Chapter 13
Peace:
Education, Pedagogy, and Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Peace is described as an 'elusive concept' having different connotations for the spheres in which peaceful processes are applied. There are several pedagogical approaches to education for peace. The Constructivist approach is considered the best strategy. Teacher preparation is at the core of the success and utilization of the pedagogical approaches meant for education for peace. Therefore, the teacher education programmes need to be redesigned to have wider implications for promoting peace through the preparation of teachers. The present paper suggests a hypothetical model depicting 'Top Down' approach to teacher education for peace which compliments the 'Bottom Up' model envisaged by UNESCO (1998). Whatever may be the model of teacher education, it should combine knowledge, experiences and skills pertaining to promoting culture of peace. At the same time all agencies of education should support and join hands with teacher education programmes to change the culture of war into culture of peace and non-violence in the world we live in.

1.0 THE CONCEPT OF PEACE

Peace is described as an 'elusive concept' having different interpretations in different cultures as well as different connotations for the spheres in which peaceful processes are applied. The concept of peace has changed throughout the recorded history of humankind as individuals and groups struggled to realize a harmonious state of existence. Consequently its interpretation ranges from as simple as the absence of conflict or war to society without structural violence; absence of exploitation and Injustice of any kind, international cooperation and understanding, ecological balance and sustainable development, and peace of mind or inner peace etc. (Pandey, 2004; p34). Mahatma Gandhi has given a much broader explanation of the concept of peace. He described violence to clarify the concept of peace. Violence according to

him meant exploitation; economic, social, political of nation by nation; individual by individual; women by man; system by systems and man by machine. The antonym to violence is non-violence, which has at least eight components; peace, equality, fearlessness, humility, love, self-control, truth and tolerance. Though these components are very intricately interwoven, peace appears to be salient attribute of non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi envisaged a non-violent society which would be free from exploitation of any kind and can be achieved through the instrument of education, In Gandhian concept of peace, truth, non–violence, self-suffering and means and end relationships are important. It was Gandhi's firm conviction that means are as important as end-often even more important than end. The principle of 'Living together' being emphasized by UNESCO for the twenty first century is reflected in Gandhian concept of peace. He emphasized 'Satyagraha' and chose self suffering as substitute for violence to others because he firmly believed that to punish or destroy the oppressor is to initiate a cycle of violence and hatred.

The concept of peace has been described in different contexts discussed below:

1.1 Peace in Individual Context

In the individual context peace is tranquility or calmness in the mind and heart of an individual. Spinoza, a Dutch Philosopher recognized 'Peace' as, not the absence of conflict but a virtue, a state of mind a disposition for benevolence, confidence and Justice, Mother Teresa thought of 'Peace' as, "Peacefulness is an inner sense of calm… a peaceful heart is one that is free from worry and trouble. When a person learns to practice certain principles of life as love, compassion, patience, forgiveness, truthfulness, control on-desires, greed, passion and anger along with the skills of arbitrating conflicts and negotiating agreements, he/she tends towards the accomplishment of 'peace'.

Jesus Christ assured, 'Kingdom of Heaven is within us', heaven is nothing but 'peace' which can be realized and experienced by means of our own deeds. Peace is a divine asset and lasting emotion of human being as Srimad Bhagwat Gita assures:

Peace is the outcome of the practice of certain values as; harmlessness (ahimsa), truth, absence of anger, renunciation (tyag), absence of crookedness, spirituality, forgiveness, patience, fortitude, purity, non-hatred (adroha), absence of arrogance (abhiman) and absence of ego. Fearlessness (abhaya) is the foremost condition of human nature which is an important determinant of peace (Gita: Chapter-2 and Chapter-16).

J Krishnamurty defines peace only in the context of individual as he believes that man is the one who is a source of peace in the world. He describes peace as a freedom from violence, an individual has to be liberated from it by looking in himself. Everybody has violence in himself as experienced in anger, in sexual demands, in hatred, in creating an enmity and in jealousy. Violence is not merely killing another, it is violence when we use sharp words, when we make a gesture to brush away a person and when we obey because of fear. So 'peace' in individual context is liberation from violence that is within ourselves. Only a liberated human being free from violence is peaceful in this world.

All seers, monks, thinkers and scriptures of the world have attributed individual to meaningful peace in the society and further in the world. Thus in individual context, 'peace' is a subjective term. Peace is an experience of inner calmness or tranquility which can be accomplished by individual him/herself by practice. So, acquiring peace is an entirely individual effort and has less to do with external circumstances.

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