Teaching Peace along with routine education: A simple and easy to implement strategy for a peaceful happy world

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Abstract In this paper the authors propose ways of implementing peace education and integrating it in the routine curriculum. Unlike the teaching of academic and vocational skills, which are based on the transmission of knowledge and skills alone, peace education is based on understanding of human motives and, above all, on example. The key individuals in the effort of peace education are teachers in primary, secondary and higher education, and the point at which peace education has to start is in the training of future teachers. Peace education has to communicate both values supportive of peace and non-violence, and the reasoning and interpersonal skills required for non-violent conflict resolution. Rather than introducing formal instruction in "peace science", teachers may find it more effective to introduce the subject informally with examples that illustrate the value of non-violence, and examples of the ways in which violent conflict can be avoided or resolved. Herein, it is emphasized that peace education can be introduced effectively by merging it with the existing education system. The current paper outlines the concept for introducing peace education and provides an implementation strategy, contributes unique methods, and offers novel suggestions regarding its why, where and how.

Keywords: Peace, Education, Method, Teacher, Student, World.

1. INTRODUCTION

Peace is usually defined as the absence of external and internal war, and of all forms of violence and blatant injustice more generally. To be stable, peace

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must be based on social and individual conditions that include happiness, health, social justice and freedom of expression, and on a set of values and skills to support these conditions. Since peace can be defined as the absence of violent conflict, it depends on two things that are, in principle, teachable: recognition that non-violence is desirable, and the attitudes and interpersonal skills required for non-violent conflict resolution. In general terms, a culture of non-violence needs to be created. To achieve this, it is necessary to examine the general social conditions that favor peace, and find ways of educating people to maintain such conditions (Galtung, 1981). The aims of peace education, in general terms, should be to raise children's intelligence and general reasoning ability, to raise awareness of social justice, promote honesty and reduce selfishness and greed (reduced corruption), and to teach children how to make constructive use of the freedoms they enjoy in a democratic society.

In addition to broad societal conditions that appear to affect everyone in at least somewhat predictable ways, it is essential to appreciate that there can be profound differences among individuals as well as among societies in the way people understand peace. The differences are both in the personalities of individuals and in the situations in which they find themselves. In today's world conscious efforts are required for global appreciation of peace, requiring the cognitive abilities for understanding its value for every nation and its necessity for development of a civilized society. Anyone anywhere can assist in the task of teaching peace, but what they will teach would depend on their own understanding and definition of peace. For one person, peace could set in by loving all the surrounding community, or it could be asked for by praying to God for the good of all, or it could be learning to accommodate those who are not in favor of peace and teach them by example. It could be the institutionalized practice of compromise as it is practiced in democratic systems, or it could be working for an official body functioning to negotiate healthy relationships between countries, or it could be simply not getting upset at anything or doing meditation for inner peace. This list of the variety of ways to peace is endless. Each individual gets to know from his own self and his fellow-beings that peace is an integral part of life (Harris, 2004).

Violence hurts. Therefore, the quest for peace is universal. Violent conflict is and has been present in every human society, so much so that it appears to be an inevitable part of the human condition. It is found at the individual level and the level of small groups: physical aggression among children, bullying in school, criminal activities, and gang warfare. Violent forms of ethnic strife, or hostilities between dogmatic religious groups or political parties, are still common in the present time (Schmidt, 1968).

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Many biologists and anthropologists point out that violence, and especially violent inter-group competition, is part of human nature. Even chimpanzees wage "wars" between neighboring communities that result in frequent fatalities when individuals from a different group are ambushed and beaten to death. Chimpanzee warfare is similar to human warfare. (Kelly, 2005; Wrangham & Glowacki, 2012). Therefore, the reasoning goes, conscious effort is needed for humans to overcome their animal heritage and replace violent conflict by more benign and constructive ways of competition and conflict resolution. Conscious effort requires the awareness of causes, and insight into the psychological processes that produce violent conflicts. It also requires knowledge and awareness of non-violent ways of conflict resolution, and the belief that violence needs to be avoided. In other words, it needs education for peace.

Conflict itself is unavoidable because competition, conflicts of interest and personal animosities arise inevitably in every human society and between human societies. These are unavoidable unless all humans decide to stop being social animals and become hermits instead (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). This, evidently, would go too much against human nature to be a viable strategy for peace education. Although the propensity for violence is part of human nature, social needs are even more so. Peace education must go with human nature, not against it, and the desire to get along with others is part of human nature as well. If this premise is false, then any efforts at peace education will be doomed. (Figure 1)
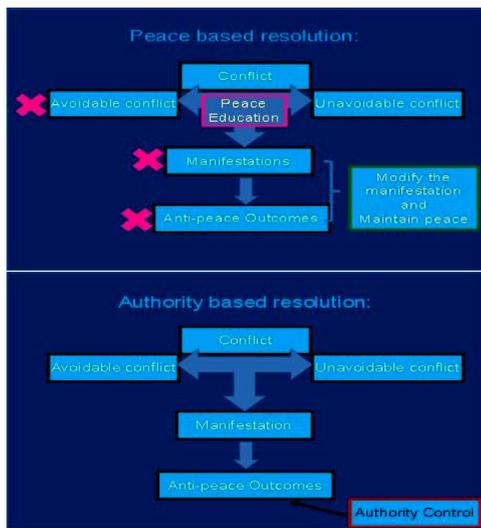

Figure 1: Peace education and conflict resolution.

2. HISTORY OF PEACE EDUCATION

Peace has not been considered universally desirable in all societies. Warlike societies, in general, educated their youth for war, not for peace. Many Roman writers, for example, approved of bloody arena games because of their educational value in presenting examples of valor and other martial virtues and because they familiarized young men with the cruel realities of war (Wistrand, 1992). Even today, many people consider war a moral imperative supporting deadly violence as a matter of principle rather than an instrumental means for achieving a good end (Ginges &Atran, 2011).

Ideas and practices behind peace building have nevertheless roots in all cultures. Anthropologists have located at least 47 relatively peaceful societies (Banta, 1993). Perhaps the earliest written records of guidelines that teach others about how to achieve peace comes from the world's great religions. These religions – following the teaching of such prophets as Buddha, Baha'u'llah, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Moses, and Lao Tse – have specific scriptures that advance peace, or at least internal peace among the followers of the religion. Therefore, it is justified to look briefly at the role of religion for peace in modern societies.

When a composite measure of religiosity is formed from four questions in the World Values Survey (2009), a Gallup World Poll (2010) question about the importance of religion in the respondent's life, and (reverse scored) proportion of atheists from Zuckerman (2007), the correlation of this measure with log-transformed homicide rates is .473 (N = 157 countries). However, this *positive* relationship disappears in regression models that include development indicators such as GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and intelligence, indicating that religiosity has no independent effect on homicide. Results are very similar when the Global Peace Index (GPI) is used as the outcome measure. The GPI is a composite indicator that measures both internal and external peace (Vision of Humanity, 2015). General cognitive, economic and social developments are the factors that promote peace. Countries at higher levels of social, economic and especially cognitive development (i.e., "high-IQ countries") are less religious (Meisenberg, 2012). These observations suggest that peace education does not need to be based on religious teachings.

Here is an excerpt from Harris (2008), a detailed publication about the global leaders of peace education: "One of the first Europeans who used the written word to espouse peace education was Comenius (1642/1969), the Czech educator who in the seventeenth century saw that universally shared knowledge could provide a road to peace. Bertha von Suttner, an Austrian who helped convince Alfred Nobel to establish a peace prize, wrote novels against war and organized international peace congresses (Hamann, 1996). In 1912 a
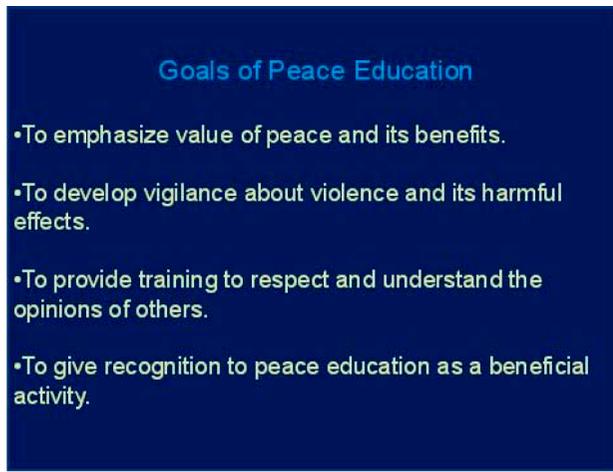
Goals of Peace Education

- To emphasize value of peace and its benefits.

- To develop vigilance about violence and its harmful effects.

- To provide training to respect and understand the opinions of others.

- To give recognition to peace education as a beneficial activity.

Figure 2: Peace education goals.

School Peace League had chapters in nearly every state in the United States that were 'promoting through the schools the interests of international justice and fraternity' (Scanlon, 1959). They had ambitious plans to acquaint over 500,000 teachers with the conditions for peace (Stomfay-Stitz, 1993). Many of the leading peace educators early in the twentieth century were women, for example Jane Addams, an American woman who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931. At about the same time an Italian woman, Maria Montessori, emphasized that a teacher's method or pedagogy could contribute towards building a peaceful world (Montessori, 1946/1974)." (Figure II)

3. PROGRAMS FOR PEACE EDUCATION

An Israeli educator has stated that peace education programs take different forms because of the wide variety of conflicts that plague human existence: Even though their objectives may be similar, each society will set up a different form of peace education that depends on the general issues, local conditions and culture, as well as views and creativity of the educators (Bar-Tal, 2002). For example, education for conflict resolution is one of the fastest growing school reforms in the West. Conflict resolution educators provide basic communication skills necessary for survival in a postmodern world. Here the focus is upon interpersonal relations and systems that help disputing parties resolve their differences with communication skills. Approximately ten percent of schools in the United States have some sort of peer mediation program (Sandy, 2001). Conflict resolution educators teach human relations skills such as anger management, impulse control, emotional awareness,

empathy development, assertiveness, and problem solving. Conflict resolution education provides students with peacemaking skills that they can use to manage their interpersonal conflicts but does not necessarily address the various kinds of civil, cultural, environmental, and global violence that take place outside schools. A variation of this approach to peace education that is practiced in the United States and New Zealand is violence prevention education that attempts to develop resilience skills in young people so that they avoid drugs and violence in interpersonal relations.

Another concern is education for a form of solidarity that includes all human beings, rather than being limited to members of one's own family, tribe, religion or nation. Peter Singer (1981) described this as the "expanding circle" of moral concern, which eventually comes to include not only all members of the human species, but all sentient life. Psychologists have even designed a scale to measure love for all humanity (Sprecher & Fehr, 2005).

Today this universal element is most commonly associated with efforts at environmental education. Environmentalists believe that the greatest threat to modern life is the destruction of natural habitat. Importantly, they see this as a threat to all of humanity, not merely to one or another nation. They recall the immortal words of T.S. Eliot, "This is the way the world ends, not with a bang but a whimper" (Eliot, 1936). Environmental educators help young people become aware of ecological problems, which they present as an ongoing or impending crisis. They try to give their students the tools to create environmental sustainability, and teach them to use resources in a sustainable way. It is necessary to promote a concept of peace based upon ecological security, where humans are protected and nourished by natural processes (Mische, 1989).

"PeaceJam" is a successful USA peace program launched in 1996 based on three simple ideas: education, inspiration and action. It is an international education program whose mission is to create young leaders committed to positive change in themselves, their communities and the world through the inspiration of Nobel Peace Laureates who pass on the spirit, skills, and wisdom they embody. Thus there are several approaches to peace education in the United States of America as well as other parts of the globe. The formation of model schools and curricula based on peace education principles, an increase in the number of non-traditional models for carrying out education, including those outside of schools, and use of cyberspace for peace education are all being explored. Human rights education and democracy education are part of the list of peace education programs as well.

4. SCHOOLING IN PEACE EDUCATION

Modern education is not preparation for life but preparation for exams. It is too commercial in form and at its best it prepares children for the world of work and

money, with little importance placed on moral and spiritual values. Globally, the education system has concentrated on "education for a living" or "learn in order to earn". This has strengthened the materialistic tendencies of the human mind (Foucault, 2006). The repercussions of this are strikingly visible in the signs of social disorganization, lawlessness and aggressiveness among the youth, violence, corruption, and a highly technocratic and consumerist society which promises unrestrained and immediate gratification of all desires. Yet selfish and materialist pursuits, when combined with inability or unwillingness to delay gratification, are also a root cause of crime, violence and corruption.

If a peaceful society is desired, renewing the education system is a must. Peace and education are complementary to each other as both contribute to the development and welfare of human beings. Maria Montessori said, "Establishing lasting peace is the work of education, all politics can do is keep us away from war (Montessori 1949, p. viii)". If students are to become socially responsible world citizens, then "Peace Education" which promotes the knowledge, attitudes and skills relevant to living responsibly in a multicultural interdependent world is the need of the hour. Ideas to teach peace must find *expression* in government policies and the educational curriculum. If society is to reach peace, then teachers must teach peace. School education involves the formative years of a person's life. This is the period when students shape their perceptions and attitudes and acquire values. There are three main educational models: integration model, multicultural model, and parallel model. Policy makers should also focus on four main areas: educational content, language policy, and teacher training and school context. Training has to be provided to teachers, school administrators and also to those who push for change in educational policies at the national level. For example, The National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005, 2006) by the National Council of Educational Research and Training in India strongly advocates education for peace at all levels of school.

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF PEACE EDUCATION

Teaching peace is different from teaching English or mathematics, which requires the learning of facts and of specialized skills without the necessity to learn values, ways of perception, or rules of conduct. But it does have some similarity. To some extent, teaching peace does require the learning of facts: about antecedents of violent conflict and its consequences for everyone concerned, the skill of understanding other people's motives for violence, skills of communication which include the skill of establishing and maintaining a dialogue with those who are ready for violence, and the skill of empathy. Both communication skills and empathy are difficult to teach the way traditional

academic subjects are taught. The aim of peace education is the establishment of habits of the heart that include the desire for peace and genuine concern for the welfare of others.

Non-violence and concern for people's welfare cannot be taught by letting young people memorize a set of facts. Most children come to loathe the academic subjects they are forced to learn. Peace education can suffer this unintended but predictable outcome, too. Values can be best instilled by example. Observations of the way a teacher or parent acts with other people, deals with friends and enemies, or interferes with fighting among boys on the school yard, are the mode in which values are transmitted. A successful peace educator must fulfill a set of conditions: First, this teacher must represent the values of non-violence, regard for others, and concern for fellow humans in his own personality. If not, the students will find out, and all efforts will be for naught. The outcome would not be an appreciation of peace. The outcome would be cynicism. Second, the peace educator has to be perceived and respected as either successful in life, or as an asset to his family, community or country. Third, the peace educator must engage the students and gain their trust and deserve their love. Thus peace education is radically different from traditional academic education. Instruction is, for the most part, not explicit, but by providing role models for young people; and learning is not by conscious effort, but incidental and without full conscious awareness on the student's and even the teacher's side. It is, to a large extent, a hidden curriculum delivered in the guise of a traditional one.

6. CURRICULAR INTEGRATION OF PEACE EDUCATION

Ideally, the set of values and skills that comprise peace education should be incorporated not only into the explicit teaching of every school, but should be practiced in the daily working of the school as a teaching institution. One option is to introduce 'peace' as an additional subject, be it at a primary school, secondary school, college, or university. Teachers experienced in curriculum design have a role to play. As in other areas of curriculum design, the starting point would be to assess the learners' background, define the goals and how they can be achieved, followed by how the results would be assessed. The most vital part is to have trained faculty (Bey & Turner, 1996).

"Do no harm" is the first principle for the medical profession (Majumdar, 1995). It is applicable to teaching as well. When one teaches "peace", one should know exactly how to go about it. The teacher is an initiator and a catalyst of a chain reaction in the personal development of the students and in cultural change in society at large. Peace teachers need to be identified based on aptitude in the subject and willingness to have a career in the same.

They could be those who are getting trained as teachers, or those who are already teachers, or those who have retired from the teaching profession. The last category could have much to offer based on their experiences and availability and their wish to continue contributing in their field of work. Here it is important to note that teaching peace should not be expected from unpaid teachers. For their commitment of time and effort, they ought to be formally employed faculty. They could be trained in the subject at the various national and international institutions, for example the peace education foundations or educational programs conducted by the University for Peace or UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), Red Cross and others. Values need to be transmitted in addition to skills and knowledge. Aspiring teachers need to develop a professional ethos that includes an emphasis on justice, concern for others, and empathy. These values serve a dual function: to make the teacher effective in his profession, enabling him to coordinate his work with his colleagues and to be responsible in his dealings with the students. The second function is to teach these values to the students, by practicing them and by formal instruction.

Within the institution there can be training programs, seminars and conferences conducted on peace education. Such gatherings can help for an increased awareness and interest amongst students, faculty and guardians about peace education. Inviting visiting faculty and students from other institutions involved in peace education can provide an opportunity to exchange views and learn new ideas (Danesh, 2006).

Introduction of this subject implies that it has to get merged with the existing education system. Rather than becoming an extra burden on students, it could be set up as an inspirational activity. Rather than introducing it as a new subject, peace education could be incorporated into the teaching of existing academic subjects, mainly in social studies but even in biology, for the understanding of war and peace includes an understanding of "human nature", which is part of human biology.

The form in which this occurs would have to be decided individually by each institution based on opinions of their faculty and students. Recent research (Shah & Meisenberg, 2012) has reported that students and faculty have moderately good agreement over different teaching/learning modalities like lectures, practical exercises, problem based learning (PBL), team based learning (TBL), e-learning or electronic or online-learning and use of study materials like books and handouts. It should be possible to achieve moderately good agreement between faculty and students about methods for peace education as well (Figure III).

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Figure 3: Peace education methods.

Didactic lectures on peace can be mainly based on the need for peace and how those who pursued it could shape the world for better. Works of peace leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa and other legends can be cited and explained. Instead of glorifying war, the teaching of history should explain how orgies of violence such as World Wars I and II could ever happen. The legitimacy of the Nagasaki-Hiroshima atomic bombings and other violent actions against civilians in war could be discussed, in addition to providing factual information about the physical nature and biological consequences of nuclear blasts. Racism and riots need to be discussed, including the many ways they have harmed humankind and paralyzed the societies afflicted by them. The biographies of successful people in every peaceful pursuit of life and their contributions to the peaceful advancement of human civilization should be held up as examples, combined with due contempt for military heroes whose claim to fame rests on the number of enemies they have killed.

Practical exercises could be based on techniques like yoga, tai chi, meditation, and others which are well researched and established in achieving inner peace, concentration and mind-control. Experts in each field can be invited and these techniques can be practically taught to the students. Also, relaxation activities or hobbies like music, dance, singing and others can be introduced and encouraged in the peace practical activities class.

PBL or problem based learning can have a great role to play while educating students about peace. This modality is a small group teaching method. There are about 8 students in each class who are tutored by a facilitator. In each class a new problem can be introduced to the group. Depending on students' age and standard of education, the problems given can vary from a simple

conflict between two students to one between countries. The problems can be real incidents – there are plenty to choose from. Students can be asked to discuss the problem, if need be research the details of the problem and suggest their views about it with responsibility to solve it and achieve peace. There can be a take home message after every class. Students can be asked to make a workbook of problems and the possible solutions they arrived at.

Such a practice can be an active way to solicit innovative ideas from students. It can condition minds for peace and harmony and can affirm responsible behavior. It can make an important contribution because effective group learning requires the sharing of information and opinions, and tolerance toward the views of others. Tolerance is a cornerstone of efforts at maintaining peace, for disagreement on matters of opinion or matters of principle are the usual causes of war, and war results when people are unwilling or unable to accept and understand other people's points of view. Thus small group learning, under the guidance of a competent instructor, inculcates the tolerance, understanding, and social skills that are needed to cooperate even in the presence of major differences in points of view. It engenders the habits of the heart that make peace appear the natural state of affairs – overcoming the baggage of history and evolutionary biology that make life appear as a constant struggle for survival in a hostile world.

Team based learning or TBL can also be of great impact in peace education. The main activity consists of large-room sessions in which problems are presented and solutions are found first individually, followed by discussion in groups of approximately 6 students, and presentation of the results by the group. In the later part of each session, expert faculty members are available for explanations and to answer student questions. Here again the problems can be real, taken from personal experience or world history. Like PBL this too can provide an opportunity to present personal opinions and suggestions, practice to listen and consider views of fellow group members, and conditioning for co-operative problem solving in a peaceful, appreciative and congenial manner.

E-learning through electronic media, including online teaching or videotaped lectures, can have a major role to play. Especially for students in higher education, time is a major constraint. E-learning can give them freedom to learn at their own convenience whenever they find time and wherever they are. These students can be given freedom to communicate with the faculty involved in peace education via e-mail or voice over internet protocol (VOIP). There can be interactive online programs to have students' active input.

7. INCENTIVES FOR PEACE EDUCATION

Appreciation of faculty and students who are involved in peace education can be an incentive. Students can be further encouraged by arranging programs like

Figure 4: Peace education incentives.

skit presentation on a peace-related theme, community work and celebrating World Peace Day. There can be awards for both faculty and students who do outstanding work in peace education. There could be trips sponsored to peaceful countries of the world to realize how collective prevalence of peace has benefited living of the people and progress of their country. Fellowships in peace education from renowned universities can spur the best efforts of students. (Figure IV)

8. COLLECTIVE WORK FOR PEACE EDUCATION

Collaborative work with other educational bodies should be welcomed. Collective efforts can be made by education policy makers along with the media, such as newspapers and cinema halls to print or flash messages on peace every day. Similar measures have been used to reduce smoking in the United States, and were found effective both for teenagers (Farrelly et al., 2005) and adults (Wakefield et al., 2008). The kinds of strategies that have worked for educating the public about smoking are likely to work for peace education as well— good habits can be inculcated—so they should at least be tried. Those who are working for peace should be brought into the limelight, and those who are in the limelight already can help set examples for peace. Besides, universities can ask the public sector on how they think the students can best be educated for peace.

9. EVALUATION OF PEACE EDUCATION

There needs to be continuous monitoring and evaluation of efforts made for peace education. Anonymous surveys of students and faculty can be carried

out to know what they think about implementation of the peace education program. Answers must be sought about whether the set goals are achieved, and if not, which areas need improvement. Inspections can be made by external evaluators and records of trouble-shooting can be kept for future reference, but the principal method of evaluation has to be feedback from the involved teachers and learners.

CONCLUSION

We must learn to live together as brothers, or we will perish together as fools. Martin Luther King, Jr. Speech at St. Louis, 1964. (King, 1964)

Many times this phrase has proved its validity. There is no acceptable alternative to teaching peace, learning peace, practicing peace and living peacefully. Peace education was sought for in the past, is needed in the present, and will shape the world of the future. How will it feel if for a change you have a student choosing peace-practitioner as a career? Think about it! Finally, peace education can be related to achieving a more civil and positive discourse among students as citizens of the world – through face-to-face interactions as well as the social media. In order to promote peace education successfully, it has to address some of the most immediate needs of students, teachers, schools, and communities. For example, how might peace education contribute to a teacher's classroom management (i.e., contribute to a positive learning environment) by helping students get along better with their peers? Could peace education have any impact on the problem of bullying? Can peace education offer – in any way, shape, or form – an alternative to gang-related behavior and can it add to conventional academic achievement, for example by learning about different cultures? Much needs to be done for peace to prevail (Figure V).

Figure 5: Teachers for peace.

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