

AJIT MONDAL & JAYANTA METE

EDUCATION FOR PEACE IN THE LIGHT OF NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK – 2005

ABSTRACT: *We live in an age of unprecedented levels of violence, with constant threats posed by intolerance, fanaticism, dispute, and discordance. Ethical action, peace, and welfare are facing new challenges. A strong need is being felt by educationists, philosophers, scientists, and political leaders to rejuvenate the human values, which may bring long lasting peace on this planet. The purpose of education goes beyond the propagation of knowledge. J. Delors's Report (1996) on learning to live together as the central pillar of education proposes that education must be geared to promote a culture of peace, tolerance, democratic values, human rights, and duties among students. With the reality of the alarming increase in violence in school life, the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) – 2005 strongly advocates education for peace at all levels of schools. In this backdrop, the present paper tries to epitomise the concept of education for peace in the light of NCF – 2005. Peace and living together have been integral part of Indian way of living and manifested in its Constitution through various articles. It firmly believes that inculcation of certain values among younger generation would help them to exist in the dynamic socio-cultural fabric with peace, harmony, and prosperity. In the final section, approach, strategies, activities, and teacher's role in education for peace in the landscape of school education are also addressed as envisaged in the NCF – 2005.*

KEY WORDS: *Education, peace, human values, harmony, tolerance, democracy, national curriculum framework, and India's government and society.*

INTRODUCTION

Peace, however, is an elusive concept having different interpretations in different cultures as well as different connotations for the spheres, in which peaceful processes are applied. It ranges from inner peace to outer peace. Consequently, the interpretation of peace ranges from absence of war, and society without structural violence to liberation from exploitation and injustice of any kind, ecological balance and conservation, and peace of mind, etc. Education for peace, therefore, includes a variety of issues like human rights education, environmental education, international education, conflict resolution education, development education, etc. Education for non-violence and peace includes

training, skills, and information towards cultivating a culture of peace based on human rights principles (Delors, 1996; and UNESCO, 2008).

In India, education for peace programmes have traditionally been concerned with promoting certain core values (Pandey, 2007). 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 and non-violence are important. The educational policies of the country lay stress on combative obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition, and fatalism; and promote some core values such as India's common cultural heritage,

Mr. Ajit Mondal and Dr. Jayanta Mete are a Research Scholar and an Associate Professor at the Department of Education, University of Kalyani, Kalyani, West Bengal, Pin-741235, India. The authors can be contacted via their e-mail at: mondalajit.edn@gmail.com and jayanta_135@yahoo.co.in

egalitarianism, democracy, secularism, equality of sexes, inculcation of scientific temper, etc.

Peace and living together have been integral part of Indian way of living and manifested in its Constitution through various articles. It firmly believes that inculcation of certain values among younger generation would help them to exist in the dynamic socio-cultural fabric with peace, harmony, and prosperity. This is the reason why all commissions and committees on education in India, like the Radha Krishnan Commission (1948–1949), Mudaliar Commission (1952–1953), Sri Prakasha Commission (1959), Sampurnanand Commission (1961), Kothari Commission (1964–1966), Rammurti Committee (1992), and Chavan Committee (1999) make important recommendations for incorporation of value education at all levels of education. Consequently, the National Curriculum Frameworks of 1975, 1988, and 2000 had adopted a value-oriented approach to integration of peace concerns in education (Udaykumar, 2009; and Mondal, 2011).

A major shift in this approach is witnessed in the *NCF (National Curriculum Framework) – 2005*, which considers that value education is subsumed in Education for Peace, but is not identical with it. The National Focus Group on Peace Education constituted in the context of NCF–2005, in its Position Paper on *Education for Peace* says, as follows:

Peace is a contextually appropriate and pedagogically gainful point of coherence for values. Peace concretizes the purpose of values and motivates their internalization. Without such a framework, the integration of values into the learning process remains a non-starter. Education for peace is, thus, the ideal strategy for contextualizing and operationalising value education (NCERT, 2005:1).

While accepting the traditional approach of integration of various peace related values and concern in school curricula, it further adds that education for peace must be a concern that permeates the entire school life – curriculum, co-curriculum, classroom environment, school management, teacher pupil relationship, teaching-learning processes, and the entire range of school activities.

THE RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Need and importance of peace is understood by the increasing conflicts and violence in the society. Conflict violence and war are the products of individual mindsets, which have got condition to violent and aggressive ways. The mindsets are shaped by education, and effective education should produce non-violent and peaceful individuals. The action for nurturing and peace building must be located in the educational system.

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) – 2005, by NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training), asserts that education must be able to promote values that foster peace, humanness, and tolerance in a democracy; and the values of equality, justice, freedom, secularism, and multicultural society. The aims of education enunciated in the NCF include developing commitment concern for others well beings. The NCF speaks of the compelling need for peace education, clearly stating that education must be oriented towards values associated with “peaceful and harmonious coexistence” (NCERT, 2005:9).

This framework also proposes that values of peace education must be integrated into all aspects of education. The researchers intend to review the approach and strategies for education for peace as envisaged in the NCF – 2005. It is also necessary to review how to integrate peace education across the curriculum made by the NCF – 2005. The present paper is a modest attempt in this direction.

The following are major objectives of the present investigation: (1) to epitomize the concept of education for peace in the light of NCF – 2005; (2) to analyze the approach and strategies for promoting education for peace in the school environment; (3) to explore the NCF guidelines for integrating peace education in the curriculum; (4) to analyze the teacher’s role in integrating education for peace in the subject content; and (5), finally, to sketch out some co-curricular activities through which education for peace can be realized as envisaged in the NCF – 2005.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE, METHOD, AND SOURCES OF DATA

Some of the related studies are reviewed below with a view to carrying out the present investigation. James Smith Page (2004) explored some philosophical foundations for peace education and the possibility that such foundations might be located within: (1) virtue ethics, (2) consequentialist ethics, (4) conservative political ethics, and (5) the ethics of care. Each of the above is important, although ultimately a thorough basis for peace education can only be established through an integrative approach to the above foundations, an approach that mirrors much of the emphasis within UN (United Nations) and UNESCO (United Nations of Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) initiatives to encourage a culture of peace.

S. Pandey (2007), in his study, emphasized on education for peace, not as a part of value education as traditionally been integrated in schools, but as an independent value in itself. He showed the paradigm shift in the approach towards learning for promoting the culture of peace as, both, the constructivist approach; and peace education are associated with the humanistic philosophy which is dedicated to developing more mature and self-directed learner – a pre-requisite for living together. He also opined that the epistemological shift suggested in the NCF (National Curriculum Framework) – 2005 provides greater opportunity to promote the culture of peace than ever before (Pandey, 2007).

Priyadarshani Rajagopalan (2009) interpreted the peace education guidelines laid down by India's NCF – 2005 as five facets of peace education (values embedded in lessons and activities, cultural and social awareness, sensitivity to differences, a pro-active approach and effective, and developmentally appropriate follow-up activities). He also reviewed the suggestions made by the NCF on how to integrate peace education across the curriculum (Rajagopalan, 2009).

Dharmendra Kumar & Kr. Sudheer Pundeer (2012), in their study, pointed out some ways and means to incorporate peace feeling at all levels of schooling, and how peace as a way of life can be inculcated in

the classroom and in various extra-curricular activities of the school and in daily life situations.

Benudhar Chinara (2012) made an attempt to show how to educate the self of a teacher on peace, i.e. orienting self into a culture of peace, carrying out a self-dialogue on peace values, and practicing peace through Universal Ethics, who in turn can empower the selves of the student mass to choose the ways of peace, and in the process the entire society may get transformed to yield the greatest good for all, ensure sustainability of both humans and nature, and result in welfare of the entire society.

The present study is basically analytical in nature based on official documentary evidence. The National Curriculum Framework – 2005, National Focus Group on Education for Peace, Executive Summary of National Focus Groups Position Papers written by National Council of Educational Research and Training have been used as primary sources of data in the study. Various articles published in the journals and books written on peace education have been taken as secondary source of data.

EDUCATION FOR PEACE AND NCF – 2005

The purpose of education goes beyond the propagation of knowledge. Education is now a significant dimension of the long-term process of building up peace: tolerance, justice, intercultural understanding, and civic responsibility. However, education as practiced in schools often promotes forms of violence, both real and symbolic. Under these circumstances, education needs reorientation and, therefore, the school curriculum takes priority.

According to the NCF (National Curriculum Framework) – 2005, peace, as an integrative perspective for the school curriculum, is an idea whose time has come (NCERT, 2005). Education for peace is different from peace education. In the latter, peace is a subject in the syllabus. In the former, peace becomes the shaping vision of education. This implies a paradigm shift in the total transaction of education. Education for peace, as distinguished from peace education,

acknowledges the goal of promoting a culture of peace as the purpose shaping the enterprise of education. If implemented with vigor and vision, education for peace can make learning a joyful and meaningful experience.

The NCF – 2005 is more vocal and direct towards the need of promoting peace through education than the earlier curriculum reform attempts where the concept of peace was subsumed in value education. The NCF – 2005, in its position Paper on Education for Peace proposes, elaborates that:

Education for peace is education for life, and not merely training for a livelihood. Equipping individuals with the values, skills, and attitudes they need to be wholesome persons who live in harmony with others and as responsible citizens is the goal of education for peace (NCERT, 2006:1).

According to Niharika Panda (2013), peace education may be defined as the process of acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the attitudes, skills and behavior to live in harmony with oneself, with others, and with the natural environment. Historically, moral instruction and value education were the precursors of education for peace. They share much in common.

Religion, according to the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) in 2000, is a source of value generation. Values and attitudes are the building blocks of the culture of peace (NCERT, 2000). What, then, is unique to education for peace?

Education for peace calls for a significant reduction, not an increase, in curriculum load. Peace embodies the joy of living. Learning, from the peace perspective, has to be a joyful experience. Joy is of the essence of life. Peace is not unrelated to pace.

Today's world, hurry and worry sour the joy of learning and undermine learning and the harmony of life. It is a serious matter that schools, which are meant to be the nurseries of peace, become transmission points for violence. Education for peace contextualizes learning. It calls for a liberation of learning from the confines of the classroom and its transformation into a celebration of awareness enlivened with the delight of discovery. NCF

(National Curriculum Framework) – 2005 says as follows:

Education for peace seeks to nurture ethical development, inculcating the values, attitudes, and skills required for living in harmony with oneself and with others, including nature. It embodies the joy of living and personality development with the qualities of love, hope, and courage. It encompasses respect for human rights, justice, tolerance, cooperation, social responsibility, and respect for cultural diversity, in addition to a firm commitment to democracy and non-violent conflict resolution.

Social justice is an important aspect of peace education. The concern for equality and social justice, which refers to practising non-exploitation towards the have-nots, the poor and the underprivileged and creating a non-violent social system, is the hallmark of education for peace.

Similarly, human rights are central to the concept of peace. Peace cannot prevail if the rights of individuals are violated. Basic to human rights are the values of non-discrimination and equality, which contribute to building a culture of peace in society. These issues are inter-related. Peace education is, thus, a host of overlapping values (NCERT, 2008:61-62).

Education for peace, thus, empowers individuals to clarify their values; to enable them to take conscious and deliberate decisions, taking into consideration the consequences of their actions; to choose the way of peace rather than violence; and to enable them to be makers of peace rather than only consumers of peace.

Education for peace, therefore, an essential component of holistic education that aims at the comprehensive development of persons.

Major Frontiers of Education for Peace. NCF (National Curriculum Framework) – 2005, in its Executive Summary, points out the major frontiers for education for peace in the Indian context. This is done with reference to the two major goals of education, namely: education for personality formation and education to foster responsible citizens (NCERT, 2008).

The major frontiers of education for peace are: (1) bringing about peace-orientation in individuals through education; (2) nurturing in students the social skills and outlook needed to live together in harmony; (3) reinforcing social justice, as envisaged in the Constitution; (4) the need and duty to propagate a secular culture; (5) education as a catalyst for activating a

democratic culture; (6) the scope for promoting national integration through education; and (7) education for peace as a lifestyle movement. For realizing the Education for Peace, some strategies can be developed as follows:

First, Simplistic Approach to Moral Behavior. At the time of teaching values, teacher needs to move away from mere talk, to a meaningful discussion of experiences and reflections. The teacher needs to draw out the children, gain their confidence, and avoid using threatening language or hostile body language. Teachers should make deliberate attempts to infuse and reinforce the importance of peace-related values that are commensurate with the textual material taught in school and the developmental stages of children.

Second, Using Appropriate Strategies for Understanding Peace Related Values. Strategies like questions, stories, anecdotes, games, experiments, discussions, dialogues, clarification of values, examples, analogies, metaphors, role playing, and simulation are helpful in promoting peace through teaching-learning. The teaching and practice of ethics go from the personal sphere to social and community-oriented thinking and then link up with global perspectives.

Third, Presenting Lesson or Topic from a Humanistic and Positive Perspective. Every peace-laden topic or lesson (hidden or explicit) needs to be transacted with deliberate planning from a positive and humanistic perspective. The methods of teaching should be creative, child-centred, largely experiential, and participatory. These include creation of appropriate learning experiences, discussion, debates, presentation, and group and cooperative projects, depending on students' maturity levels and the subject content.

Approach to Education for Peace. In the NCF (National Curriculum Framework) – 2005, education for peace is not envisaged as a separate subject that would further augment curriculum load, but a perspective from which all subjects are to be taught. An integrated approach to education for peace is the ideal, especially since peace is an integrative and all-embracing concept. The integrated approach must be reflected in the totality of educational programmes in schools and must permit the

school curriculum and co-curriculum (NCERT, 2005).

NCF – 2005, in its Executive Summary, made some suggestions with respect to curriculum contents. They are as follows:

First, the primary school years could focus on laying the value foundations for personality formation and the development of the social skills necessary to live together in harmony. Focus could then shift gradually to a perspective on peace, especially to enable students to understand the value-foundations of peace. The area of special emphasis here is the need to promote skills for the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Second, in the upper primary years, students could be enabled to view the culture of peace from the perspective of Indian history, philosophy, and culture.

Third, thereafter, education for peace could focus more on citizenship education. A brief introduction to the basic features and ethos of the Constitution is what is envisaged here. The emphasis may shift, thereafter, to “peace as a lifestyle movement”. Students can be made aware of the need to for lifestyles conducive to the integrity of creation and stability of society. The various challenges to national unity can be the focus thereafter. The main emphasis here must be on promoting an attitude of respect for diversity and difference. Students also need to be made aware of the various hindrances to unity.

Fourth, at the plus two level, the foci of education for peace could be : (1) understanding the logic, modes and expressions of violence; (2) skills for an objective understanding of issues; and (3) developing a global perspective on peace (NCERT, 2008:57).

Integrating Peace in the Curriculum – The NCF Guidelines. The NCF (National Curriculum Framework) proposes that the values of peace education must be integrated into all aspects of education, including teacher training, curriculum, student-teacher relationships, and examinations. In other words, as stated in the NCF, peace education is not an add-on-subject per se but a way of making all the subjects in the curriculum peace-oriented. The NCF guidelines for

integrating peace education in the curriculum have three main areas of focus: teacher training, content, and peace activities for students.

First, on the Teacher Training. The NCF (National Curriculum Framework) suggests, “No reform, however well motivated and well planned, can succeed unless a majority of teachers feel empowered to put it in practice”. Teachers being the central to the entire gamut of all relationships at school, their orientation is most crucial (NCERT, 2007).

Suggestions for teacher include sensitizing teachers to their own biases so that they can set aside judgments while dealing with students. The emphasis is on how teachers can create a non-threatening environment by treating students with respect and thereby help them feel/confident and comfortable. Teachers need intensive training so that they can address issues in a fair and unbiased way and become good role models of peace. Another suggestion is to include discussions and dialogues in everyday processes, thereby setting the stage for respectful communication between students and teachers.

Historically, value education has focused on encouraging desirable behavior; here, the emphasis is on creating an environment that will also offer an opportunity to discuss undesirable feelings and thoughts (Rajagopalan, 2009). Differences between students should be used constructively to support peer learning. A true society is made up of individuals with varied levels of skills and strengths; classrooms and school community should reflect this diversity and value each person’s contributions.

The NCF emphasizes on interdependence and the need for children to be aware of it. Teachers should also be encouraged to contextualize lessons to suit the current situations in the child’s immediate environment.

Second, on the Content. Throughout the NCF (National Curriculum Framework), there is a strong focus on the content a child is exposed to. The language used in texts and other media should be checked to determine age appropriateness and relevant context. The idea is to select appropriate texts that convey

positive values and do not subscribe to any bias or misrepresentation. This is recommended across subjects and can be used both in the classroom and in extra-curricular activities like book or science clubs.

Third, on the Peace Activities for Students. The NCF (National Curriculum Framework) guidelines also suggest activities that call for cooperation and team work as opposed to individual assignments that only foster competition. Projects that require group effort will allow children to work towards a common goal while retaining their individuality through their unique contributions. Suggested peace activities in the NCF can be broadly categorised into three major themes.

The first deals with awareness of issues and the impact of actions at a universal level. For example, helping children realize the impact of wear and tear on a leaf that is passed around the classroom, representing the damage to the environment. The second encourages children to express their own views, be open to other perspectives and build empathy through discussions. The third category gives space for reflecting on issues and organizing events and forums to debate or change policies at their level. For instance, thinking of laws that they might put into action if they were peace lawyers of the country. All of these can be achieved by structuring activities with a purpose and providing space for choice.

Teaching-Learning Activities for Education for Peace: Teacher’s Corner. Education has to ensure peace, according to *National Curriculum Framework for School Education* (NCERT, 2000:34-35); develop peace loving personality, according to *Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education* (NCERT, 1998); and is vital for the effectiveness of promoting a culture of peace, according to *National Curriculum Framework – 2005 Position Paper* (NCERT, 2006:5).

National Curriculum Framework – 2005 Position Paper (2006 : 9) acknowledged “teachers as peace builders” and stressed further that the success of the initiative for education for peace substantially depends on the vision, motivation, skills, and awareness of teachers (NCERT, 2006:23). Teachers who carry out education for peace have to

cherish its values, hold comparable attitudes, and exhibit similar behavioral tendencies'. Teachers as self-reflecting and self-performing individuals thus can play a crucial role for promoting peace in students in the context of global commitment to peace. Their personal commitment and firm determination to the promotion of peace has to be absolute.

NCF – 2005 suggested some examples of teaching-learning activities for integration in the subject content. Children could be asked to: (1) Demonstrate the many ways in which one can show respect to elders at home and in school, in subjects of Environmental Studies or Language; (2) Express the meaning of the word "cooperation" in different subject, in subject of Language; (3) Imagine a peaceful world and what would it be like, in subject of Social Science; (4) Write a story on tolerance, sensitivity to others, etc., in subject of Language; (5) Compose a poem or a song depicting values like honesty, hard work etc., in subject of Language; (6) Organize field visit to local orphanages or old age homes to sensitize students to the loneliness, deprivation, and helplessness of these sections of society; (7) Discuss how environmental degradation affects the poor; and (8) Describe how anger destroys peace, in subjects of Social Science or Language.

Education for Peace can also be realized through the co-curricular life of the school (Ramani, 2004). A number of activities and projects embodying peace themes could be organized in school, such as: (1) Students can be motivated to learn and develop skills for peacemaking by including peace issues in debates, seminars, and audio visual shows; (2) Participation of children in role-plays, dramas, composing peace poems, peace songs, etc.; (3) Participation in various days observed internationally, such as Human Rights Day, Children's Day, United Nations Day, Day for the Disabled, Girl Child Day, Environment Day, etc.; (4) to Help develop sensitivity towards others, children could be encouraged to visit homes for senior citizens, disadvantaged groups, etc. and enabled to develop an interest in their welfare; (5) Religious festivals and national days could be celebrated in the schools and in the

neighborhood; and (6) Story-telling sessions and discussions could be held to promote tolerance and understanding.

CONCLUSION

Education shall be directed towards the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial, or religious groups for maintenance of peace, as cited in an Article 28, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Kumar, 2011). Taking into consideration the very function of education, the NCF (National Curriculum Framework) spelt out that peace education must be integrated across the curriculum, in lessons as well as activities. Peace education must be a concern that permeates the entire school life: curriculum, co-curriculum, classroom environment, school management, teacher-pupil relationship, teaching-learning processes, and the entire range of school activities.

Accordingly, teacher training, the content of social science in particular, and learning through work and activity are three areas, it indicates as warranting attention. Education for peace seeks to nurture ethical development, including the values, attitudes, and skills required for living in harmony with oneself and with others.

The NCF – 2005 set out a few foundational convictions which underlie the contours and contents of education for peace, such as schools are potential nurseries for peace, peace skills promote academic excellence, education for peace can humanize education, teachers can be social healers, and justice is integral to peace. This framework, thus, made a plea to turn education for peace into a people's movement.

Education for peace needs to be seen as an enterprise for healing and revitalizing the nation. Education for peace could be an effective catalyst in activating a holistic vision for education. This could also transform education into a movement for national integration and regeneration, which is the need of the hour.

An approach to education that erodes social

cohesion, aggravates economic inequalities, and undermines ethical foundation needs to be recognized as a threat to peace and a disservice to society. Peace must be pursued with single-minded vigor and an undeviating sense of purpose; and education for peace must be implemented with vision and determination.

Conclusion can be ended with words of Mahatma Gandhi, “If we are to teach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on a real war against, we shall have to begin with children”.

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