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POSITION PAPER

NATIONAL FOCUS GROUP

ON

# EDUCATION FOR PEACE

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राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

# Executive Summary

"If we are to teach real peace in the world we shall have to begin with children".

*Mahatma Gandhi*

"All education is for peace".

*Maria Montessori*

Peace, as an integrative perspective for the school curriculum, is an idea whose time has come. 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 vigour and vision, education for peace can make learning a joyful and meaningful experience.

Peace and Education for Peace are then defined, and the need to introduce education for peace in the school curriculum is viewed, albeit very briefly, from the global and national perspective. Education for Peace requires a reduction in curriculum load. Peace offers a contextually appropriate and pedagogically gainful point of coherence for all values. The complementarity of peace and justice is underlined. In the event of a conflict of interests, the claims of justice must take precedence over the dynamics of peace in the interests of peace in the long run, lest peace becomes a repressive or retrograde ideology. The need to do justice to teachers is also argued and the setting up of Teachers' Tribunals is proposed to address this basic need. Inner peace is identified as the seed of peace, but a note of caution is struck against misunderstanding inner peace as escapism and sanctified selfishness.

This paper reckons with the reality of the alarming increase in violence in school life. It is to this end that this paper outlines pedagogy for peace. The pivotal role that teachers play in learning is envisaged in education for peace and the need to turn schools into nurseries for peace is also examined.

The paper then examines, in some detail, 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 citizenship. Citizenship, not religion, is what all Indians share in common. The major frontiers of education for peace are: (a) bringing about peace-orientation in individuals through education; (b) nurturing in students the social skills and outlook needed to live together in harmony; (c) reinforcing social justice, as envisaged in the Constitution; (d) the need and duty to propagate a secular culture; (e) education as a catalyst for activating a democratic culture; (f) the scope for promoting national integration through education; and (g) education for peace as a lifestyle movement.

Attention is then turned to examining the major issues and concerns that an effective implementation of education for peace needs to engage. They include: teacher education, textbook writing, school setting, evaluation, media literacy, parent-teacher partnership and the need to address the practical implications of integration as the preferred strategy for implementing education for peace.

This paper then attempts to outline the curriculum contents for education for peace. 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. Curriculum contents are identified with reference to the goals of education for peace as identified in this paper. The paper's suggestions with respect to curriculum contents are as follows:

(i) 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.

(ii) In the upper primary years, students could be enabled to view the culture of peace from the perspective of Indian history, philosophy, and culture.

(iii) 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.

(iv) At the plus two level, the foci of education for peace could be: (*a*) understanding the logic, modes and expressions of violence; (b) skills for an objective understanding of issues; and (c) developing a global perspective on peace.

The paper also makes a set of suggestions for making the implementation of education for peace effective and enjoyable.

The paper concludes by identifying some of the basic assumptions that shape the approach to education for peace. These are: (a) schools can be nurseries for peace; (b) teachers can be social healers; (c) education for peace can humanise education as a whole; (d) the skills and orientation of peace promote life-long excellence; and (e) justice is integral to peace

A plea is then made, to turn education for peace into a people's movement. A few notes of caution are also struck. The enterprise of education must be cleansed of social and gender injustice; for what is tainted with injustice cannot be a vehicle of peace. Letting the minds of children—the citizens of tomorrow—be warped by violence is a serious problem and it needs to be acknowledged and addressed with the seriousness and urgency it merits. Peace must be pursued with single-minded vigour and an undeviating sense of purpose. Education for peace, as a pioneering move, must be implemented with vision and determination. A casual or half-hearted attempt could trivialise it and aggravate cynicism about its efficacy.

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## 1. CONCEPTS AND CONCERNS

As stated, peace, as an integrative perspective for the school curriculum, is an idea whose time has come. The purpose of education goes beyond the propagation of knowledge. As Daniel Webster said,

> "Knowledge does not comprise all that is contained in the larger term of education. The feelings are to be disciplined. The passions are to be restrained. True and worthy motives are to be inspired….And pure morality is to be inculcated in all circumstances".

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. Currently, the enterprise of education is driven by market forces. Education for peace is not antagonistic to the market, but it does not recognise the market as the purpose of education. The market is only a part of our life-world. 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.

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)–2000, is a source of value generation. Values and attitudes are the building blocks of the culture of peace. What, then, is unique to education for peace? Why should we bother ourselves, or burden students, with a new perspective?

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. In today's world, hurry and worry sour the joy of learning and undermine learning and the harmony of life. This is the stark reality to which the increasing incidence of suicide among students draws our attention.

Value education is subsumed in education for peace, but is not identical with it. Peace is a contextually appropriate and pedagogically gainful point of coherence for values. Peace concretises the purpose of values and motivates their internalisation. Without such a framework, the integration of values into the learning process remains a non-starter. Educating for peace is, thus, the ideal strategy for contextualising and making operative value education. Values are internalised through experience, which is woefully lacking in the classroom-centred and exclusively cognitive approach to teaching. Education for peace 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.

Education for peace contextualises learning. We live in an age of unprecedented violence: locally, nationally, and globally. It is a serious matter that schools, which are meant to be the nurseries of peace, become transmission points for violence. The alumnus of a well-known college in Delhi, to take a recent example, was found to be running a kidnapping racket in Patna. Consider what an experienced, urban school teacher has to say on the change that has come about in the school setting. "There is a quantum leap in violence. The words children use are violent. Their tastes and games are violent. Their relationships are violent. But I don't blame them. They come from violent homes."

Now listen to the anguish of a sweeper in a South Indian school, lest we presume that only students are

vulnerable to violence. She was interviewed by a member of the Focus Group on Education for Peace in the course of a survey conducted for this position paper.

Tulasiamma is not a one-off island of anxiety. She has innumerable counterparts in urban India. It is not physical violence that worries every one of them, but wordless emotional violence. Not all of them are worried that their children might turn into terrorists. But they do worry about whether they will ever have a soul-filling heart-to-heart with their children. Increasing emotional alienation, resulting in the erosion of

**Will he become a Terrorist or a *Goonda*?**

I was 10 years old when my father died in the Satyagraha movement in 1945. Mahatmaji came to see us. Here, look at this— my treasure—[she points to a *charakha* and a white cap]. He gave me this and said, "Do not weep, your father is a hero, come join the Vanaraseva." My elder brother was also in the movement with Indira Gandhi. We were illiterate in today's sense because we did not attend school. Now I feel, we were educated. We had these great leaders of the nation to teach us. My grandson, this little fellow, is just 13 years old now. I have been taking care of him since his mother died 10 years ago. He was a nice, kind, truthful, and patient child until one day he spoke the truth and got beaten up so badly that one of his limbs was broken. When the school inspector asked the children about the school, the teachers, and the facilities, he stood up boldly and spoke. He told the inspector about a boy who was allowed to copy in the science exam, because he was the Headmaster's (HM's) nephew. The inspector took action on the HM and the HM beat this boy. He engaged some gangsters to beat him up. I went to the police but to no effect. Today this boy is changed. He gets his way by intimidating others. He has shifted to another school. He is a hero in the new school because of his physical might. I do not believe that children learn violence at home. They learn it from school. I have lived all my life as a Gandhian believing in *satya* and *Ahimsa* but can I die peacefully when my own flesh and blood engage in *hinsa*? Please do something to change the school learning. Merely talking to them about peace is insufficient, we need to train them in peace—'peace training'. Gandhi trained us in *satya* and *ahimsa* for *Shantimargam*. You tell me that all this is done in Delhi—tell them to wakeup at least now—they have Gandhiji's blessings. Go ahead and teach children *shanti*. I sometimes have nightmares about this little fellow. Will he turn out to be a terrorist or a *goonda*? How can I give him these treasures [the *charakha* and cap] when he has no belief in *ahimsa*?

*Tulasiamma: a 70-year-old sweeper in a school in Tamil Nadu*

togetherness and the virtual death of communication at home, is the substance of their silent suffering. And it threatens to assume epidemic proportions. Alienation is the seed of violence. In alienation, even silence becomes violence. It needs to be asked if we are not spreading alienation, albeit unwittingly, through education by undermining the affective, relational and experiential aspects of learning. Education of this kind turns children into cerebral machines that master facts and are mastered by them. But it leaves them deficient in emotional and relational skills. As a result, the more "achievement-oriented" a person is the less able he tends to be in relating to people, even dear ones, sensitively, reciprocally, and responsibly. Lopsided development, marked by deficient social imagination, makes children vulnerable to violence. In a survey conducted for this position paper, 18 per cent of the children interviewed were found to take pleasure in various acts of violence. They enjoyed stoning little pups and kittens, breaking flower buds off plants, holding butterflies between their fingers, older children engaged in eve-teasing and ragging to the extent that it sometimes became fatal.

Faith in violence as a quick-fix problem-solver is an emerging epidemic. Even more worrisome than crude eruptions of physical violence is the violence ensconced in our craving for achievement and effectiveness. If India, a country of a billion people, does not win an Olympic gold medal, we believe that this is not because we do not develop talent or work hard with a vigorous sense of purpose, but because we lack the "killer instinct". Opposition parties prefer, not to debate, but to 'drive' their point home by 'holding the Parliament to ransom'. We assume that even routine things cannot be accomplished, unless launched "on a war-footing". Our eagerness to 'eradicate' illiteracy is not matched by a keenness to 'promote'

education. Young people, today "get a kick" out of their birthday parties, by turn them into birthday 'bashes'. Rather than go out for a drive, they "hit the road" and "take a spin". Why, we even talk of "launching peace offensives" or "waging peace".

Agenda-wars in workplaces, gender-wars in homes, propaganda wars in the public space. The result? Children grow up unwittingly schooled in violence. The worst dis-service to a nation is to infect the minds of its children with violence. This is done actively by indoctrinating young minds with ideologies of violence. It is also done passively by denying them integrative ideals and universal values. The citizens of tomorrow need to be empowered to choose the way of peace; lest, by default, they stray into the blind alleys of violence. "violence literacy" threatens to become universal.

But escalating violence is not the only, or even the most important, reason for re-orienting eduction to peace, just as the need to avoid accidents is not the main reason why a car needs to be roadworthy. Accidents must be avoided at all costs. But one does not own a car only to avoid accidents. One does so, primarily, to reach desired destinations. Education is a nation's tryst with destiny. We owe it to our country to ensure that the education we impart is conducive to the health and wholeness of India. Peace is a prime requirement for progress and national integration. Conflicts dissipate our collective energy and destroy the framework for a better quality of life, even when the material resources for it are available. Implementing education for peace is not only an appropriate strategy for conflict resolution and conflict avoidance, but also a proactive investment in realising "the India of our dreams". Every society in every age has acknowledged peace as a noble and necessary ideal. The great spiritual teachers of the past were, in their own ways, educators for peace.

No value is either absolute or self-sufficient. Values are complementary and inter-dependent. A value becomes counter-productive when pursued in isolation of other values. Loyalty, for instance, is a value. But when loyalty excludes truth, it degenerates into sycophancy. Speaking the truth, devoid of love, hurts more than it heals. Peace, likewise, becomes an alibi for oppression when delinked from a commitment to justice. Injustice subverts peace. The most pervasive forms of systemic injustice in our context are discriminations and disabilities based on caste and gender, both of which— further vitiated by poverty— continue to rob millions of children of their the right to education and dignity in school. Caste and gender-based injustices continue to subvert education as a fundamental right. Addressing and rectifying these aberrations is a core agenda in education for peace. Denial of access to basic education perpetuates political, economic, and social injustice against the underprivileged, prejudices them, and excludes them from the mainstream of national life. In a society marked by multiple pockets of endemic injustice, *the demands of justice must take precedence over the claims of peace, paradoxically, for the sake of peace.*

Inner peace is the kernel of collective peace. Without this, one may be restless even in a haven of calm. In contrast, one who is at peace with himself can stay calm in the eye of the storm. This inner peace should not, however, be misunderstood as a state of self-centred apathy, or wilful blindness to human suffering. Peace implies the ability to respond to the surrounding suffering and other's needs in ways that affirm faith in the light beyond the darkness. It is in the presence, not in the absence of turbulence, that the capacity for peace is tested and proved. *The ability to respond justly and affirmatively to the needs and sufferings of others is the hallmark of authentic inner peace.* Also, inner peace is a precondition for proactive solidarity. It is not an exclusive obsession with peace for oneself, but a commitment to peace for all. It includes, besides, the fortitude to recognise, renounce, resist, and remove whatever undermines peace for all.

The foremost challenge before education for peace that deserves special mention at the outset, is the need to do justice to teachers. We expect a great deal from teachers; and the burden of expectations continues to mount. But the duty to do justice to teachers is overlooked. Teachers' day is observed; but we turn a blind eye to how teachers live their lives— underpaid and, in some states, paid erratically. In hundreds and thousands of cases, teachers are actually paid a great deal less than their salaries on paper. Many of them have had to pay huge bribes for their jobs and feel demoralised and aggrieved. Thousands live in smouldering resentment. Even the most lowly worker in the organised sector can have recourse to the labour courts for the redressal of grievances. There is no corresponding provision for teachers. *It is necessary, therefore, to set up a constitutionally empowered National Tribunal for Teachers with branches in every State and Union Territory to address and redress the grievances of teachers.* In large States like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar, it might be necessary to have more than one branch to ensure accessibility, affordability, and promptitude. *Doing justice to teachers is crucial to implementing education for peace.*

Education for peace seeks to nurture the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that comprise a culture of peace. It is a long-term proactive strategy to nurture peaceful persons who resolve conflicts non-violently. Education for peace is holistic. It embraces the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social growth of children within a framework of human values. Recognising peace as holistic carries two major

implications for education for peace. (*a*) Peace involves all aspects and dimensions of human existence in an inter-dependent way. Only those who are at peace with themselves can be at peace with others and develop the sensitivity it takes to be just and caring towards nature. Spiritual and psychological peace is neither stable nor viable without social, economic, and ecological peace. (*b*) Peace implies reciprocity. Values like love, freedom, and peace can be had only by giving them to others. Peace for oneself that excludes peace for others is a dangerous illusion. Education for Peace, hence, has a two-fold purpose: (*a*) to empower individuals to choose the path of peace rather than the path of violence; and (*b*) to enabling them to be peacemakers rather than the consumers of peace. Education for peace is, in this sense, an essential component of holistic basic education that aims at the comprehensive development of persons.

Peace is often equated with the absence of violence. To Gandhiji, exploitation was the most familiar and practical form of violence on an individual by the state, a group, another individual, or by machines; on women by men; and on one nation by another. Peace mandates the practice of values such as love, truth, justice, equality, tolerance, harmony, humility, togetherness, and self-control. Self-suffering, if need be, is to be preferred to inflicting violence on others. Gandhiji's concept of peace includes:

(i)  The absence of tensions, conflicts, and all forms of violence including terrorism and war. Peace implies the capacity to live together in harmony. This calls for non-violent ways of resolving conflicts. Diversity occasions conflicts but conflicts do not have to eventuate into violence.

(ii)  The creation of non-violent social systems, i.e., a society free from structural   violence. The duty to practice justice: social, economic, cultural, and political. Hunger is systemic violence.

(iii)  The absence of exploitation and injustice of every kind.

(iv)  International cooperation and understanding. This involves the creation of a just world order, marked by a willingness to share the earth's resources to meet the needs of all. That is, the need to shift from greed to need.

(v)  Ecological balance and conservation. The adoption of lifestyles conducive to the wholeness of creation.

(vi)  Peace of mind, or the psycho-spiritual dimension of peace.

Peace begins with the individual and spreads to the family, to the community, to the nation, and to the global village. Promoting a culture of peace, hence, involves a two-pronged strategy. The members of a society need to be oriented toward peace rather than toward violence. At the same time, social, economic, and political systems have to be reoriented to peace. The discipline of peace must shape our way of life. Education is vital for the effectiveness of both strategies. For this to happen education has to go beyond the warehousing of information to a celebration of awareness, which is best facilitated through education for peace.

## 2. A Brief Background

### 2.1 Initiatives: International and National

We are at present halfway through the decade for the promotion of a culture of peace, as approved by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1999. 2000-2010 was declared by the UNESCO as the International Decade for Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World. The last five decades have witnessed several significant advocacies for education for peace. The UNESCO

recommendations on education for international understanding, peace, human rights, and fundamental freedoms (1974) and UNESCO's 1994 action plan for education for peace, human rights, and democracy, endorsed by 144 countries, are two of the prominent landmarks. ASPnet was launched by UNESCO in 1953 to promote international understanding and peace. As of 2003, ASPnet includes 7500 institutions ranging from nursery schools to teacher training institutions in 170 countries. The network is dedicated to the pursuit of peace, liberty, justice, and human development.

An innovative pilot project on "peace and disarmament education" is being implemented in four countries: Albania, Niger, Peru, and Cambodia, by the UN Department of Disarmament Affairs (UNDDA) and the Hague Appeal for Peace (HAP). The Centre for Research on Education for peace (CERPE) at the University of Haifa, Israel, which has been functioning since in 1998 serves as an interdisciplinary and international forum for the scholarly study of education for peace. The center has undertaken a number of research projects on education for peace. The Earth and Peace Education Associates International (EPE), New York, is yet another organisation which promotes basic values related to peace, viz., sustainability, non-violence, social justice, intergenerational equity, and participatory decision-making. Besides these, a number of other organisations around the world are working for peace.

Many institutions in the country are working for the promotion of peace, particularly Gandhian ideas of peace, the Gandhi Peace Foundation, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samriti, Gandhian Institute of Studies, and Jaipur Peace Foundation being prominent examples. It is regrettable that peace studies continue to be neglected by Indian academic institutions. Given our philosophical tradition of ahimsa, cultural heritage of peaceful co-existence, and the Gandhian legacy of non-violent resolution of conflicts that inspires heroes and sagas of peace in other parts of the world, this state of affairs should embarrass us.

Although Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) have been contributing to different aspects of peace studies, viz., human rights, gender discrimination, environment, etc. they do not impact education adequately at the school level. There is need for networking among all such institutions in order to enhance their effectiveness.

### 2.2 Policy Perspectives: A Brief Overview

The approach to education in the pre-British period, as the Report of the University Education Commission (1962) points out, was shaped by the awareness that "education should not stop with the development of intellectual powers but must provide the student…a code of behaviour based on fundamental principles of ethics and religion." The British Period, otherwise termed the Raj, in contrast, marked a hiatus in the history of education. The attitude of the Raj was negative, even antagonistic, to religious and moral education. The Education Commission of 1882, however, ventured to recommend the inclusion of moral education in the curriculum, which the government dismissed as "impractical" in 1884.

The Report of the Central Advisory Board of 1944-46, however, marked a departure in the thinking on the subject. It recognised that "religion in the widest sense should inspire all education and that a curriculum devoid of ethical basis will prove barren in the end." This did not, however, result in any change on the ground. The Special Committee appointed to study the feasibility of implementing this recommendation, under the Chairmanship of Bishop G. D. Barne, came to the conclusion that religious education should be

"the responsibility of the home and community to which the pupil belongs."

The Report of the Secondary Education Commission of 1952–53 is a significant landmark in the thinking on moral and religious education. It identified character building as the defining goal of education. "The supreme end of the educative process should be the training of the character and personality of students in such a way that they will be able to realise their full potentialities and contribute to the well-being of the community." The report prescribed moral instruction as the means to achieve this goal. It recommended, besides, an integrative approach to moral instruction rather than treating it as a separate subject. In respect of "religious instruction", however, the report stipulated that it "may be given in school only on a voluntary basis and outside the regular school hours, such instruction being confined to the children of the particular faith concerned and given with the consent of the parents and the managements."

The Report of the University Education Commission (1962) struck a more confident note. "If we exclude spiritual training in our institutions," the Report warned, "we would be untrue to our whole historical development." The Report then goes on to make a case, not for religious or moral education, but for evolving "a national faith, a national way of life based on the Indian outlook on religion, free from dogmas, rituals and assertions." The Education Commission of 1964–66 put the spotlight on "education and national development", from which perspective it identified the "absence of provision for education in social, moral and spiritual values" as a serious defect in the curriculum. The commission recommended that these values be taught "with the help, wherever possible, of the ethical teachings of great religions." Agreeing with the Sri Prakasa Committee Report it recommended "direct moral instruction" for which "one or two periods a week should be set aside in the school time-table."

The National Policy on Education (1986) expressed concern over "the erosion of essential values and an increasing cynicism in society". It advocated turning education into "a forceful tool for the cultivation of social and moral values". Education should "foster universal and eternal values, oriented towards the unity and integration of our people". The Programme of Action of 1992 tried to integrate the various components of value education into the curriculum at all stages of school education, including the secondary stage.

The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (2000), echoing the National Policy on Education (1986), lamented the "erosion of the essential social, moral and spiritual values and an increase in cynicism at all levels." Against this backdrop, the framework advanced a plea to integrate value education into the curriculum. Stating that what was required, however "is not religious education but education about religions, their basics, the values inherent therein and also a comparative study of the philosophy of all religions." The framework prescribed an integrative approach. Value education and education about religions should be "judiciously integrated with all subjects of study".

The shift of focus, over the decades, from religious and moral education to education for peace, via value education, parallels the shifting sense and sensitivities in the larger context of education. Remedies point to maladies. The acceptance of education for peace as a necessary ingredient of holistic education in the western context was driven by deepening anxieties about the rise and spread of violence. A similar pattern is obtained in our context as well.

### 3. AN APPROACH TO EDUCATION FOR PEACE

The peace opportunities latent in the curriculum are maximised when the school atmosphere is imbued with the values and attitudes of peace. Teacher–student interactions, lesson designs in textbooks, the pedagogic approach, and the total life of the school must all be oriented toward peace.

The pedagogic strategy for education for peace presupposed in this paper is that of integration. Integration is the ideal, especially since peace is an integrative and all-embracing concept. The integrated approach is to be understood from two angles. At the broader level, integration occurs when all the activities of the school, curricular as well as co-curricular, are geared toward education for peace. At the classroom level, peace dimensions are woven into the contents of the lessons, which are treated also as a means of helping students to imbibe peace values. Here, emphasis is not merely on acquisition of knowledge but also on the process through which peace is achieved.

The integrated approach has an edge over the "separate subject approach" from a number of points of view — psychological, motivational, and pedagogical. From the cognitive and developmental point of view, constructivist psychology has established that children construct knowledge holistically. When knowledge is embedded in appropriate contexts, it becomes more meaningful and enjoyable for the learner. In the integrated approach, the lessons and topics become the vehicles to convey peace messages in meaningful contexts. This approach not only makes the subject matter wholesome and situated but also motivates students to learn and to relate what they learn to their own settings. It provides contexts and connections to explore, think, reflect, and internalise positive dispositions. The integrated approach must be reflected in the totality of educational programmes in schools and must permeate the school curriculum and co-curriculum. Thus, every teacher becomes a peace educator. Teacher–student interactions, textbook lessons and the pedagogy for teaching them, and the school management and administrative staff must all be oriented to education for peace.

### 3.1 Stage-Specific Approach

The primary stage of education is the ideal time for laying the foundation of a peace-oriented personality. These years comprise the formative period in the lives of the students. At this stage, students are comparatively less burdened. The number of students who could be exposed to education for peace is at the maximum during this phase. Thereafter, students begin to drop out. Therefore, this is the stage at which focused attention should be paid to laying the foundation for a culture of peace through education. As the saying goes, "It is easier to build a child than it is to repair an adult."

The values that make up a peace-oriented personality include: hygiene both of the self and of the surroundings, respect for others and for elders, recognition of the dignity of labour, honesty, love, sharing and cooperation, tolerance, regularity, punctuality, responsibility, etc. All children are naturally loving and kind, but they are also imbued with the potential to be otherwise. Hence, the need to affirm and fortify what is constructive and to forestall violent tendencies. Education for peace for primary school children is about helping them enjoy and celebrate diversity, beauty, and harmony in nature. They must be encouraged to develop the skills it takes to be at home with others (especially the art of listening) and with nature (aesthetic sensitivity and a sense of responsibility).

As children grow older and reach the middle school stage, they begin to grasp abstract thoughts. In a limited

way they develop the capacity to think rationally and relationally about the various happenings in their surroundings. A crucial issue for children at this stage is that of relating to other children and their status in peer groups. Since, the school brings together children from multiple religious, cultural, and regional backgrounds, students need to be equipped with cognitive competence to understand the values underlying democracy, equality, justice, dignity, and human rights. They need to respond positively to cultural plurality and appreciate the importance of peaceful coexistence.

This is the appropriate stage for developing the skills for handling information, thinking creatively, self-reflection, and self-discipline, which will enable them to participate in groups and relate to others responsibly, negotiate conflicts with understanding, and develop an informed aversion to various forms of violence like communalism and discrimination on the basis of gender, caste, class, and religion. Besides, they need to develop discernment, to respond with maturity to corruption, misleading advertisements, and whatever is violent and unhealthy in the media. Above all, they need to be educated in the basics of becoming responsible citizens of a socialist, secular democracy.

In the secondary and senior secondary stage students gradually become aware of their identity. They are on the threshold of becoming independent persons, though still deficient in maturity. The resulting confusion leads to conflict with peers, parents, and teachers. During this phase, their skills for rational thinking, communication, and self-discipline are tested. They need training to resolve, through dialogue and negotiation, the conflicts they are sure to encounter in day-to-day interactions. They also need to develop awareness about inter-relationships and interdependence in the global and ecological contexts,

so that they can form a wider perspective on justice, peace, and non-violence. It is important to enable them to be not only the recipients of peace but the active makers of peace, who can think for others and help them. They need to be at peace with themselves as evolved human beings who are peaceful and non-violent not because they are weak, but because of their commitment to peace based on a larger awareness and rational thinking.

## 3.2 Teachers as Peace Builders

### Some News Headlines

- Teacher molests eight year old (*Hindustan* Times, 4 December 2004)
- Teacher blinds boy with pen (A case of a Class III student being punished for being inattentive in class) (*Hindustan* Times, 20 January 2005)
- Class III student thrashed for spelling error (*Hindustan* Times, 16 February 2005)
- Teacher pulls out five year-old's hair, keeps her standing (the child was punished for not bringing a plastic bag to carry some art assignments) (*Hindustan* Times, 17 March 2005)

For students, teachers are role-models. Therefore, teachers play a role, unwittingly, in propagating violence if they are not oriented to peace. As the saying goes, "What I teach is what I know and what I educate is what I am." A teacher's prime responsibility is to help students become good human beings, motivated to fulfil their true potential not only for their own benefit but also for the betterment of the society as a whole.

It is for this reason that a teacher is compared to a gardener who plants seeds of knowledge and good values, waters them with care and kindness, and removes weeds of ignorance. Good teachers are models of peace values, such as, the art of listening, the humility to acknowledge and correct one's mistakes, assuming responsibility for one's actions, sharing concerns, and helping each other to solve problems transcending differences, even if they do not preach peace.

A teacher who imposes "discipline" in the classroom only by intimidating children with blows and slaps is a role-model for violence as the sole problem-solving strategy. The teacher's role in creating a positive climate in the classroom is of paramount importance. It is his/her attitudes, values, and relationships that determine the nature of the classroom climate. A teacher who, from a peace perspective, can critically evaluate his/her attitudes, habitual modes of thinking, and approach to teaching—what one teaches and what are the carry-over values of what is taught and how it is taught—is an asset for eduction for peace.

Children close their ears to advice and open their eyes to example. This is especially true in the Indian context where teachers are respected as the fountainheads of knowledge and wisdom. Students will learn peace values only if these are modelled by their teachers and elders. If there is a mismatch between what adults do and what they say, students will imitate what is done. Teachers need to be aware of the effect of their behaviour on students. For example, instead of exhorting students to "care for others", it is more effective to practise this value and let students construct their own understanding of it.

### 3.3 Pedagogical Skills and Strategies

The common pedagogic goal for teachers is syllabus and examination oriented. In peace-oriented pedagogy, the focus is not merely on retention of concepts, memorisation of texts, or achieving individual goals and excellence but on learning to reflect, share, care, and collaborate with each other. Every topic/lesson has peace-laden (hidden or explicit) components, which need 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. The teacher and school may devise other context-specific strategies to develop among students a sense of openness and comprehension about diverse cultures, histories, and fundamental shared values. There is ample scope in the syllabi of various subject areas for teaching students the importance of adopting peaceful means of resolving disagreements and conflicts and eschewing violence; and teachers need to take full advantage of this.

Presenting lessons from a humanistic and positive perspective is the basis of education. Teaching should awaken positive feelings and foster positive experiences, help in arriving at an understanding of the self, encourage openness to inquiry by raising questions, exploring, and discovering and constructing an understanding of values, and provide an opportunity for applying the knowledge of values the student has learnt. Strategies like questions, stories, anecdotes, games, experiments, discussions, dialogues, value clarification, examples, analogies, metaphors, role-play, and simulation are helpful in promoting peace through teaching-learning. Some peace values may be more appropriately inculcated while teaching a particular subject at a particular stage or grade, while others are better integrated with other subjects in a different grade.

Thus subject-appropriate and stage-/grade-appropriate strategies vis-a-vis values need to be delineated.

In all of this, what stands out is the crucial role that the teacher plays in an approach to education that promotes a culture of peace. The fact that learning has to necessarily be pupil-oriented does not contradict this. Learning can be pupil-oriented only if the teacher facilitates it. It would be naïve to understand the pupil-oriented approach in a way that devalues the role that the teacher plays in the learning process. For education for peace, a great deal depends on the peace-motivation of teachers, especially in the integrated approach. The teacher has to be alert to peace opportunities and creative in appropriating them in respect of the curriculum as a whole. Teachers who are either aggressive or indifferent to the culture of peace, and hence see teaching only as the warehousing of information, may remain blind to the exciting scope that every lesson and every experience in the school offers to promote the cause of peace.

Some examples of teaching-learning activities are suggested below for integration in the subject content. The teacher is the best judge when and where to use them.

**Children could be asked to:**
- Demonstrate the many ways in which one can show respect to elders at home and in school. How do we show respect while asking for things, listening, or talking? (Environmental Studies/Language).
- Express the meaning of the word 'cooperation' in different ways (Language).
- Demonstrate using puppets, how to resolve conflicts peacefully through the usage of proper words and gestures [Environmental Studies (EVS)/Language].
- Imagine a peaceful world and what would it be like (Social Science).
- Describe how anger destroys peace (Social Science/Language).
- Explain the paradox: everyone wants a peaceful world, but the world is not peaceful. Why is this so? Analyse the factors that come in the way of peace. (Social Science).
- Identify the changes we need to bring about, if we are to have a peaceful world. These changes include changes in respect of one's own feelings and values (Social Science).
- Identify as many activities as possible, which indicate the good that we can do to others with our hands (Language).
- Complete an incomplete story in different ways with peace messages (Language).
- Demonstrate different ways, i.e., emotions/gestures, to be supportive and caring to a person in a wheelchair (Language).
- Role-play different objects like trees, a broom, various civic facilities, showing how they benefit us (EVS/Language).
- Write a story or poem or come up with a quotation based on the picture displayed on a chart. The story, besides being original, must carry some social/moral message (Language).
- Write a story on tolerance, sensitivity to others, etc. Collect newspaper chippings, magazines, articles on different themes and create a wall magazine (Language).
- Improvise the solution to a problem affecting weaker students through teamwork, utilising available resources (EVS/Social Sciences).
- Show the students an object, for example, a flower, and ask them to write a few lines, a poem, or a song, comparing the qualities of a flower or other object with those of a good human being (Language).

- Compose various value-words, using a set of letters provided. For example, qualities like honesty and truthfulness, making new associations among them (Language).

- Compose a poem or a song depicting values like honesty, hard work, etc. (Language).

- Write a letter pertaining to a misunderstanding between two friends, suggesting a way to resolve the problem without either one feeling humiliated (Language).

- Imagine being the victim of violence, for example, having to pay a bribe, being humiliated, having to live in fear of one's life, being a victim of red tapism, etc. and express what it means to be a victim.

- Collect the works of relatively lesser known people who have contributed to the welfare of others and analyse their qualities (Social Science).

- Identify problem areas in the community that require creative solution (Social Science).

- Write a composition on 'A Day in the Life of a Teacher' (Language).

- Imagine different ways to help a street child. For example, the students could write a letter to the editor of a leading newspaper circulating in the area about how to be more caring to others especially the young and the needy (Language).

- Organise field visits to local orphanages or old age homes to sensitise students to the loneliness, deprivation, and helplessness of these sections of society.

- Organise programmes, talks, workshops, film shows, etc. to inculcate in the students love and concern for the human family. A case in point is the science and ethics of organ transplants, where unscientific assumptions and anxieties stand in the way of improving the quality of life of thousands.

- Develop projects on ecological changes over the years and their effect on local crops. This exercise is of especial significance for rural students. Discuss how environmental degradation affects the poor.

- Provide opportunities for development of social skills through dramatics, plays, community singing, and group work, etc.

- Undertake a survey on how many children below the age of 14 are not attending school in the village, town, or neighbourhood in question, exploring also the reasons why they are out of school.

- Organise discussions on daily news items, current affairs, etc.

- Organise conflict resolution sessions on selected themes.

- Study problems linked with violence. Encourage the students to share their experiences with violence so that others in the class can also learn strategies for coping with fears and anxieties.

## 3.4 Integrating Peace Concerns in Classroom Transaction
Some exemplars

**Science**
Consider illustrating a magnetic field. The teacher holds a magnet under a sheet of paper and sprinkles iron filings on it. The iron filings get instantaneously arranged into an intricate pattern due to the force field created by the hidden magnet. The teacher then changes the magnet and sprinkles the same iron filings. The iron filings then form an entirely different pattern. All that has changed is the magnet. Usually teachers leave the lesson at that, but not a peace-oriented teacher. To such a teacher, the experiment may be used as an opportunity

to explain to the students what happens to individuals subjected to indoctrination and mass hysteria. Their ability to be authentic individuals, who think rationally and act responsibly, is taken over by powerful hidden interests. They are coerced into attitudes and actions dictated by others. The teacher can, then, offer some reflections on the nature of violence. Violence suppresses one's moral sensibility, rational thinking and humane sentiments. Violence makes us like the iron filings. And when the context changes, we regret our conduct.

**History**

**Lesson on the Mughal Emperor Akbar:** The teacher may use this lesson to help students reflect on Akbar's policy of religious tolerance. The points to emphasise: (a) religious harmony is basic to our cultural heritage; (b) the untruth and injustice in stereotyping certain communities and groups; (c) the need for religious tolerance today; and (d) The contrast between a culture of peace and culture of war. In the latter religions also become violent.

It may be pointed out that integrating peace-related values into the school syllabus should not mean that various subjects are to be treated only as vehicles of education for peace, and not as mediums for cultivating a taste for the subject concerned. The Report of the Education Commission (1964–66) cautions us that, "the teacher need not draw out the underlying moral all the time, but if he/she has given some thoughts to the values underlying the scope of the subject and his

work as teacher, they will imperceptibly pass into his teaching and make an impact on the minds of students."

## 4. FRONTIERS OF EDUCATION FOR PEACE

Since war begins in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defence of peace must be constructed.

**Preamble of the Constitution of UNESCO**

"Those who want war prepare young people for war: but those who want peace have neglected young children and adolescents so that they are unable to organise them for peace".

*Maria Montessori*

### 4.1 Personality Formation

**The Inferno within**

Ten year old Rani (name changed) studied in a prestigious English medium school. She began to misbehave, stealing pens and smashing the lunch boxes of fellow students. Reprimanded sharply by her teacher, Rani went home, poured a can of kerosene on herself and lit a match. Admitted to hospital with 50 per cent burns, she struggled for life for a few days, but in vain.

Her dazed parents ask, "Where did we go wrong?" Rani awakens in us feelings of individual and collective guilt. We know we have created a scheme of things in which the innocence of children is violated. Did Rani grow up in a violent environment? Did the school look the other way when she showed early signs of aggression?

Schools across the country are obsessed with academic goals, but neglect character

> goals. Many children cannot cherish either themselves or love others. Violence of various kinds is becoming increasingly commonplace—teasing that borders on bullying, gossiping, discourteous conduct, using intemperate language, and stealing to name a few. Tragedies like that of Rani alert us to the fact that we are neglecting the moral development of our children.

The age in which we live has, among other things, two striking features. First, it is an age of unprecedented material progress. Second, it is marked by a universal erosion of our human capital. The imbalance between material progress and human stature is the prime cause for the multiplying social ills of our times.

We can no longer overlook the possibility that the current model of education contributes to this unhappy state of affairs. Lopsided personality development—the alienation between head and heart—is the byproduct of the current model of education. The exclusive focus on the cognitive to the total neglect of the affective in the learning process has long been recognised as a pedagogic aberration. This correct diagnosis notwithstanding, the transaction of the learning process, confined almost entirely to classrooms, has only continued to aggravate this imbalance, aided and abetted by the current nature of classroom transaction, curriculum formation, teacher education, and modes of evaluation.

The tragic implications of neglecting the need to develop relational, linguistic, emotional, and communication skills through school education need to be recognised upfront. The lost balance between the emotional development of students and their intellectual development must be restored. In point of fact, the polarisation between emotion and intellect is an aberration. Their mutual separation degrades both. Emotional intelligence, leading to unified sensibility, rather than the mastery of mountains of information, is the secret of wholesome personality development.

## 4.2 Living Together in Harmony

We are social animals, not self-contained islands. Self-reliance, as Gandhiji pointed out, must not be mistaken for self-sufficiency. We need each other. Interdependence is the human face of self-reliance. How we respond and relate to others is a defining element in our personalities. If this be the case, education needs to nurture in students the values and skills that enable them to live in harmony with others. Jacques Delors in *Learning: The Treasure Within* identifies "living together in harmony" as one of the four pillars of education.

The current practice of education is inadequate to promote the art of living together in harmony. Students are nurtured in a spirit of competition and trained, from the beginning, to relate to facts and objects. Learning takes place in a milieu isolated from the world of relationships and realities. Learning of this kind comprises, as Charles Dickens lamented in *Hard Times*, "facts, facts and nothing but facts". The emotional and relational deficit this breeds is vitiated further by an individualistic idea of excellence. Such a perspective reduces the purpose of education to "acquiring the skills to milk and massage the system to one's own advantage." A potential for violence is latent in this approach to education.

## 4.3 Responsible Citizenship

The real purpose of education is to train youth to discharge the duties of citizenship properly. All other objectives are incidental.

*Report of the Secondary Education Commission, October 1952– June, 1953, p. 101*

What every Indian shares in common is not religion but citizenship. Citizenship is the framework for national unity and identity. Responsible citizenship is also the matrix for collective peace. Yet, citizenship education suffers neglect in the current approach to education. Citizenship involves a multi-polar enlargement of the loyalty and consciousness of individuals. This should not be taken for granted but has to be facilitated through appropriate education. Growth involves a gradual enlargement of consciousness, from the self to the other. From being conscious only of the self, the individual moves on to a knowledge of the self as a member of a family, a neighbourhood, a village, a town, a city, a religious community, a nation, and, beyond that, of the global village. At each stage there is an enlargement of awareness, a refinement of loyalties and a readjustment of priorities. The yardstick for measuring the educational progress of students should not be only the marks scored in core subjects but also the extent to which their consciousness grows from being members of a clan or caste to becoming citizens. Citizenship does not involve a renunciation of the various foci of individual consciousness but their harmonious functioning. One can be, for example, a devout daughter, a competent professional, a fervent Hindu or Muslim, and also a patriotic Indian, provided one is able to harmonise these loyalties. *In the event of a conflict between them, responsible citizenship demands that the conflict be resolved in favour of citizenship.* A citizen's first loyalty is to the Constitution. Religious faith cannot claim primacy over constitutional mandate. It is a serious problem when the citizens of a secular democracy are unable to rise above their clan, caste, or religious loyalties in respect of national issues. It is an even greater problem when these loyalties are invoked and deployed in defiance of the Constitution. If Jawaharlal Nehru's hope that a casteless and classless society would emerge through the spread of secular education and scientific temper has been belied, it is largely due to the neglect of citizenship education. The ascendancy of caste is so conspicuous today that electoral exercises are often described as "voting one's caste" rather than "casting one's vote".

Citizenship is the kernel of democracy. Surely, we cannot keep the citizens ignorant of the vision and values of the Constitution and expect them to be responsible citizens. There is an added urgency to address this task in earnest, today. Prior to the era of Liberalisation, Privatisation, and Globalisation (LPG), we could have taken for granted a reasonable extent of communitarian and citizenship consciousness from individuals. The consumerist, pleasure-seeking way of life presumed in LPG degrades citizens to consumers. Unilateralism is the essence of consumerism. It erodes reciprocity and makes individuals obsessed with rights to the neglect of duties. They relate to the nation only for what they can get out of it. Educated persons remaining ignorant of and indifferent to the duties of citizenship, defeats the very purpose of education.

### 4.3.1 Citizenship and Socialism

From an educational perspective escalating poverty and inequality are the critical issues that socialism needs to address in the Indian context. The peace approach to education must engage with these challenges. Inequalities are reinforced and perpetuated by a hierarchical worldview that legitimises them. Education, conceived and implemented from such a perspective, could perpetuate inequality and the disempowerment of the underprivileged unless corrective measures are integrated into the educational enterprise. The

recognition of education as a fundamental right for all children below the age of 14 is a timely remedial step. The holistic perspective of peace is essential if the full scope of this potential revolution is to be appropriated. Opening classrooms to underprivileged children is one thing, but evolving a system, complete with accessories, which empowers them to benefit from this opportunity is quite another.

From a peace perspective education towards social wholeness must address the scandal of poverty head-on, lest the constitutional right to education remains a tantalising illusion. Poverty results from policy options and priorities; it is not an accident. Strictly speaking, even accidents are not accidental. Poverty is eminently eradicable and this needs to be deemed a national priority. The quest for a wholesome society through education must address poverty-related issues with a view to dismantling the customs and systems of exclusion. Some areas that need urgent attention include the need to:

- Minimise the disparities between the various streams of school education, as recommended by the Kothari Commission (1964-66).
- Standardise educational infrastructure and technology nationwide, especially keeping in mind the appalling urban–rural divide.
- Optimise the competence, motivation, and skills of teachers. A key issue in this respect is corruption in the recruitment of teachers.
- Create favourable economic and social conditions to contain and gradually eradicate school dropout rates in rural and tribal areas.
- Prioritise the education of the girl child.
- Eradicate traditional stigma and prejudices in respect of caste, poverty, and gender.
- Propagate, through textbook writing and learning experiences, values like respect for the inherent and

equal worth of all human beings and their rights and dignity irrespective of caste, colour, gender, economic status, and religion.

Given the ground realities, *there is a compelling case for applying the principle of reverse discrimination in favour of rural and tribal India in respect of education.* Equal treatment for all, in a context of accumulated inequalities, serves only to perpetuate inequality. Improving the educational scenario in rural and tribal India needs to be the priority today. This is also a defining concern in education for peace.

### 4.3.2 Citizenship and Secularism

Our tradition teaches tolerance.
Our philosophy preaches tolerance.
Our Constitution practices tolerance.
Let us not dilute it.
(The Supreme Court of India in *Bijose Emmanuel vs State of Kerala*, AIR, 1987 SC 748)

Even though, the word 'secular' was incorporated into the Preamble of the Indian Constitution only in 1976, through the 42nd Amendment, secularism has been a defining feature of our Constitution. Article 14 enshrines the right to equality. This is further reinforced by Articles 15 and 16 that protect all citizens against discrimination based on religion and caste. Articles 19 and 21 guarantee freedom of speech and expression to all citizens. Article 27 prohibits the state from being partisan or partial towards any religion. Article 25 gives to all citizens freedom of conscience, and the right to "practice, preach and propagate" their faith. Through Article 29, religious and linguistic minorities are granted the right to preserve their identity and culture, and Article 30 confers on them the right to establish and administer institutions of their choice. Even though the scope of Article 30 and its underlying philosophy have come under increasing judicial scrutiny

and ideological resentment, the founding fathers of the Constitution regarded them as basic to its secular fabric.

The specific issues in respect of secularism that education for peace needs to address in the Indian context are:

- Respect for diversity.
- Scientific temper and the spirit of critical inquiry as opposed to blind faith.
- Consolidation of our common identity as Indians, fortified by a shared vision for India so as to minimise divisive sentiments and prejudices. We have created India. We must now address the even more important task of creating Indians, who can transcend all divisive barriers and identify themselves with the cause of nation-building.
- Shift from exclusive religious loyalty to inclusive spiritual values.

### 4.3.3 Citizenship and Democracy

The two crucial issues for Indian democracy from the perspective of education are: (a) conflict resolution and reconciliation; and (b) peoples' participation. Democracy is the best system available for managing conflicts without having recourse to violence. Differences of opinion, belief, ideology, culture, and so on, are a natural part of every society. Conflicts emerge from the disharmony of differences. We may choose, however, to approach these conflicts from a perspective of peace or from a perspective of violence. The violent solution is the eradication of conflict by the assimilation or elimination of those who are different from the dominant group. The peaceful solution involves developing respect for diversity or a positive attitude to difference, as well as engaging those who are different in a way that enables difference to co-exist without undermining the whole system. This

is the essence of a 'democratic culture', the development of which must be an educational priority for India, the largest functioning democracy in the world.

Education is basic to peoples' participation, which is the hallmark of democracy. Illiteracy disables democracy. Illiteracy limits peoples' participation to the casting of their vote, as and when elections take place. Such a democracy cannot be a government of the people, by the people, or for the people. Literacy in itself is not, however, sufficient to facilitate democratic participation. Peace is a pre-requisite for participation. Violence excludes and disables all, except those who wield power. In times of large-scale conflict or war, citizenship rights get de-activated. People can be empowered only in a state of peace. A democracy that fails to foster a culture of peace stands is in danger of degenerating into oligarchy, dictatorship, or fascism, as in Hitler's Germany.

Eradicating, through education, every kind of exclusion from the life, resources, and opportunities of the nation is a bottom-line peace agenda in democracy. Education for peace is a powerful and necessary means for this purpose. The major categories of exclusion are:

- *Poverty:* which accounts for the two most glaring flaws in the present system of education—gross inequalities between the various streams of education and high dropout rates in rural and tribal India. The gulf between the rich and the poor is further widening in the wake of LPG, and it is necessary to address poverty-related issues in education with urgency and courage.
- *Caste:* the eradication of which system is a Constitutional mandate. The caste system freezes our social capital and excludes millions of people from the march to progress. Various indices of

underdevelopment such as social degradation and economic disempowerment, point directly to the tyranny of caste over our democratic culture. Education for peace can turn the eradication of the caste system into a peaceful revolution.

- *Gender:* The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)— often described as an international Bill of Rights for women—defines discrimination against women as:

...any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women…on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

India is a party to the convention. We are, as such, obliged to promote a culture of gender justice. Even though various NGOs have done, and are doing, commendable work in this respect, we are still woefully short of bringing about the required systemic and attitudinal changes mandated by gender justice. Violence, vulgarity, and sex-related crimes are increasing. Women face insecurity and discrimination in the workplace, in the public space, and even at home. In many regions, even the female foetus is not spared. Bride burning and honour rapes continue. The work done by women is not recognised or rewarded adequately. Sadly, justice is not done to girls and women even in textbook writing. Illustrations in textbooks mostly portray boys or men in superior roles. Girls and women, as and when they are portrayed are shown in inferior roles. This stereotypes women and stigmatises them with inferiority.

- Democracy and Minorities. Special emphasis needs to be laid on enabling students to understand the democratic logic underlying the Constitutional provisions for empowering minorities (refer Article 30 of the Indian Constitution). Democracy has the potential to degenerate into a dictatorship of the majority, if special provisions are not made to enable religious and linguistic minorities to preserve their culture and identity. Making reasonable provisions in this regard does not amount to 'minority appeasement' but provides for the health of democracy itself. Globally, a nation's commitment to the welfare and security of minorities is regarded as a mark of the robustness of its democratic culture.

## 4.4 National Integration

The life of a nation is, at all times, in a state of continual evolution. Cultural agenda are key players in this process. They shape or disfigure the India of our dreams. Of late, the conflict of cultural paradigms has assumed special intensity. A triangular pattern may be noticed in the ongoing confrontation of cultures.

- Cultural homogeneity
- Cultural plurality
- Cultural subalternism

The people of India have expressed themselves, in the language of democracy, against homogenisation as altogether alien to the sprit of India. Religious, linguistic, and cultural plurality is innate in our history and heritage. Today we are poised to build further on this unique foundation. The subaltern segments of our society have for long been invisible in the country's cultural profile. A significant and futuristic development in recent times is the dalit awakening. The need to negotiate this new ferment has to be factored into pedagogy for peace in the Indian context. In the light of the above, education must:

- Promote an awareness and celebration of cultural variety, diversity, and plurality.

- Reflect the reality of an emerging subaltern ferment in the national context, promote a positive attitude towards it, and allocate it due curricular space.

## 4.5 Education for Peace as a Lifestyle Movement

War and violence are the byproducts of a particular way of life. The roots of violence lie in the paradigm shift from needs to insatiable desires that drive an unsustainable lifestyle. The core spiritual strategy for building the foundation for peace has been that of re-orienting lifestyles to needs, rather than to limitless greed. Covetousness is a one-way relationship that goes counter to the logic of caring. It treats nature as a lifeless object to be exploited at will. Development then becomes despoilment. Desires-driven development is inherently violent and unsustainable; and it is at the root of the present environmental crisis. Globalisation deifies greed as God. An indulgent and consumerist lifestyle is marked by apathy and callousness. It is incompatible with the culture of peace.

## 5. SOME CRITICAL ISSUES

For radical educational reform to be delivered on the ground it is imperative that the way for it be prepared with an unwavering sense of purpose. Reform is a movement, and not a few disjointed cosmetic adjustments. From a total vision of the envisaged reorientation, various parts of the vehicle of learning have to be redesigned, making sure that the deficiencies of the previous model are rectified. It is like paddling a boat from one side of a river to the other. Even the most earnest and frenetic of strokes will not take it forward unless the boat is untethered. Unfurling the panoply of an altered orientation without clearing the roadblocks of the

old, may not yield the desired results. Identified below are some of the key areas that need to be addressed urgently and boldly to ensure that education for peace has a reasonable chance of succeeding.

## 5.1 Curriculum Load

**Is this the best you can do?**

Every year when millions of parents sign up their young children sign to go to school, the nation's future enacts an impersonal nightmare. Holding a crayon or chalk or pencil is itself a major feat at age three. Yet, before their fourth birthday little children are expected to know that the number 30 is somehow superior to 25. And that to stand second in class is more admirable than being in the 25th place. Before their fifth birthday, they are expected to be able to not just count but to write in figures up to 500. By the time they put on a school uniform and outgrow their first pair of school shoes this number stands at 1,000. 'Is this the best you can do?' is the anxious exasperated question that plagues them all the days of their school life. Most children lose their natural optimism and joy by the time they are ten or eleven years old. Many of them are already in a state of fear and depression that adults simply identify as mulishness or rebellion.

It is naïve to equate quality of education with the quantity of information it handles. Also, it is incorrect to assess 'curriculum load' only by the weight that the textbooks add up to. The 'load' in question involves,

no doubt, the burden of incomprehension; but it goes beyond that. The 'load' is as much attitudinal as it is quantitative. Even a small responsibility may seem a 'burden' to one who resents it. Apart from the quantitative aspect of the syllabus, the factors that degrade learning into a burden are:

- The approach to teaching that limits its scope to covering the syllabus. Teachers then view the syllabus as a burden and that sense of burden is transmitted to students, unawares.

- The exclusive tyranny of the cognitive degrades learning into a laborious, not a joyful, experience for students. Joy can mitigate the sense of burden; whereas the absence of joy can exaggerate the subjective perception of 'load'.

- Inordinate parental ambition, in a context of intense competition.

- The underdevelopment of personality and inner resources, on account of the current approach to education, results in the inability to cope with stress and strain and also magnifies them.

- In villages and tribal belts, the curricular burden is compounded by the burden of poverty.

Curriculum load has serious practical implications for implementing education for peace. The sense of burden curriculum load breeds, and the impatience it activates, may cause education for peace to be seen as an unwelcome intruder. Since education for peace is to be integrated into the curriculum, much depends on the availability of adequate instructional time to teachers to practice this integration. Education for peace calls for a vastly different approach to teaching as compared to what is in vogue now. Teachers have to be creative, innovative, and enterprising in their pedagogic approach, all of which can be suppressed by a sense of burden and underprivilege.

## 5.2 Textbook Writing

Even after more than 50 years of Independence the Indian system of education has not been able to introduce the history of post-Independence India in the school curriculum. For most children the history of India *starts* in 'ancient times' and comes to an abrupt *end* in 1947. Everything they pick up about Pakistan comes from news bulletins and films. Thus, Partition comprises the latest news that Indian students receive about our neighbour who is thoroughly demonised at all levels.

Textbooks convey attitudes and values explicitly and implicitly. Every aspect of textbooks—language, contents, and presentation, including illustrations—lends itself to either a pro-peace or a pro-violence treatment. It is, therefore, important to ensure that textbooks are written and designed from the perspective of education for peace.

Care needs to be taken in writing textbooks to avoid violence in diction and illustrations. Illustrations, at times, for purposes of effect tend to err on the side of the violent and the melodramatic. Implicit forms of violence are common in textbook writing, and tend to reinforce prejudices and stereotypes of discrimination. The following instances brought out by the PROBE Report illustrate this.

- An analysis of the textbooks for Classes IV, V, and VI of government schools in Madhya Pradesh shows that not a single character can be identified as coming from a Scheduled Caste background. Yet a large proportion of the students in these schools are from the erstwhile untouchable communities. Exclusion is a form of violence. It breeds a sense of inferiority.

- Forty-nine illustrations in a Class III Hindi textbook (*Gyan Bharti*), used in Utter Pradesh depict men or

boys. These include a scientist, a soldier, two doctors, a teacher, a king, and a poet. In contrast, only 14 women (or girls) are represented. Almost invariably, they are shown in subordinate positions or standard 'female' roles. And this, notwithstanding the directive of the National Policy on Education (1986) that 'sex stereotyping' in the school curriculum be scrupulously avoided.

The integration of a peace perspective in textbook writing can help eradicate these anomalies. Textbooks written with the sole aim of imparting information tend to be dry and fail to stimulate interest in students. In the process, precious opportunities to advance peace values and deepen peace insights are lost.

Ideally, textbook writing should take into account the larger context in which the educational formation of students takes place. Authors should be aware of socio-economic inequalities, negative attitudes, discriminatory stereotypes, prejudices based on caste, creed, and gender, as well as broad trends in the emerging popular culture, especially the growing prevalence of violence, that comprise the larger ambience of education. They should take advantage, creatively and innovatively, of the 'peace opportunity' in the treatment of every topic and subject.

Such opportunities include, among other things, the scope for enlarging the awareness of students in respect of the ground realities. Consider this instance. A Class IV EVS textbook has a chapter on 'Need for Food'. In this chapter, the author recommends values like cleanliness, preference for wholesome food, and the need to ensure that food is not wasted. The author, however, does nothing to make the students aware of the poverty and malnutrition among the millions of children belonging to the marginalised sections of our society.

A major limitation that textbook writing has to reckon with is in respect of reflecting the immediate contexts of students in their specificities. India is a vast country with immense diversities. Textbook writers usually hail from urban and privileged backgrounds. Directly or indirectly this bias gets reflected in textbook writing. Rural and tribal realities are rarely portrayed in textbooks. Special care needs to be taken to eradicate such discrimination.

Textbooks, in the end, are as good as their fate in the hands of teachers. It should be possible for a teacher, trained from the perspective of proactive peace, to make up for what textbooks lack in terms of contextual specificity. This, however, should not be taken for granted. Training future teachers to do so should be the major thrust in teacher education for peace.

Every textbook must be thoroughly and critically reviewed for its contents, treatment, and overall vision. On the negative side, textbooks need to be kept clear of anti-peace ideas, assumptions, and attitudes. From a positive angle, it needs to be ensured that they appropriate 'peace opportunities' optimally. Attention needs to be paid to the language used in textbooks so as to ensure that their sensibility is conducive to nurturing courteous, aesthetically-sensitive, and socially-aware human beings.

## 5.3 Assessment and Examination

Vis-à-vis education for peace, evaluation presents us with two major issues. First, the current system of examination and evaluation, burdened by curriculum load, is vitiated by violence. Learning, which is meant to be a joyful experience, is degraded into something burdensome, even oppressive, by reducing its goal to examination-centric excellence that is expected to eventuate into employment in due course. Fierce competition—artificially kept red-hot through the denial of adequate opportunities for higher education—and the stigma it imposes on failure, keep millions of children in a limbo of suffering and drives a few to despair and suicide. These extreme reactions are startling statements on the toll that education now takes

on children. A misconceived pursuit of excellence has degraded the beneficiaries of education into its victims! The learning process, along with its system of evaluation, needs to be radically reorganised and made pro-peace and student-friendly.

It is inappropriate and inadvisable to evaluate students in respect of education for peace in the way they are in other subjects. Education for peace is situated in the domain of affective learning, which is not measurable in a quantitative form. In a practical sense, however, the total absence of evaluation may erode accountability and cause education for peace to be neglected. It is quite possible and necessary, therefore, to evaluate a school's effectiveness in educating students to be active agents for peace. The International Schools Association, Global Issues Network, suggests the following indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of education for peace programme in educating students and the school community as a whole.

The school's mission statement should contain aspirations to peace and related values and skills. It should be mandatory to ensure that schools are free from discriminatory attitudes and practices based on caste and gender. A social audit of schools in this respect may have to be considered. The mission statement of the school should be periodically reviewed, under the following main heads, by the whole school community.

**At the personal level, for evidence of:**
Tolerance
Truthfulness
Respect
Equality
Effective communication
Openness
Reconciliation
Compassion
Freedom from prejudice

**At the classroom level, for evidence of:**
Recognition of diversity and disparity
Cooperative group work
Absence of discriminatory attitudes and practices
Open and respectful student/staff relationships
Seeking peaceful resolutions

**At the school level, for evidence of:**
A secure and non-threatening climate
Fair school rules
A caring approach and provisions for counselling
Representation
Parent-teacher partnership
Inclusion of appropriate educational activities related to peace
Evidence of staff development programmes relevant to education for peace

**At the community level, for evidence of:**
Service programmes
Outreach programmes
Demonstrating leadership
Awareness of problems and contributions to solutions
Exchanges
Partnerships with other schools

**5.4 Teacher Education**

The village schoolmaster was once viewed with respect. The day a peon in a nationalised bank began to receive a higher salary than the village schoolmaster marked the fall of the intellectual in rural India.

Teachers conduct the symphony of education. More than any other subject or educational goal, education for peace depends on the teacher's sense of vocation and the kind of person that she/he is. Thus, it is obvious that the success of the initiative for education for peace substantially depends on the vision, motivation, skills, and awareness of teachers. Teachers who carry out education for peace have to cherish its values, hold comparable attitudes, and exhibit similar behavioural tendencies.

The worst part of teacher education today is that it does not equip would be teachers to engage the opportunities of their vocation with innovation and imagination. The skills promoted, and the approaches inculcated, through teacher education are mostly irrelevant and impractical in the teachers' work milieu. It can be said that, vis-à-vis the requirements of education for peace, teacher education at present promotes more 'trained incompetence' than pedagogic preparedness or motivation.

There seems little point in introducing a curriculum for education for peace in schools if the teachers who implement it, and the teacher-educators who train them, are culturally prejudiced, intolerant, and pedagogically ill-equipped to transact the messages of the text in the classroom in a way that promotes peace. Teacher education institutions, in this context, have a very vital role to play as they are the centres that mould the teaching fraternity of the country through their pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes.

The teacher education curriculum frameworks of 1978, 1988 and 1998 emphasised the role of teachers as catalysts in the process of promoting social sensitivity, tolerance, cooperation, democratic and secular values, national integration, international understanding, etc. through inclusion of relevant themes in the 'Foundation Course' and 'school experience' programmes. However, the existing realities and growing faith in violence among the teachers themselves in the form of corporal punishment given to students, caste and/or gender discrimination, religious prejudice, etc. indicate that teacher education programmes have not succeeded in equipping would be teachers with humane qualities essential for promoting a culture of peace in schools. Therefore, barring a few exceptions, teachers have ceased to be role models for peace vis-à-vis the students.

Hence, it is essential to reconsider the teacher education programmes in order to equip teachers both through pre-service and in-service education to:

- Be knowledgeable about cultures and political systems of their own as well as of others.
- Base their perceptions of caste, class, religion, other cultures, and national groups on Constitutional values and empirical evidence, and be free from any prejudice or dogmatic belief.
- Be aware of the societal structures of oppression and their effect on peace as well as the techniques to promote the art of living together.
- Be trained in alternative pedagogical skills which may help in resolving conflicts, tensions, violence and aggression among students and promote peace.
- Be committed to the profession and its ethical code of conduct.
- Be aware of the factors that destabilise peace within the country, such as, gender disparity, prejudice, ideologies of conflict, violation of human rights, violence, harassment and bullying in classrooms and between nations, such as, political relations with neighbouring countries; and to be vigilant against promoting inequality or discrimination through their actions.
- Be appreciative of our composite culture and national identity from an international perspective.
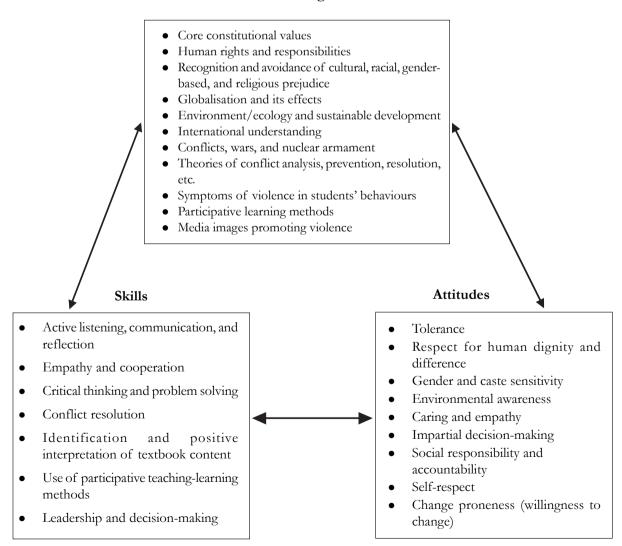
- Realise that they belong to a professional community, shouldering the serious responsibility of building the future of the nation and the world.
- Develop warm and supportive human relationships with students and colleagues.

Teacher education programmes, therefore, need to prepare teachers as peacemakers and peace builders through pre-service and in-service programmes. The following suggestions have been formulated for modifying teacher education programmes to that end.

*Action points*

- A separate compulsory paper on 'Education for Peace' to included in the Foundation Course of pre-service teacher education programmes.
- If this is not possible, peace concerns, attitudes and values may be incorporated into foundation papers.
- Student teachers may be given hands-on practice, through internship, school experience programmes, and community work, etc., in the use

**Knowledge**

- Core constitutional values
- Human rights and responsibilities
- Recognition and avoidance of cultural, racial, gender-based, and religious prejudice
- Globalisation and its effects
- Environment/ecology and sustainable development
- International understanding
- Conflicts, wars, and nuclear armament
- Theories of conflict analysis, prevention, resolution, etc.
- Symptoms of violence in students' behaviours
- Participative learning methods
- Media images promoting violence

**Skills**

- Active listening, communication, and reflection
- Empathy and cooperation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Conflict resolution
- Identification and positive interpretation of textbook content
- Use of participative teaching-learning methods
- Leadership and decision-making

**Attitudes**

- Tolerance
- Respect for human dignity and difference
- Gender and caste sensitivity
- Environmental awareness
- Caring and empathy
- Impartial decision-making
- Social responsibility and accountability
- Self-respect
- Change proneness (willingness to change)

of various conflict resolution techniques and in textbook analysis and positive interpretation of content, etc.

- Cooperative learning techniques may form essential components of internship programme of pre-service teacher education programmes. A few lessons utilising these techniques may be made compulsory for all candidates.

- Regular in-service teacher training programmes, on content and pedagogy, of teachers and teacher educators may be organised separately on a regular basis.

## 5.5 School Setting

The Report of the Education Commission of 1964–66 lays utmost emphasis on the importance of the school environment in inculcating values in students. "The school atmosphere, the personality and behaviour of the teachers, the facilities provided in the school have a large say in developing a sense of values." The school environment must be envisaged as a microcosm of the more peaceful and just society that is the objective of education for peace. The messages of the curriculum can thus be validated and reinforced by the school setting. Some of the pertinent issues in this regard are: how childrens' rights and needs are either upheld or denied in school, how discipline is understood and practised, and how decisions are made and teaching is transacted in the classroom.

School life needs to reflect peace values. Relationships comprise the human ambience of school life. Education for peace demands and effects improvements in all relationships: whether teacher–administration, teacher–student, teacher–teacher, student–student, or teacher–parent. Irrespective of diversity in function, all those who comprise the school community, especially those who do the so-called menial work, must be treated as members of the school family. Interpersonal relationships must be shaped by reciprocity, mutual respect, and a caring attitude. Unethical and unjust practices of every kind must be avoided. Students need to be made aware of the problems and needs in the local community and enabled, wherever possible, to respond to them. A systematic effort to nurture students in the culture of democracy must be made. Besides, students must be enabled to assume responsibility for maintaining school discipline.

### Activities for Education for Peace

Education for Peace can also be realised through the co-curricular life of the school. A number of activities and projects embodying peace themes could be organised in school.

- Students can be motivated to learn and develop skills for peacemaking by including peace issues in debates, seminars, and audio visual shows.

- Participation of children in role-plays, dramas, composing peace poems, peace songs, etc.

- Participation in various days observed internationally, such as, Human Rights Day, Childrens' Day, UN Day, Day for the Disabled, Girl Child Day, Environment Day, etc.

- 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.

- Religious festivals and national days could be celebrated in the school and in the neighbourhood.

- Story-telling sessions and discussions could be held to promote tolerance and understanding.

Since learning takes place in many different contexts, all of which can be used to promote messages of peace, a number of activities as part of the

after-school programme could be taken up. Some of these include: (a) 'solidarity camps' bringing together children of different cultural groups for recreational activities; (b) sports activities that build character and promote a spirit of teamwork, cooperation, sportsmanship, etc.; and (c) 'media' awareness to reduce violence and increase the peace-content in radio and television programmes for children. Other activities that help in awareness-building among children are: magazines focusing on peace themes, *Nukkad Natak* (street plays) using dance, drama, and songs to educate the community on peace values, puppetry and animation to popularise the values of fairness, non-violence, and social harmony. Television and radio sports and peace campaigns can also be used to raise public awareness concerning peace and conflict issues.

## 5.6 The Media and Violence

The media is a pervasive presence today and its outreach is not limited by the roadblocks of underdevelopment. In rural India children have more ready access to the television than to safe drinking water. In thousands of villages, there are reportedly more television sets than there are toilets! Children spend an astounding amount of time watching television programmes. Researchers estimate that a child, on an average, watches up to 2400 hours of television a year. In the process the child is exposed to thousands of episodes of violence, including murder, rape, and riot. The media plays, albeit unwittingly, a major role in spreading a culture of violence.

Teachers need to engage this reality in their approach to teaching. Some of the harmful effects of the media on children are:

(a) *Learning aggressive attitudes and behaviours:* The first step in learning aggressive attitudes and behaviours is accepting violence as a way of solving problems.

On television, violence is the attractive, effective, and preferred solution to most conflicts. The media downplays the consequences of violence. On the screen, violence is entertainment; but in real life it is a nightmare. This truth, however, is withheld from children. As a result they acquire a distorted view of reality and conclude that violence is the 'done thing' and that it is safe. Teachers need to raise the awareness levels of children regarding this missing dimension of reality.

(b) *Becoming desensitised to real world violence:* Children who are heavy viewers of violence on television lose the ability to empathise, protest, and become distressed by real-life acts of violence.

(c) *Spreading cynicism about the feasibility and efficacy of peace:* Insofar as violence is represented by the media as an effective and acceptable way of resolving conflicts, non-violent options seem unattractive to children. Feature films often romanticise violence. The result is that many children favour violent, aggressive, and anti-social approaches to solving problems.

Informed teacher–parent partnership can go a long way in protecting children from media-induced orientation to violence. Under the given circumstances, the initiative in this regard has to come from the teachers. In these respects, education of children may have to include media literacy for parents as well, to enable them to discharge their role adequately. The battle is half-won if parents are made aware of the harmful influence that television and cinema violence has on their children. Good parenting is perhaps the greatest defence against the ill-effects of media violence on children.

On their part, teachers can help children to relate to the media in a realistic and wholesome fashion so that its benefits are derived and its harmful effects

minimised. An example of the latter is that of 'deconstructing' television messages. Teachers may discuss some of the popular television shows in the class, using some of the questions below.

- Do the characters remind them of anyone they know in real-life?
- What was the problem or conflict in the story?
- How was the conflict solved?
- Would these solutions work in real-life?
- How do the students think the victim feels?
- Did the television version of violence leave anything out?
- What would happen if people did this in real life?
- In what way could the problem have been solved without anyone getting hurt?
- Did the characters think about alternatives before becoming violent?

## 5.7 Teacher–Parent Partnership

The gradual displacement of parents in their children's academic formation is a sad outcome of the increasing sophistication of the curriculum. This aggravates the culture-driven alienation between parents and children. The importance of the teacher–parent partnership in education, however, continues to be paid lip service to. In practice, though, the space for parental participation does not survive beyond the few early years of a child's schooling. Burdened beyond the school hours by tuition and homework, children live like guests in their homes. The obsession with academic achievement in an ambience of hyper competition reduces the parent–child interaction to a bare functional minimum. Children are forced to live in academic incubators, out of touch with reality and uninvolved with the flow of life around them. In this respect, education for peace can, and must, make a wholesome difference. It is

impossible to integrate peace concerns into the learning process and keep it confined to the classroom. Teachers will know at once that they build on the foundations that parents lay. They will know, too, that parents are helpful and necessary allies. The peace values and problem-solving methods taught in classrooms have to be sustained and reaffirmed at home, if they are to be internalised by students. The rehabilitation of parents in the learning process of their children can prove excitingly beneficial in improving the relational and emotional quality of life at home as well. As of today, there is palpable anxiety, especially among middle class and upper middle class parents, about the escalating alienation of their children. They are, thus, sure to welcome the opportunities afforded by education for peace, if only teachers know how to open the door to this temporarily misplaced but crucial pedagogic partnership.

## 5.8 The Challenge of Integration

The pedagogic strategy for education for peace presupposed in this paper is that of integration. Integration is the ideal, especially since peace is an integrative and all-embracing concept. But this ideal approach is to be implemented in a system that is far from ideal. The ground realities concerning every constituent of education—from textbook writing to classroom transaction, from teacher motivation to the school setting—leave much to be desired. The Indian school system is the most complex and multi-layered in the world, marked by diversities, inequalities, and inadequacies of various kinds. For education for peace to have a realistic chance to deliver within this system, it is important that the likely pitfalls and potholes along the route of implementation be remedially engaged. From a pragmatic standpoint, the preference for the integrative approach is dictated by anxieties about

curriculum load. But, surely, this cannot be a greater priority than enabling education to engage its goals. Nor should it be assumed that peace is a 'burden,' or the only burden, from which students are to be protected. In point of fact, peace is a blessing rather than a burden. The Focus Group wishes to make an impassioned plea that education for peace should not be strategised and implemented from an outlook of anxiety about 'curriculum burden', lest this pioneering initiative be foredoomed. Peace, if it is to work at all, has to be a priority. Nothing less will do.

## 6. EDUCATION FOR PEACE: VALUES AND SKILLS

Outlined below are some of the curriculum inputs essential to promoting a culture of peace through education.

### 6.1 Peace Values

### 6.1.1 Peace Values for Personality Formation
- Love
- Truth
- Purity—both physical and mental (think, speak, and do what is right)
- Beauty and harmony—appreciating the unity in diversity of people and nature
- A spirit of appreciation (gratitude)
- A sense of responsibility
- Ahimsa
- Humility—the willingness to be corrected and the courage to accept one's mistakes
- A spirit of service
- Leadership—initiatives make peace or to improve a given situation
- Positive thinking and optimism
- Discipline—self-control, concentration, hard work, and growth
- 'Other-orientation'—the skills to cope with

'otherness' and the ability to think for others and to help them.
- Growth—both for the self and for the neighbour

### 6.1.2 Peace Values and Shared Spirituality
- Aspiring to inner-peace, by developing inner resources
- Freedom of thought, conscience, and belief
- Freedom of religious practice
- Mutual respect for the religious observances of others
- Equality of treatment of all religion by the state

The students must be enabled to develop a rational and critical approach to religion: to shift from competitive religiosity to shared spirituality; and from blind faith to responsible questioning.

### 6.1.3 Peace Values, vis-à-vis, Indian History and Culture
- Positive and negative understanding of peace
- Integrative vision (*vasudhaiva kutumbakam*)
- Diversity, plurality, and co-existence, with a special emphasis on subaltern customs and cultures
- Teachings on peace (ahimsa, truth and hospitality)
- Gandhiji's idea and practice of peace
- Peace movements (especially the Freedom Movement)

### 6.1.4 Peace Values, Human Rights, and Democracy
- Dignity
- Equality
- Justice
- Protection of the Rights of all peoples
- Participation

- Freedom of speech and expression
- Freedom of belief

An introduction to the Indian Constitution:

- The Preamble
- Rights and Duties
- Special provisions
- The unfinished agenda: the Directive Principles of State Policy

### 6.1.5 Peace Values and Lifestyle

- Sensitivity to, and appreciation of, nature
- Respect for life in all its forms
- Simplicity—live simply so that others may simply live)
- Responsibility—a sense of living in a community
- Consumption and the integrity of creation
- Gandhiji's idea of the Earth's resources being to meet the needs of all, not the greed of a few

### 6.1.6 Peace Values and National Unity

- India—unity in religious, cultural, and linguistic diversity
- Human dignity
- Equality
- Social justice
- Protection of the rights of all peoples
- Participation
- Freedom of speech and expression

### 6.1.7 Violence: What It Is and What It Does

- Modes of violence
  (i) Verbal
  (ii) Psychological
  (iii) Physical
  (iv) Structural
  (v) Vulgarity in popular culture

- Frontiers of violence
  (i) Caste
  (ii) Gender
  (iii) Discrimination
  (iv) Corruption
  (v) Communalism
  (vi) Advertisements
  (vii) Poverty
- Perils of violence
- Media and violence
- Peaceful resolution of conflicts
- Reconciliation after conflicts

### 6.1.8 Peace Values and Globalisation

- Peace in the global context
- Peace movements and initiatives
- Ecological concerns—caring for nature and sustainable development
- Liberalisation, Globalisation and Privatisation—their implications for peace
- Globalisation and democracy
- Peace, development and social justice
- Peace and sexuality
- Generation gap
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- HIV/AIDS
- Terrorism

## 6.2 Peace Skills

It is expected that students will develop the skills (and attitudes) necessary to be proactive and effective peacemakers. These can be summarised under three heads: thinking skills, communication skills, and personal skills.

### 6.2.1 Thinking Skills

*Critical Thinking*: The ability to distinguish between fact, opinion, and belief; to recognise bias and prejudice; to

identify issues and problems as well as the assumptions in an argument; and to reason correctly.

*Information Handling*: To be able to form a hypothesis and test it; to know where to look for answers and how to select and reject information; to effectively weigh up evidence; to hypothesise eventual outcomes and consequences in order to be able to choose the most appropriate action.

*Creative Thinking:* To seek novel solutions and answers; to think laterally and approach problems from multiple perspectives.

*Reflection*: To stand back from a problem and identify its component parts; to effectively monitor thought processes and produce appropriate strategies for dealing with any particular problem.

*Dialectical Thinking*: Thinking about more than one point of view; understanding both points of view; being able to construct an argument from either point of view based on knowledge of the other.

### 6.2.2 Communication Skills

*Presentation*: To be able to clearly and coherently explain ideas.

*Active Listening*: To listen carefully, understand, and acknowledge the views of others.

*Negotiation*: To recognise the role and limitations of compromise as a tool for the cessation of conflict; to carry on a productive dialogue towards the resolution of a dispute.

*Non-Verbal Communication*: Recognising the meaning and significance of body language.

### 6.2.3 Personal Skills

*Cooperation*: To work effectively with others towards a common goal.

Adaptability: To be willing to change opinions in the light of evidence and reason.

*Self-Discipline*: The ability to conduct oneself appropriately and manage time effectively.

*Responsibility*: The ability to take on and complete tasks in an appropriate manner; being willing to assume a share of the responsibility.

*Respect:* Listening sensitively to others; making decisions based on fairness and equality; recognising that others' beliefs, views, and ideas may differ from one's own.

## 7. EDUCATION FOR PEACE: SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the need, goals, and objectives for an integrated approach to education for peace, the following suggestions are made:

1. Set up peace clubs and peace libraries in schools. Make supplementary reading materials available that promote peace values and skills.

2. Create a pool of films—documentaries and feature films—that promote the values of justice and peace and screen them in schools.

3. Co-opt the media as a stakeholder in education for peace. Newspapers can be persuaded to run peace columns, similar to the current columns on religion. The electronic media can be persuaded to broadcast peace programmes tailored to the needs of education for peace in schools. In these, there needs to be a special focus on motivating and enabling teachers to be peace educators.

4. Make provisions in schools to enable students to celebrate: (a) the cultural and religious diversity of India, (b) Human Rights Day, (c) Day for the Differently-abled, (d) Girl Child Day, (e) Women's day, and (f) Environment Day.

5. Organise programmes to promote and attitude of respect and responsibility towards women,

in view of the alarming increase in crimes against women, which is a major symptom of social illness.

6. Organise district-level peace festivals for school students, the two-fold purpose of celebrating peace and removing barriers of various kinds.

7. Facilitate short-term exchanges between students from various streams to help students overcome prejudices, regional, caste, and class barriers.

8. Encourage and enable students to serve as volunteers in peace projects run by local NGOs. To that end, it is desirable that schools enter into partnerships with NGOs working in the area of peace for a more effective implementation of education for peace. It might be necessary to produce a directory of such NGOs.

9. Organise workshops in education for peace for teachers, principals and parents.

10. Set up state-level agencies to: (*a*) monitor the implementation of education for peace, especially in respect of textbook writing, teacher education, classroom transaction, and school setting; and (b) to promote appropriate research in education for peace in order to review and reform the curriculum in the light of unfolding data and experiences.

11. Narrow the appalling disparities between the various systems of schooling so that education does not propagate inequality or aggravate social divides.

12. Affirmative action to made amends for the gross educational neglect of rural and tribal areas. This involves both setting up an adequate number of schools as well as improving the existing ones.

13. A nationwide campaign to eradicate corruption in the employment of teachers to be launched forthwith. Corruption is a form of violence.

Subjecting teachers to corruption destroys their motivation to be peace educators.

14. Raise awareness concerning the need to improve the institutional culture of schools. Initiate a programme of personal and social ethics emphasising respect and concern for all members of the school family, especially the less privileged.

15. Education for peace should be a strong component of any future educational review or reform of policy. It should feature strongly in every discussion and orientation/training programme organised for education administrators.

16. Establish and strengthen teacher–parent links. Parents and teachers should collaborate in the process of promoting a peaceful approach to problems and conflicts arising in school.

17. Strong inputs (history, goals, aims, benefits) on education for peace need to be a part of pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes.

18. Curriculum design needs to be informed by a holistic approach to education for peace.

19. Syllabi and textbooks need to be reorganised to reflect the concerns of education for peace.

20. Textbooks writers to be sensitised to the need for reorientation, and visuals and vocabulary of textbooks' presentation to be closely examined.

21. Teacher education programmes at all levels to be reformed and radically re-organised in the light of the avowed goals of education and the specific requirements of education for peace.

22. The school atmosphere must be kept free from violence of every kind. This includes, among other things, violence disguised as discipline. A serious view needs to be taken on the persistence of corporal punishment. It must be eradicated.

Students must be enabled to participate in maintaining and improving discipline.

23. An adequate and effective mechanism to address the grievances of teachers, say in the form of Teachers' Tribunals needs to be set up in each state and union territory. In large states it might be necessary to set up several of them to ensure easy accessibility.

24. Prepare a handbook comprising guidelines for an integrated approach to education for peace to be followed by every teacher, teacher-educator, and textbook writer in respect of all subjects taught in schools and teacher education institutions.

25. Prepare and make available to every school a manual on the causes and cures of violence in schools: its many forms (verbal, psychological, physical, criminal, and structural) and the practical steps to reorient school life to the culture of peace.

## 8. CONCLUSION

A few foundational convictions underlie the contours and contents of education for peace as set out in this paper. *Schools are potential nurseries for peace:* School education involves the formative years in a person's life. The mansion of life is built on the foundation laid at this stage. To educate is to orient. We can orient children either to peace or to its opposite. Not to orient children to peace is to allow them be oriented to violence: subtle or gross. In different parts of the world there is a growing awareness today that propagating a culture of peace through education needs to be deemed a non-negotiable goal of education.

*Teachers can be social healers:* We do injustice to the vocation of teaching when we reduce its scope to that of warehousing information. Doctors cure biomedical ailments. They cannot heal social illnesses. Teachers can, however, heal social illnesses if they engage their responsibilities from the enlarged perspective of peace. Social health is a function of harmony. Harmony results from a positive and hospitable attitude to diversity and otherness. Education is a means of fostering this outlook in students. Education of this kind, besides healing society, can arrest the increasing marginalisation of teachers. Teachers squander their social capital by imparting learning that falls short of teaching. To teach in a mechanical fashion, driven only by the urgency to "cover the syllabus", is to become blind to the larger horizons of teaching. In theory we agree that learning should be pupil-centred. In practice teaching remains syllabus-driven. Focused exclusively on the syllabus, teachers fail to respond to students as human beings. They tend to neglect the humane formation of students, which is the soul of teaching. Teachers, then, cease to be 'teachers' and remain only 'employees' in schools. Education for peace is an exciting opportunity for teachers to refurbish their eroded sense of vocation and to regain its nobler nuances.

*Peace skills promote academic excellence:* The capacity to listen, a sense of higher purpose, patience and endurance, purity of mind facilitating concentration, aptitude for cooperation and teamwork, the willingness to seek out answers to questions (curiosity and rational inquiry), acceptance of discipline, and a positive attitude to study/work are the hallmarks of a good student. Significantly, they are also the skills of a peace-oriented person! This truth needs to be brought to a wider public awareness, as parents—and to a lesser extent even teachers— increasingly prefer that instructional time be devoted exclusively to curricular activities. In other words, the purpose of learning is seen as contrary to the goals of education, which is to enable individuals to live joyfully and in harmony in the given social context. To see this fallacy for what it is just consider

this. Equipping students to be "life-long learners' is one of the avowed goals of education. However, we smugly overlook the fact that without inculcating in students a sense of higher purpose, a passion for knowledge fortified with the spirit of rational and imaginative inquiry, and a positive outlook, they cannot be expected to become life-long learners. Fostering peace skills in children needs to be seen as an investment in building the foundation for life-long learning and enduring achievements.

*Education for peace can humanise education:* To be educated is to be fully human. The need to live in a community is basic to our humanity. It inheres in the essence of education, therefore, to foster in students the skills to live together in harmony. Individualism, that has the potential to disrupt the sense of community, shapes modern education and culture. There is hence a danger that the higher the person climbs on the ladder of learning the less socially 'educated' and responsive they could become. This explains the widening gap between the purpose and processes of education. Integrating the total learning process from a peace perspective can humanise education and harmonise it with its essential goals. Recognising the extent to which peace is basic to the purpose of education the Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the Twentieth Century calls education for peace "the 4th R".

The mark of an educated person, wrote Plato in *The Republic*, is the willingness to use one's knowledge and skills to solve the problems of society. Education must imbue children with a proactive social conscience. Society is the empowering context for individuals. No one can become fully human or attain dignity and fulfilment outside the web of relationships and responsibilities presupposed in society. Thus education must train and equip individuals to live creatively, responsibly, and peaceably in a society. If we are to attain

this basic goal at all, it is imperative that 'excellence' in education be re-oriented humanely. Being a good human being must be deemed an integral, not optional, attribute of an educated person. Overloading the brains of students, while starving their emotions, sensibilities, and sensitivities, fails to do justice to the goals of whole-person education. The aggravating gulf between the goals and tools of education needs to be urgently addressed.

The acknowledgement of education as a fundamental right for all children in the age group of six to 14 years is a potential revolution, if its implications are addressed earnestly. This can be done only if education is turned into a people's movement and communities are empowered to participate in this process. The scope for active people's participation is minimal in schemes; whereas it is central and crucial to a movement. This would, among other things, raise national awareness about the meaning and scope of education. The Second Education Commission (1952–53) had defined the purpose of education as "the training of the character and personality of students in such a way that they will be able to realise their full potentialities and contribute to the well-being of the community." It goes on to admit that only a "radical approach" can address such a comprehensive goal. Its report comes to conclusion that such an approach cannot be confined to the school but must "take the whole situation into account". Only a movement can involve diverse agencies, liberate dormant energies, and bring about radical change.

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

**Teacher, You gave Me half a loaf**

A teacher had a dream in which she saw one of her students fifty years from today. The student was angry and asked, 'Why did I learn so much detail about the past and the administration of my country and so little about the world?' He was angry because no one told him that as an adult he would be faced almost daily with problems of a global interdependent nature, be they problems of peace, security, quality of life, inflation, or scarcity of natural resources 'Why was I not warned? Why was I not better educated? Why did my teachers not tell me about these problems and help me understand that I was a member of an interdependent human race?'

With ever greater anger, the student shouted, 'You helped me extend my hands with incredible machines, my eyes with telescopes and microscopes, my ears with telephones, radios and sonar, my brain with computers, but you did not help me extend my heart, love, and concern for the human family. Teacher, you gave me half a loaf.'

education for peace in the Indian context falls squarely on social justice in education and the need to bridge the aggravating urban–rural divide. An approach to education that erodes social cohesion, aggravates economic inequalities, and undermines ethical foundations needs to be recognised as a threat to peace and a disservice to society.

Parables come naturally to the Eastern imagination. We think through images and let stories speak for us. So let us, true to tradition, conclude with a parable.

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