral equilibrium and attain what Ian Harris and John Synott term a tripartite objective from the global population: 1. an earnest desire for peace, 2. a lookout for nonviolent alternatives for managing conflict and 3. a yen to sniff out the problems of structural arrangements in the state apparatus that tend to produce and legitimize injustice and inequality.

This three-fold objective to achieve what Koichiro Matsuura, the former Director-General of UNESCO calls of 'fundamental importance to the mission of UNESCO and the United Nations' can be brought forth in a number of ways.

First of all, peace education programmes devise ways of inter-personal training that includes innovative methodology to advocate ways to isolate and identify areas of socio-psycho-behavioural conflicts, and promote therapeutic use of anger-management, fair-play, disengagement of emotions and facts, listening skills, politico-morally correct speech-patterns. These discourses aim at nurturing an attitude of tolerance and compromise that seems imperative in the face of the fact that one cannot possibly go on fighting it out tooth and nail the whole of one's life.

**Inclusiveness:**

Another methodology that Peace Educationists follow is that of including more and more of the demography into the process of situation management in times of stress and distress. But then the basic pre-requisite for that would be a group or set of social members who would be prepared psychosomatically to accept the inevitability of conflict first as a sine qua non, in order to combat it. This method, better known as the 'conflict-positive orientation' is generally expected to produce an affirmative outlook that helps in viewing conflicts as the first rung towards a better understanding of situations that could bring forth a more tolerant and constructive methodology of peace-management. This mode of peace education aims at critical analysis of tricky situations, understanding perspectives, patient dealing in inter-personal spheres, tolerance of differences, freedom and diplomacy of speech and conscientious judgement making. The idea is to create 'responsible citizens' who will indirectly aide the government to maintain peace by regarding the state apparatus accountable to the standards of peace, thus engaging in constructive criticism that will take the nation forward through adversarial processes. In fact this is the chief clue behind the belief that a democracy functions best when it has opposition to provide constructive criticism. The same fallacy works in egging responsible citizens forward through positive communication that could go a long way in establishing peace.

### **Awareness:**

Creating awareness about human rights is yet another way in which peace education preaches techniques to combat violence and unrest. The idea is to inform citizens of their rights through a basic knowledge about international covenants and declarations of the United Nations. This would help people to identify instances of violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, thereby enabling them to a mode of *caveat emptor*. This would help maintain an ambience of peace, solidarity and self-assuredness in the socio-personal spheres.

Parlevliet though, believes that, '*human rights education can increase the potential for conflict*'. That is because the more people get conscious of their own rights, the more they tend to get put off by the violation or non-achievement of the same. But that could probably be remedied by combining the awareness about human rights with training in conflict resolution and anger management.

Peace can be disturbed at the interpersonal, community, national and international levels in the world of humans. Violence can manifest itself in multifaceted dynamics. It can show up in the form of domestic violence, school shootouts, or in more structuralized forms like institutionalized forms of bias of colour, caste and gender or mass violence that surface through ethnopolitical clashes, genocide, terrorism, and finally, war.

### **Psychological bias:**

Peace educators also invest in psychological study that unearths the psycho-somatic reason d'etre behind the yen for violence as well as the longing for peace. As Erik Erikson points out, the study of peace psychology draws heavily on clinical psychology, social psychology, political psychology, media psychology, developmental psychology, historical psychology, and cultural psychology. All these myriad branches of psychology work behind the acquisition of what is known in Peace Education jargon as worldview. The term 'worldview' is an umbrella one that comprises of multiple layers of comprehension, chief among which are, contemplation of 1) the nature of reality, 2) the nature of human character and demeanour, 3) the purpose of existence, 4) the principles necessary to figure out workable human relationships. Worldviews, or *weltanschauung* primarily surface in diverse situations like conflicted intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, and international relationships. Conflicts crop up time and again because of different

kinds of worldviews that form during different phases of human behavioral development—for instance, the Survival-Based Worldview and the Identity-Based Worldview. These conflict-inciting worldviews need to be countered and mitigated by more conflict-resolving worldviews like what is popularly known as the more integrative, Unity-Based Worldview. And the magic wand that could make all this possible is a comprehensive and dedicated implementation of peace education as a part of mainstream education to shape human ontology towards a more tolerant and constructive environment.

**Conclusion:**

Peace Education, thus, could work wonders in helping human community to exert control over the ‘self’ as well as the ‘other’, thereby simmering down possibilities of violence and making room for a more peaceful, cohesive, symbiotic and sustainable coexistence in the personal, interpersonal, cultural, societal and global spheres. The global population needs to be educated in the societal and pedagogical implications of peace as an ethico-moral trope. The mass media, through print as well as TV programs and films and literature, too need to be channelized into the process of the orientation and internalization of peace as a concept for the ontological subsistence of humanity.

## References

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