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## **INTEGRATION OF VALUE BASED EDUCATION INTO THE FORMAL EDUCATION SYSTEM FOR PEACEFUL SOCIETY: PERSPECTIVE OF BUDDHISM**

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### **Abstract**

*The peaceful mind and environment morals and values are equally important to the life. But all these elements are degrading these days. However, the students should be taught the peace, morals and values in twenty first century education. This can be done through the integration of curriculum between formal and Buddhist education system. Here, the paper analyses the meaning of peace from general view and Buddhist view. It discusses the imbalances in the peace and morals/values through both the general and Buddhist view. Lastly and mainly, it proposes the teaching of peace, morals and values education through the integration of formal education curriculum and Buddhist education. Therefore, incorporating the core human values exemplified in Buddhism into the school curriculum (formal education) aims to first, promote values-based education and, second better equip future generations to live a moral and ethical life which directly contributes for making the Peaceful society.*

## **Keywords**

Peace, Conflict, Buddha's Teaching, Integrated Curriculum, Values-Based Education

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## **1. Introduction to Peace**

Peace can be defined in two ways, i.e.; the general way and the Buddhist way. They are-

### **1.1 In General**

The peace is most loving and worthy word for humanity with most agreed. People of this planet never hate and irritated with this instead of war and conflict. It is probably often used in this century ever used before in this pace as a central focus because of conflicts/wars.

Peace is the absence of war. In the west, according to the Greek word for peace which is Irene and meaning the absence of war or absence of conflict and a state of non-war (Aikhionbare, 1991). The Oxford Dictionary defines the peace as freedom from, or cessation of, world of hostilities; that condition of a nation or community in which it is not at war with another. People's charter on peace for life (2008:6) given a genuine definition as; Peace is sharing of universal values like respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, and equality. Similarly, a holistic meaning of peace is the understanding of humanity that cannot exist independently in the world, which sustains all life.

According to Peace pioneer Johan Galtung, peace is as an absence of organized group violence, hence, peace and violence are interlinked to each other so that peace can be explained as absence of violence (Galtung, 1967, 1969). On the basis of Galtung's argument it can be stated that the peace and violence are just like a two sides of a coin, which are associated with each other. He discovered two typologies of peace such as negative peace, which is the absence of personal violence, and positive peace, which is the absence of structural violence (Galtung, 1967 as cited Tilahun, 2015). The absence of personal violence does not lead to a positive condition but the absence of structural violence lead to positive condition like social justice (Galtung, 1969).

### **1.2 Buddhist View**

Without any doubt, the Buddha is considered as an ancient teacher for peace, symbol of peace and contributor for peace who tried to establish the peaceful society. His philosophy equally pertinent in his time as well as in present context due to his evidence based practices and teachings on how to establish the peace within an individual, and finally in the society.

Peace can be understood in different forms as it is associated with human's activities that come from human's mind. Epstein (1998) said that the peace or war is our decision. Especially in Hinduism and Buddhism, peace is mainly inner tranquility (Ishida, 1969; Nikhilananda, 1969). The Sanskrit word describes the peace as 'Santi', which means a well ordered cultivated mind regardless of external conditions. As there is always conflict and/or war in the world, the peace is possible only for the individual subjectively. The Chinese concept of peace is the inner harmony as influenced by Buddhism (Nikhilananda, 1969) and the Japanese concept is a tranquil state of mind (Ishida, 1969) and harmonious surroundings too.

The inner peace is the peaceful mind so if the minds of living beings are at peace, the world will be at peace (Epstein, 1998). The elimination of the sources of conflicts can help in attainment of peace (Santi) within the individual (Premasiri, 2002). As the mind is central part of human body and all the activities; that we are showing or wish to do; are happening due to the mind and its command. So, the cause of violence of any kind lies in our own minds (Tanabe, 2014).

Non-violence, which is a practical necessity but not only the belief, is the first step as well as prerequisite in Buddha's teaching (Fleischman, n.d.). This teaching is not for academic stand point but highly based on the threefold trainings of morality. Therefore, Buddha's teaching inspires the individuals to develop many qualities such as self-reliance, moral responsibility, tolerance, compassion, and wisdom for enriching happiness and making life meaningful. His teaching also helps in understanding the true nature of things so that it will develop harmony to live in with a changing world. Ultimately this will provide the highest level of happiness and enjoyment ([www.buddhn.net](http://www.buddhn.net)).

## **2. Degradation of Peace and Values**

The status of peace and values is not in satisfactory level. These are exploited due to some reasons.

### **2.1 In General**

These days, the children are showing unethical behaviors i.e.; the moral degradation seems everywhere; however, children are not to be blamed for this. Several reasons might be responsible for this situation. One of the major factors is the parents (Luther, 2001). Incidences of broken homes with children distraught and deserted because parents of twenty first century are more involved with their worldly pleasures and social obligations rather than their responsibilities towards their children have become common. Similarly, another cause is a negative impact of information and technology. Children everyday read and hear unhealthy information through the media about growing influence of criminalization of politics and politicization of crime.

The social system, world widely, is undergoing great transformation (Singh, 2011, pp.2, 42). The easy excess of huge amount of information through internet and mass media, the young minds are impacted negatively if they do not have something robust to anchor upon.

There is a strong chances of uneducated person would show unethical behaviors and unexpected activities. They might not be properly aware on human values, norms and ethics so they could break the code of conducts and rules and might fall on criminal actions. On the other hand, the educated persons also are lacking of characters and moral values. Most of the cases, the young generation students from school and colleges are committing the crimes although they are educated. This is because of their interests on moneymaking and materialism, which has resulted in declination of values among people (Shelly & Jain, 2012, p.1).

For this distressing condition, the new generation is drifting towards the crime and violence. They are forgetting the history and culture of values and morals (Rai, 2014, p.1). Doubtlessly, the scientific discoveries have provided a good facility in the life along with the problems of inequity; conflicts, poverty, apathy and anxiety. Hence, the needs or the unfulfilled needs develop the conflict (Sandole et al, 2009).

## **2.2 Buddhist View**

The concern of Buddhism is far deep than a general one. So, it goes to the ultimate cause of suffering, violence and conflict than the mental, behavioral and structural causes. According to Buddha, our behavior of attachment with others and objects is the cause of suffering. This caused the human ignorance (*avijja*) so that the world cannot be seen as it is in real and we cannot be seen as we are. The reality is that everything in this world is inter-related as well as inter-dependent which is the cosmic reality. Due to the lack of Buddhist view, people think they are separate and different than others, their belongings are different than others and they are only for them. This is resulted the thought of “me” and “mine” and focus only to the cause related to self but not the whole causes and conditions conducive to its happening (Yeh, 2006, p. 97). Ultimately, this develops the unrest of mind and absence of peace i.e.; degradation of peace and values/morals.

## **3. Maintaining the Peace and Values**

The peace and values can be maintained by one of the effective ways that is the transformation of ways of thinking by educating peace and values. Education is the key to live wisely where the lack of it is the cause of imbalance situation of peace and values.

### **3.1 Buddha's Teaching for Peace and Values**

The attainment of peace (*shanti*) within each individual, and thereby, eliminating the source of social conflict is the main destination of Buddhism (Premasiri, 2003).

In Buddha's teaching, the Dharma, Karma, Nirvana, Moksha, Niraya, Samsara, Atma have a unique meanings than existing ones (Dhammanand, 2002, p 5). The Dharma is a law given by the God but it is a teaching way; as Buddhism describes; to escape from the suffering and to prevent from degrading human dignity (*ibid*).

The Karma (or *Kamma* in Pali ) has its literal meaning the action, code of conduct, to do or doing something good or bad (<http://www.mu.ac.in>; Dhammanand, 2002). However, in Buddhism, the Karma is any kind of intentional action whether mental, verbal, or physical. It covers all that is included in the phrase: ‘Thought, word and deed’ (Maháthera, 2010). So, Karma is not a fate, it is intentional, conscious, deliberate, wilful action and every action must have a reaction and effects (Buswell, 2004).

Nirvana is the ultimate goal of Buddhism. But it was simply the peace before Buddhism.

However, Buddhism describes Ni as no and Vana as craving so Nirvana in no more craving i.e.; no more attachment or no more selfishness (Dhammananda, 1994, p.11). So, no one can attain Nirvana with greed, selfishness, delusion, and craving. However it can attain through “lead a life of right moral conduct and constantly practice meditation. By active exertion, free from all selfishness and illusion” (Dhammananda, 2002, p.156).

“Do no evil” was Buddha’s the first advice. “Do well” and “Purify the minds” were other important and essential advices in Buddha’s teaching and all these are known as Dhamma or Buddhism (Mahathera, 2010; Narada, 1988). Therefore, Buddhist education is to being a good human and mainly focused on purity of characters. It is the training for moral and psychological development of the student. Hence, the goal of Buddha's teaching is to help and guide delusion of the human beings, to help in escaping from the suffering for happiness (Kung, 1996, p.8). However, this is depended in faith (*saddha*) of Triple Gem. The students could be inspired to accomplish in virtue (*sila*) through of Buddhism (Bodhi, 1998-2013). Thus, the main concern of all Buddha's since Buddha's time is to teach the five moral precepts to the laymen, the teaching preludes to the establishment of peace in the world (Singh, 2013). Among the five precepts, the first percept is abstaining from taking life of living beings is associated with the value of life. Similarly, the second precept; abstaining from taking the things which are not given is the values of property and social justice. The third precept; abstaining from sensual misconduct is connected to the values of self-control, respect to others and fulfilling the duties. The fourth precept; abstaining from false speech is indicated to the value of “seeking truth and seeing things as they are. Lastly, the fifth precept is abstaining from taking intoxicants. The fifth percept reflects the Buddhist concern for mental health and purification of mind, which prepares the people for higher wisdom (De Cea, 2010).

Similarly, Buddhism explains the excellent code of morals, which are suitable to both educated and uneducated persons (Mahathera, 2010). Buddha gave more emphasis on peace, which occurs only when *ahimsa* or harmlessness is established in the world. He clearly stated that any one should not harm to self of others as everyone has own beloved one (Minh Chau, 1995). As mind is the centre part, it could be purified through the meditation from all negative tendencies such as greed, anger and delusion. When all negative tendencies are removed, the mind will be freed from sufferings (Sujiva, 2000, p.9).

### **3.2 Integrated Curriculum of Formal Education in Teaching Peace and Values**

Most waiting model of today's education system in school education is the integrated curriculum model which can be done to draw the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values within or across the subject areas together (Alberta education, 2007, p.2). With the integration of curriculum, subjects should not teach as a single and separate from the other subjects (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1988). Integration means the themes are to be connected to provide the education of peace, morals and values (Beane, 1995). In the same context, Lake (n.d.) expressed; integration of curriculum links the subject areas to develop skills and knowledge, and same time it leads to understand the conceptual relationships for lifelong learning.

Education is a major and important means for peace building. Globally, UNESCO has also been assisting its member countries in peace education by helping to develop educational policies. The objectives of peace education process training, skills and information towards the peace-culture based on human rights values both in formal and non-formal/informal education; skills and knowledge towards in defusing and recognizing the conflicts; promoting multi-lingual education and cross-cultural learning for linguistic diversity; building the capacity of teachers through teacher trainings and professional developments; and strengthening the partnership as well as networking for innovative educational practices (UNESCO, 2008; Tesadale & Zhao, 2004, p.vii)

Apart from peace, the values and morals are another side as of a coin in the life. A student who is master of his or her subject but no moral values is not a human rather he can be compared with a wise animal because these values differentiate a human from animal (Awasthi, 2014, p.5). As the value is worthwhile, it is one of the many alternatives that a person chooses and acts upon because it increases human development (Lakshimi, 2009, p.2). For example; the relationships, behaviors, actions, and sense of who we are can be shaped by the values (Indrani, 2012). This is the reason for teaching or including all types of education as it has a greater role towards learners' personality and helps to becoming successful in their lifespan and careers as well.

There are several ways of inculcation of values in learners; however one of the most possible ways is curriculum. As the curriculum constitutes the values and morals it promotes a thought provoking and interactive environment for the students. It promotes quality education and holistic development of each child for their bright future (Iyer, 2013). It helps to develop the

characters apart from physique and mentality, which are also equally important (Indrani, 2012, p.2).

The values and morals can be taught by including in the curriculum. For this, the possible methods can be as follows-

- Providing a place for moral values in the curriculum.
- Explaining through stories as well as illustrations.
- Making participation in poetry and stories.
- Role-playing of a good story.
- Utilizing the posters, advertisements, and dramas (Indrani, 2012).

The UNESCO (2008) has developed and suggested the 'four pillars of learning' for the twenty-first century education with good intention of making the peaceful human society as-

- Learning to know,
- Learning to do,
- Learning to live together and
- Learning to be.

In the same context, the Buddhist education also has four pillars of learning according to Pongnarin, (2005) as:

- Learning to know (Theoretical Education) = ***Pariyatti***,
- Learning to do (Practical Education) = ***Patipatti***,
- Learning to be (Accomplished Education) = ***Pativedha and***
- Learning to live together (Continuous Education for All).

The Buddha preached non-violence and peace as universal message ( Singh,2013). Thus, this universal message is unity, no war, non-violence, and peace, which ultimately promote learning to live together without any discrimination. These four pillars basically speak about knowledge; values and skills for being a competent individual which can contribute for being a true human and making the peaceful society.

## **4. Conclusion**



There are lots of anger, frustration, etc. between human societies and deep-rooted unfair competitions. Without any surprise, there is no peace in our minds as human rivals and scares with another human are most depressing scenario of the human's civilization. Thus, the matter of peace becomes most desirable and this can be achieved only if we are free from fanaticism of getting the things for material comforts. To establishing the peace and peaceful society, peaceful mind is must and this is only possible through morals and values which shape human's behaviors. However, everywhere people are showing unethical behaviors with inhuman activities so, morals and values are degrading in this modern age and peace remains in aloof.

In this horrifying situation, Buddhist education or teaching of Buddhism can play a vital role as it is fundamentally based on human values and moral education. Most importantly, Buddhism gives more emphasis on life as a more precious thing. Hence, for the morals, values and peace, the development of such a curriculum should be done which can encourage the learners towards these elements. Consequently, the integration of core human values of Buddhism into the modern or formal education could be fruitful in this matter.

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