PEACE EDUCATION : THE MOST RELEVANT IDEA OF EDUCATION FOR THE UPLIFTMENT OF THE MULTI CULTURAL RURAL INDIA.

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ABSTRACT Peace education is a modern idea extensively promulgated by UNICEF. The present study is an attempt to understand the relevance of peace education in Indian perspective and how peace and education was a natural thing to India. How peace and education has been perceived in India from the ancient times. This study also tries to discuss how peace education can help India and basically the rural India to resist the degradation of its society and environment by limiting the bad effect of globalization and helping people to learn to live in harmony with themselves and others.

Keywords: Peace Education, Multi-cultural, Upliftment, Rural India

INTRODUCTION:
According to the UNICEF, Peace Education is “the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior change that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level”. The Wikipedia defines Peace Education as “the process of acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the attitudes, skills, and behaviors to live in harmony with oneself, with others, and with the natural environment.”

'EDUCATION FOR PEACE” involves educational efforts to enhance four interacting "goal areas”

Though according to Salomon (2002), a critic of the idea of Peace Education, it is a vague idea without any "clarity of what peace education really is, or how its different varieties relate to each other, it is unclear how experience with one variant of peace education in one region can usefully inform programs in another region.” Salomon has described how the challenges, goals, and methods of peace education differ substantially between areas characterized by intractable conflict, interethnic tension, or relative tranquility.

In India also this vagueness persists about the idea of Peace Education. How India and peace is synonymous, how from the ancient times India only and only propagated peace through its education and now India Being a multi cultural, multi ethnic and multi religious country, can use the idea of peace education to heal the scar of separatism, terrorism and inequality among its citizens, is a pivotal question. This study tries to find some answers to these.

1. PEACE IS NATURAL TO INDIA:
From the ancient times of history the concept of India was based on peace. It has never attacked others though being attacked by others again and again. The sages and the ancient texts of India propagate such a world where everyone is free and fearless in its true sense and spirit. Based on these philosophical thinking the administrative structure of India was built in the prehistoric ages and the same also transited through
various means and mediums unto the modern India. Though the western culture has eroded that idea of peace through its materialistic education, the concept comes back in the educational and administrative policies time and again as peace is a natural concept for India. The other countries, nations are known for their bravery or war skills but India has always been a practitioner of peace in its true sense. In India peace is an inner thing which is and should not be disturbed by any outside conditions. Unlike the western thinkers who find peace in the outer world or in the materialistic world, Indians find peace in sacrifice and in detachment. And this natural peace has been the soul of India as a nation from the

1.1. VEDAS, YOGA AND PEACE EDUCATION:

Vedas are the basics of Indian culture. There are four Vedas and various upanishadas which had tuned the whole south Asia in a string of peace and prosperity. The basic theme of these hindu holy books (shastras) is to spread and propagate peace and true happiness. From the creation to the development of true human being every aspects have been dealt with in those books-

"This person is my relative and that person is a stranger, says the small minded one, for the one who knows the truth, the whole world is a family." -Maha Upanishad.

"He who sees all beings in his own self and his own self in all beings, what sorrow and what delusion can overcome him?" -Isha Upanishad verse 6 & 7

"May all be prosperous and happy
May all be free from illness
May all see what is auspicious
May no one suffer"

"May there be Peace in Heaven, Sky, Earth, Water, Plants, Trees, Gods, in various Worlds; May there be Peace in all. May there be Peace indeed within Peace, Giving me the Peace which grows within me.

Om peace, peace, peace" -Shanti Path, Upanishads

"Knowledge brings humility, from humility comes worthiness, with worthiness one attains wealth, with wealth one is able to perform his duties in a better way and in performing his duties one attains happiness." –Suvashitani

"One must always be prepared for the worst situations, it is futile show concern and take remedial steps only after facing a calamity. Just as it is futile to start digging a well when your house is already on fire." –Suvashitani

"Providing food to poor and needy people is charitable deed, but making people learned by teaching is the supreme form of charity. Food gives momentary satisfaction, but the knowledge will empower them to lead a satisfactory life." –Suvashitani

“In yogic peace education, techniques from yogic science were utilised to alter the physical, mental and spiritual instrument of humanity (the self) to address violence that comes from within. Contemporary peace education (similar to all peace education) relate to specific forms of violence (and their transformation) and similar to teaching human rights and conflict resolution in schools critical peace education and yogie peace education are complementary curricula that seek to foster positive peace and decrease violence in society.”

From all of the above texts and shlokas it is clear that peace and education were the most significant and essential things in the Indian philosophical domain which taught the Indians not only to live in harmony with their fellow human being but also with the nature.

1.2. GOUTAM BUDDHA:

Gautam Buddha is the icon of peace. The fundamental goal of Buddhism is peace, not only peace in this world but peace in all worlds. The Buddha taught that the first step on the path to peace is understanding the process of peace. When the causes and the process of peace is understood, one can direct their efforts towards the implementation of peace. And this process can only be understood only through a proper education. "Buddhist education aims at a personality transformation into a highest form of humanity through ethical, intellectual and spiritual perfection. These three faculties of perfection of human life undoubtedly lead a man through mundane happiness to supra mundane happiness, which is the highest achievement we all are equally looking for. Therefore, the Buddhist education is grounded on the primary psychological need of all living beings." “The main aim of Buddhist Education is to make a free man, an intelligent man, a wise, moral, talented, non-violent and secular man. Buddhist Education makes man judicious, humanist, logical and free from superstitions.”

1.3. SUFISM, BHAKTI MOVEMENT AND PEACE EDUCATION:

Sufism and Bhakti movement had left a great prevailing impact on the social and cultural life of India. It led the way towards an inclusive growth of the different castes and creeds of Indian society. Earlier the education was only for the elite of the society. But Sufism and Bhakti movement made an awareness for the
need of education to all. Through madrasas, sufi khanqah, tolls education of peace and love were imparted for all during this period. This inclusiveness brought social harmony in Indian society which made the nation a peaceful one from the core of its heart. As the base of these movements were the spirituality the people were happy from their inside and this led to the peaceful co-existence of different types of people with different opinions. India become an epicenter of peace during this period despite various problems.

1.4. GANDHI AND PEACE EDUCATION:
Gandhi is the epitome of peace. By education he meant an all-round drawing out of the best in the child and man—body, mind and spirit. According to him—“An education which does not teach us to discriminate between good and bad, to assimilate the one and eschew the other, is a misnomer. Education should be so revolutionized as to answer the wants of the poorest villager, instead of answering those of an imperial exploiter. Education in the understanding of citizenship is a short-term affair if we are honest and earnest. Basic education links the children, whether of cities or the villages, to all that is best and lasting in India.” The main aspects of his philosophy of education is non-violence and inclusiveness. This non-violence and inclusiveness is the base of peace. If his educational philosophies are adopted worldwide peace will prevail.

2. HOW PEACE EDUCATION CAN HELP TO MAKE INDIA PROSPEROUS AGAIN:
To make India prosperous the villages of India must have to be made prosperous. Due to the Globalization and other various factors the base of peaceful living in India has been eroded day by day. The social and economic structure of rural India has also crumbled in a very bad way. In modern India the trace of that peaceful living of earlier times can be seen in a very irregular way. The ancient culture of practicing Yoga is not so much regular now. The British rulers of India had left an indelible marks of separation through their divide and rule policy. Till now this factor of divisiveness is continuing in the Indian mindscape. Its impact can be seen more in the rural areas of India. More and more causalities are happening due to the impatience ingrained in the public mind. Modern education could not help to solve this problem. Every where there can be heard the talks of separatism, terrorism and confrontation only. People are becoming more and more selfish and self centric. The rat race to earn their living has transformed a large part of Indian people into machines, without any human feelings. They have begun to forget about happiness and love. Only money and prosperity is all they want. For this they can go to any extent. They can harm their fellow countrymen, they can harm the nature, they can do anything to achieve their narrow goals. And the main reason behind this is the education system of this country. The education system based on the western philosophies made the situation more horrible.

To get rid of this condition of social destitute and disharmony again education or peace education is the way out. But the education should be programmed in such a way where there will be universal unity of knowledge and the universal unity of humankind through the elimination of violence. The approach of the education system will be planned in such a way that it will help to “acquire the values, the knowledge and developing the attributes, skills, and behaviors to live in harmony with oneself, with others, and with the natural environment.” India being a multicultural and multi ethnic nation the need of peace education is much needed here to prevent conflict and violence among the various groups divided by their languages, traditions and beliefs. Peace education will only be the aid to create the conditions conducive to peace among these groups. As India is developing country the environmental pollution is becoming a great concern. The Yogic practice with modern outlook can easily be helpful for the proper development and maintenance of huge human resources of India. Only through the peace education people can be made aware of their role in preserving the natural environment by assisting them to understand how to live in harmony with the nature without hurting it.

The effect of globalization is much harsher on the rural life of India. Until a decade or two ago the rural life was not as hard as it is today. The traditional arts and occupations are being obsolete day by day as they cannot cope up with the modern technology which is more cheap and easily available. Thus frustration is growing among this population. This can be immediately dealt with proper education and training. Peace education can only help here through its all inclusive yet modern approach.

CONCLUSION:
In the conclusion it can be said that the adoption peace education as a method of education can bring back the ancient glory of the Indian education. Through the art of conflict resolution and life skill development a comprehensive attitude can grow towards the self, others and the whole environment. With the assistance of technology peace minded education can help India to end its various differences, dissensions and disputes in a more convincing and natural way. The ancient Yogic science which is inherent to Indian culture can easily make this difference by making good changes at the innermost levels of human being making
them more and more receptive and tolerant towards the nature, towards the other opinions and the other ways of life.

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