

PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH EDUCATION**Sri. Sanju Das**

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ABSTRACT

All the nations are fighting single-handed to defeat poverty and unemployment but they can do nothing separately. The people will have to be international minded giving up narrow national outlook. They will have to co-operate with one-another in defeating poverty and unemployment. The feeling of nationalism must be changed into internationalism. A concern of universal brotherhood friendliness and good will must prevail. As soon as this feeling arises in our mind, the problem of international understanding will arise itself. Students should feel that they are the members of one world, one community. They should be encouraged to practice tolerance, mutual help and respect for others. The feeling of world citizenship is to be fostered among students through co-curricular activities in school. This article is an attempt to flash some light on Education for International Understanding. There are some of the ways and means of organising education for promoting the feelings of internationalism and the teacher plays a very vital role in contributing international understanding.

Keywords: Education, Internationalism, National integration,

“All for one and one for all, united we stand divided we fall.”— Alexandre Dumas.

Introduction:

"The world is swinging between two conflicting poles—Peace or War. On one side there gleams the distant beacon of hope for peace, while on the other, dark clouds of war hover on the horizonThe World, today, is in the worst critical phase of its existence, no one can predict future of modern man whether he is to survive or get extinct, in the event of a Global Nuclear War." — Late Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

The world today is passing through one of the most crucial periods in his history. Mankind is standing on the edge of a precipice, banging perilously on the tenuous and fragile stone of peace. The world may be engulfed in the mighty deluge of destruction at any ticking of the deck. There is a mad race for Nuclear-armaments among the most powerful nations of the world; Space-ships are being launched one after another to find new possibilities of world domination. The world is gradually drawing close to the brink of the Third World War. And the Third World War if it breaks out would be a thermo-nuclear war that might erase the very existence of human life from the earth.

As such in a world of tension, living under the shadow of nuclear holocaust, if man has to survive, he will have to fight with the evils of the world and with the forces of destruction and war. As such there is the need of international understanding. The world is full of 'ideologies'. If we want to live in a world free from war and destruction, we will have to break the barriers of 'ideologies' and 'isms'. We will have to accept the principle of peaceful coexistence. We will have to strive for international understanding, for a world authority under which all the nations of the world will be undoubtedly free to change their course of action according to their genuine deed without any consideration of political ideologies.

The problems of all the men of all the countries are the same. The people of the world are fighting to conquer nature and to master science and technology. Their aim is to bring peace in the world with prosperity and sufficiency of everything. But this peace, prosperity and sufficiency cannot be achieved without international understanding. If there is tension in the mind of man, if there is the fear of war, man cannot try for peace. People of the world will have to crush the tension of war and destructive elements to conquer peace and prosperity. For this aim, we will have to fight for international understanding and will have to strive for one world Government.

All the nations are fighting single-handed to defeat poverty and unemployment but they can do nothing separately. The people will have to be international minded giving up narrow national outlook. They will have to co-operate with one-another in defeating poverty and unemployment. The feeling of nationalism must be changed into internationalism. A concern of universal brotherhood friendliness and good will must prevail. As soon as this feeling arises in our mind, the problem of international understanding will arise itself.

Problems of disintegration:

India is a country with innumerable diversities, an entity composed of many communities, races, classes, languages and subcultures. In any such nation, there are many obstacles to the achievement of national integration.

In India the following hindrances are obstructing the growth of national feeling, casteism, communalism, linguistic fanaticism, social disparity, economic inequalities and immorality, regionalism etc.

1. Casteism:

Caste is an imported part of our social fabric. This was developed in the past on the basis of division of labour in the society. But now casteism has segregated the society. Unity and integrity has become a dream in a caste ridden society. The feeling of socially neglected scheduled castes under the suppression of upper caste ruined the sense of we feeling and unity. It becomes a problem for national integration.

2. Communalism:

Religious antagonism has posed a serious challenge to national integration in India. India is a multi-religious land. Political manipulation has projected one religion against the other which resulted in communal riot, bloodbath, mutual, distrust and disintegration of the country. Large scale illiteracy and superstition are responsible along with other causes for raise communalism in the country. It is very difficult to promote national integration under these situations.

3. Linguistic Fanaticism:

Multi-linguism is one of the important characters of India. India has fifteen officially recognized languages. There are about 1652 languages are spoken in India which shows its diversities. There is conflict and riots on the languages issue. People of one language try to establish their language over others. When Hindi was declared as the national language people of South India resented against this decision supporting English language. Language issue became a barrier on the way of national integration.

4. Regionalism:

There are several regions in India having their unique traditions, food habits, dress and languages. Each regional differs from the other in one or other ways which leads to disintegration of the country. People of one region compete with the person of other regions which leads to conflict and riots. Land dispute, language problem are some of the reasons which pose hurdle on the way of national integration.

5. Social Disparity:

Social disparity among the people of different communities, castes and sometime within the community and caste causes tension and imbalance among the people. Social disparity poses great challenge to national integration.

6. Economic Inequalities:

Economic standard of people in a state depends on the fertility of land, resources available and manpower management. All the states are not equal in the above matter which leads to economic backwardness of the people. Even in a state distribution of wealth is not properly done. Day by day poor becoming poorer and rich become richest this causes tension and conflict. It is a problem for national integration.

What is International Understanding?

According to Oliver Goldsmith "International Understanding is a feeling that the individual is not only a member of his State, but a member of the World".

According to Dr. Walter H.C. Lewis "International Understanding is the ability to observe critically and objectively and appraise the conduct of man everywhere to each other, irrespective of the nationality of culture to which they may belong. To do this one must be able to detach oneself from one's own particular cultural and national prejudices and to observe men of all nationalities, cultures and races as equally important varieties of human being inhabiting this earth."

In the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan, "The world once divided by Oceans and continent is united physically today but there are still suspicions and misunderstandings. It is essential for us not to live apart but to live together. Understanding one another fears and anxieties, aspirations and thoughts that are what we are expected to do. We must not claim a racial extermination, enslavement or segregation but work for racial harmony. We may be German, we may be American, we may be Russian but we are essentially human beings. Let us not overlook fundamental fact that let us learn to live in a World Community."

In this way the international understanding means

- Global brotherhood
- Global citizenship
- Global friendship
- Welfare of all human beings

Barriers of International Understanding:

There are many problems, which retard the progress of a country towards international understanding such as the following:

- i. Secrecy about the nuclear strength of nations.
- ii. Inequality of countries in size, resources, income, scientific and technological progress.
- iii. Racial prejudice is one of the strongest barriers in developing internationalism.
- iv. Lack of national solidarity due to the existence of regionalism, communalism, casteism, politicalism and lingualism.
- v. Narrowness owing to illiteracy, ignorance, poverty and internal problems.

Role of Education for fostering International Understanding:

The United Nation's Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in its preamble enunciated, "Since war begins in the mind of men, it is in the mind of men that defense of peace must be constructed, the wide diffusion of culture and education for humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity which all the national must fulfill in a spirit of natural assistance and concern".

As Wars and peace are closely related to mind i.e. knowledge, understanding, critical thinking, favourable attitude kindness should be promoted among the people.

Education is the most potential instrument for moulding the mental makeup and its faculties. Importance of education for maintaining international peace and understanding cannot be overestimated and the guiding principles of education must influence internationalism in many ways- Agencies of education do not limit themselves to the formal systems like school but to different informal as well as Non-formal agencies including all mass media like radio, television, press, cinema etc.

International understanding can be developed only through the right education which will provide awareness, for healthy attitudes, create desirable interest, and promote critical thinking and appreciation among the students. It is the responsibility of the educational institution to generate a suitable atmosphere in which children can develop the feelings of oneness and world unity.

Students should feel that they are the members of one world, one community. They should be encouraged to practice tolerance, mutual help and respect for others. The feeling of world citizenship is to be fostered among students through co-curricular activities in school.

Education for International Understanding means a cosmopolitan education which will produce a loyalty to world citizenship. There are some of the ways and means of organising education for promoting the feelings of internationalism and the teacher plays a very vital role in contributing international understanding.

Education for international understanding implies the promotion of democratic citizenship etc. The following are some of the ways and means of organising education for promoting the feelings of international understanding:-

1) Aims:

- i) Promotion of world citizenship
- ii) Promotion of world peace
- iii) Promotion of independent and critical thinking
- iv) Promotion of construction rather than destructive feeling
- v) Developing the student's faith.
- vi) Eradicating of racial, religious, cultural and national prejudices

2) Redesigning the curriculum

The traditional curriculum followed in our schools and universities does not fulfill all the possibilities of internationalism. The redesigning curriculum should enable our students:

- i) To learn that the earth is the home of man and other living things
- ii) To gain knowledge about the world we live in
- iii) To learn how to promote better understanding of the interdependence of the world
- iv) To inculcate respect for all major religions of the world
- v) To know something about the long strength of mankind to replace conflicts with co-operation
- vi) To develop a desire and the simple skills
- vii) Knowledge of various cultures of the world

3) Curricular aspect

i) **Literature:** A UNESCO publication states, "Extracts from the works of the writers such as Dickens, Gorkey, Tolstoy, Tagore and Isben can be used to illustrate stages in social progress. So the best of literature of other nations must be included in the curriculum.

ii) **Art:** True art should be included in the curriculum. The true hope of human feelings should be depicted and shown in art. It is beauty involved in the art that is significant.

iii) **Language:** it can play a vital part in the peaceful intercourse of the people of the world. The study of modern languages should be the study of modern people.

iv) **Science:** Students should be told how the scientists of various nations have contributed in fighting against disease. He nourishes in his heart goodwill to the whole of mankind.

v) **History:** The field of history should be wide enough to enable the students to cultivate international outlook. History should be taught objectively and with a cultural bias. Students should be encouraged to study newspapers and magazines.

vi) **Economics:** The knowledge of consumption, production, taxation, human resources etc. can be given our international level.

vii) **Philosophy:** Philosophers throughout the history of the world have been stressing mental peace as the human goal.

vi) **Mathematics:** The language of mathematics is universal, with largely the same symbols, throughout the world. It should be impressed that almost all subjects and problems lend themselves to mathematical treatment.

4) Co - Curricular activities

Co - Curricular activities which go in the school from time to time can be geared to educating for international understanding. The following activities are suggested:

- i) Celebrating birth anniversaries
- ii) Celebrating international week
- iii) Celebrating days of international importance
- iv) Organising and running UN societies
- v) Organising pen friend's club
- vi) Arranging exhibitions
- vii) Dramatic representation
- viii) School assembly
- ix) International games
- x) News of other countries

5) Face to Face contacts

Face to face contacts are of great help in broadening outlook, breaking rigid isolation of individual nation's and in removing imaginary fears and grievances. The following activities are useful in this regard:-

- i) International Camps
- ii) Cultural and study tours
- iii) Arranging visits and excursions to foreign students
- iv) International youth festivals
- v) Exchange of teachers and students

Different organization for fostering International understanding:

There are many institutions which help the people to cultivate the international understanding. United Nations and its branches work for international understanding all over the world. The form of United Nations is political but its various specific institution world for developing co-operation and understanding among people. Such institutions are stated as below.

1. International Labor Organization (ILO)
2. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
3. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
4. World Health Organization (WHO)
5. International Development Association (IDA)
6. International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)
7. International Financial Commission (IFC)
8. International Monetary Fund (IMF)
9. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
10. Universal Postal Union (UPU)
11. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
12. International Marine Consultation Organization (IMCO)
13. International Trade organization (ITO)
14. World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

15. International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA)
16. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
17. United Nations Organization for Trade and Development (UNOTD)
18. United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP)
19. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
20. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

These and many other institutions work for development of co-operation for international affairs and their work is important. To cultivate international understanding, the work of United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO is of great importance for the world of education.

Role of UNESCO to promoting International Understanding:

- **Aims of UNESCO :**

According to Swarup Saxena, the aims and work of UNESCO are stated as below. The full form of UNESCO is United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The aim of this institution is to establish peace all over the world by developing international understanding by the means of education. To achieve this aim, this department wants to cultivate the virtues in people by educating them psychologically and intellectually at international level so that the people hate the wars and respect the international importance themselves.

- **The Functions of UNESCO**

1. The UNESCO tries to remove fear, suspect and other odor thought spread among different nations and to establish the sound relations.
2. The UNESCO also tries to put the end of illiteracy and ignorance of countries which are left behind.
3. This institution also tries to spread the literature, science, culture and art of one nation to the rest of nations so that people of every nation can be familiar with others" intellectual development.
4. The UNESCO gives the financial help to researcher so that more researches can be held.
5. This institution creates a chance to teachers, thinkers and scientists for mutual discussion which constructive art can be created.
6. This department helps financially to the schools in backward nations.
7. The UNESCO expresses its idea for constructing curriculum and researches in text books of nations and also translates some important books of literature.
8. This department arranges literary exhibition at international level so that international understanding can be developed.
9. The UNESCO encourages the teachers and children to visit foreign countries.
10. The UNESCO also tries to develop international vision among people by the means of radio, TV and other mass media.

To succeed the functions of the UNESCO, the co-operation of all nations is necessary, so every nation of the world should become the member of United Nations Organization and take interest in each effort of this department.

Conclusion

International understanding is the need of the hour. The International Organizations like UNO and UNESCO are doing their best to promote brotherhood, peaceful Co-existence among the people of the Globe. No discrimination against anybody or any nation on the basis of caste, creed and colour etc. should be developed in the pupil. Adequate knowledge and understanding of the cultures of different countries should be given in the curriculum. Critical thinking and clear outlook towards the different issues of the world's basic needs for effective international understanding.

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