



## Education for Peace: Kaleidoscopic Musings

*Shweta Singh*

### Abstract

*Education for Peace is a crucial mediating 'space' and 'tool' that addresses and facilitates transformation of conflict towards a 'structure' and 'process' that constitute 'Just Peace'. In other words, actions for 'Peacebuilding' must be located in the educational system. This paper firstly, elucidates how Education has been used historically to address varied forms of violence in different geographical settings. Secondly, how each approach has been similar from the perspective of fundamental goals and values and yet unique, as it was a response to specific problems within a context and a particular historical setting. Thirdly, how currently the Education for Peace paradigm in India is an effort in the direction of nurturing Peacebuilding through educational system. Lastly, it discusses the 'How' of Education for Peace. This is an essential component because building peace through education is a dynamic process and thus the pedagogy or the 'how' is as important as the 'what' of Education for Peace. A possible pedagogical tool kit is delineated in the concluding part to make a contribution in this process.*

### Author Profile

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## Education for Peace: Kaleidoscopic Musings

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### What is Violence and Peace?

Theoretical developments in the field of peace research have shaped the direction of Education *for* Peace. Education *for* Peace is intertwined with the meaning of peace, which in turn is intrinsically linked to the understanding of violence.<sup>1</sup> The central questions therefore are: ‘What’ is the substantive content of the concepts of violence and peace? How do we transform conflict and build ‘just peace’? Is education a ‘space’ and ‘tool’ that can address and facilitate transformation of conflict towards creating ‘structures’ and ‘processes’ that constitute ‘just peace’?

The field of peace research which has provided an understanding of peace and violence is multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary but the understanding of violence from a perspective of ‘realpolitik’ has been focused on direct, organized violence<sup>2</sup>, particularly the institution of war and armed conflict and peace consequently has been defined as the absence of organized war between or within nations. This definition of violence is now considered too narrow to encompass the many levels at which violence manifests itself and the myriad forms it takes to impact the political, social and economic order. In fact if peace is action directed against violence, then the understanding of violence needs to be broadened to include all its significant varieties.

In the early 1960s, when the field of peace research was still in its fledgling stages, Johan Galtung through his writings explicated the need and rationale for expanding both the concept of violence and peace. Galtung draws a distinction between direct and structural violence and links it to the idea of negative peace and positive peace. Negative peace represents an absence of direct violence such as cessation of hostilities or absence of organized war between or within nations and positive peace is taken to mean the presence

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<sup>1</sup> Instead of a broad literature review some representative views are included which are considered especially relevant for understanding Education *for* Peace in India. The views of Gandhi, Johan Galtung, John Paul Lederach and Lisa Schirch are discussed from the standpoint of peace research, peace action and peacebuilding. Betty A. Reardon’s and Krishna Kumar’s views are discussed, as Reardon has spearheaded the movement to popularize the concept of Education *for* Peace from a Western perspective and Kumar, is the force behind the Education *for* Peace movement in India especially his contribution to the drafting and implementation of the National Curriculum Framework 2005. Kumar as the Director of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), has been one of the key proponents of the Education for Peace movement through the National Curriculum Framework 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Galtung defines, “The narrow concept of violence as somatic incapacitation, or deprivation of health, alone (with killing as the extreme form), at the hands of an actor who in-tends this to be the consequence.” Johan Galtung, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 6, No. 3, (1969).

of social justice or the absence of structural violence<sup>3</sup>. This conceptualization of peace was not altogether new. It could also be located in the writings of Mahatma Gandhi in India. Robert Hart writes, "Peace, as Gandhi envisaged it, is far more than the absence of war and violence. It is a state of positive and constructive world-view and world-order, where individuals, groups and nations eschew to dominate or exploit one another and live in cooperation and mutual aid."<sup>4</sup> Gandhi also states, "There is no way to peace. Peace is the way"<sup>5</sup> – a perception which highlights that peace is a process and not an outcome or an end state.

John Paul Lederach similarly argues that "metaphorically peace is not merely a stage in time or condition. It is a dynamic social construct".<sup>6</sup> Krishna Kumar asserts that "Peace is a state of being that must be consciously cultivated at individual, social, national and global levels". Kumar in his explorations successfully divests peace of its popular connotation of passivity, and makes a compelling case for imagining, choosing and pursuing peace every moment of our lives. As he says, "...a counter-offensive for peace should become an everyday event. The desire for peace and the will to actualize it must begin in our hearts and minds, from where it will radiate into our shared spaces and some day, enfold the entire world."<sup>7</sup>

This is of critical importance as it posits that the understanding of peace is not limited to ending violence or negative peace but aims at building positive peace or just peace which is inclusive of social justice marked by values of democratic participation, respect for human needs, human rights and human security. This holistic view of peace, though not new, often goes unarticulated in these times when peace is enforced with weapons and wars are fought in the name of peace and democracy. If the meaning and goal of peace itself gets challenged; if it is enforced through war and weapons then, 'How' do we transform conflict and build peace?

With this larger objective to transform conflict and build peace, Johan Galtung, John Paul Lederach, and Lisa Schirch direct attention to Peacebuilding. The term peacebuilding refers to a complex web of processes - a web that incorporates different roles, strategies and interventions employed by different people at different stages of conflict development and directed towards building just peace. Galtung asserts that 'structures' must be found that remove causes of violence and offer alternatives to violence in situations where violence might occur.<sup>8</sup> Lisa Schirch asserts that an integrated

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<sup>3</sup> Galtung defines "Structural violence as the distance between the actual and the potential". Structural violence is silent, it does not show; It is broadly a case of unjust or unfair institutions, laws, or rules that are perceived as conflict by those who suffer, but not perceived as conflict by those who benefit from the situation. It is found in legal institutions, political structures, governance patterns and the cultural patterns that govern a social system. Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research" *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 6, No. 3, (1969).

<sup>4</sup> Robert Hart, "A Gandhian Approach to the Fourth World", *Gandhi Marg*, Vol. III. No. 9, 1981.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> Interview with author, New Delhi, March 4, 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Johan Galtung, "Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, and Peacebuilding," in *Peace, War and Defense: Essays in Peace Research*, Vol II. (Copenhagen: Christian Ejlertsen, 1976).

peacebuilding framework goes beyond ending violent conflict and seeks to create capacity for a culture of just peace.<sup>9</sup>

It is precisely in this role of building a culture of peace that education can be used as a tool and create conditions for *just peace*. In other words, actions for 'Peacebuilding' must be located in the educational system. Thus schools are the institutions most essential to education for a culture of peace.<sup>10</sup> Teachers are the most responsible, influential and significant agents in the schooling process. Betty Reardon states 'If we truly wish peace, we would prepare for it by educating all of our peoples about what peace is, the obstacles that impede it, the proposed and possible means to achieve it, what we need to learn to pursue these means to successful conclusions and, most important of all, the changes we must bring about in ourselves, our societies and our cultures'.<sup>11</sup>

### **Kaleidoscopes for Peace: Education *for* Peace and Education *about* Peace**

As one moves across historical and geographical settings, patterns of conflict and the ways in which education is used for peace change. In fact each education paradigm articulates a response to the specific problems of the given historical and geographical setting, yet a universal character can be ascribed to them as they attempt to universalize values of social justice, equality, democratic participation, human rights, human needs specifically human dignity and human security. It is thus imperative to examine the distinctions that have been made between two key approaches, Education 'for' and 'about' Peace and also locate the Indian approach within this broader map.

A brief trajectory of the field is provided here to demonstrate the symbiotic relationship between the historical events and geographical spaces and education. The first time the question of 'how' to preserve peace without war and weapons surfaced at the Hague Conferences.<sup>12</sup> However, there were very few direct references to education and its role in peace promotion during these conferences.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Lisa Schirch, *The Little Book of Strategic Peacebuilding*. (Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Good Books, 2005).

<sup>10</sup> School curricula and pedagogy play a crucial role in building both a culture of peaceful coexistence or a culture marked by politics of hate, discrimination and demonization. For example in India, schools affiliated to Vishwa Hindu Parishad(VHP) through the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram and the Shishu Mandir's affiliated to the RSS Seva Bharati follow a pedagogy and curriculum that demonises the minorities, challenges the secular fabric of Indian Democracy and has a damaging impact on Education at the grassroots.

<sup>11</sup> Betty A. Reardon, *Education for a Culture of Peace in a Gender Perspective*.( France : UNESCO, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907 were held for the purpose of bringing together the principal nations of the world to discuss and resolve the problems of maintaining universal peace, reducing armaments, and ameliorating the conditions of warfare. An in depth analysis is available in Ervin Laszlo and Jong Youl Yoo, eds., *World Encyclopedia of Peace*, Vol. I.(Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press,1983).

<sup>13</sup> The first program of the international peace movement is linked to the International Peace Congress in Paris in 1849. This Congress emphasized on the need that participants should work in their respective countries for eradicating political prejudices and "hatred that has been learnt". Education in this context was argued could play a key role. Victor Hugo was one of the most famous participants. This has been characterized as the first program of the international peace movement An indepth analysis is available in Bengt Thelin "Early Tendencies of Peace Education in Sweden", *Peace Education Miniprints*, No 69, 1994.

The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of World War II, what could be loosely called the period of formative peace education was focused on exposing the contradiction between religious and history education, which characterized Europe at that time. Early 'Peace Educators' had a two fold focus, to cleanse history education from nationalistic chauvinism, ethnocentrism and secondly, to prevent glorification of war.<sup>14</sup> The factors that explain this focus were the growth of totalitarian movements in Europe, particularly the growth of Fascism and Nazism that emphasized the use of war and weapons and aggressive foreign policies and the dismal performance of the League of Nations as an institutional mechanism to preserve peace. The attempt through this paradigm of education *for* peace was to challenge aggressive nationalism, militarism and war heroism. However peace education during this period focused on peace and war on the 'macro level' or what has been articulated in the previous section as negative peace.

Scholars like Betty Reardon argue traditional or essential peace education as a field evolved after the close of World War II. Earlier at the turn of twentieth century, both Maria Montessori and John Dewey had advocated Peace Education by foregrounding a child centred and 'progressive' approach to education.<sup>15</sup>

The most significant components of the post-war essential peace education have been war prevention, non violence, world order studies, nuclear education, comprehensive peace education and ecological and cooperative education. All these were responses to particular conditions and or forms of organized violence. So in this period peace education was broadly a response to Cold War marked by increased threats of war, nuclearization and arms race. But the domain of inquiry within this framework of peace education was gradually expanding and the argument was that teaching about or for peace necessitates teaching about and for economic and social justice. Human rights, economic and social structures came to be linked inextricably to essential peace education.<sup>16</sup> This was aptly reflected in Pope Paul's axiom, "If you want peace, work for justice".<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Several educators and peace researchers, most notably Stitz Stomfay, M.Aline, David Smith and Terry Carson have researched this history and published their findings. See Terry Carson and David Smith, *Educating for a Peaceful Future* (Toronto: Kagan and Woo Limited,1998); Stomfay Stitz and M. Aline, *Peace Education in America,1828-1999:A Sourcebook for Education and Research*. (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press,1993).

<sup>16</sup> This period was also marked by the approach to Peace Education derived from a peace research methodology designated as " world order inquiry" devised by the World Order Models Project (WOMP), a transnational peace research project established in 1968 by the Institute for World Order, then called the World Law Fund.

<sup>17</sup> 1963 was a pivotal year in this phase of peace education, because of the promulgation of Pope John XXIII encyclical letter, "*Pacem in Terris*" and President John F Kennedy's commencement address at American University, "Towards a Strategy of Peace" in which he announced the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Available at: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1963kennedy-peacestrat.html>.

Education for a 'culture of peace'<sup>18</sup> is the most recent development in the field of peace education. This development is welcomed by those who have advocated a comprehensive and holistic approach to peace education. It provides an overarching concept under which the varied topics and approaches that comprise the field can be integrated, and more easily comprehended as multiple components of a single field of peace education. The urgency and necessity of such education was acknowledged by the member states of UNESCO in 1974 and reaffirmed in the Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights, and Democracy in 1994.

Education *for* Peace as a concept and a movement upholds and supports the realization of international priorities which have been articulated in UN Resolution 53/25,<sup>19</sup> which proclaimed the period 2001-2010 as the 'International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World', as well as UN Resolution 53/243,<sup>20</sup> by which a global 'Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace' for the new millennium was adopted. The Hague Appeal for Global Campaign for Peace Education<sup>21</sup> and the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by UN Resolution 44/25<sup>22</sup> also recognize the right of every child to be 'brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity.'

Education *for* Peace got a fresh impetus with the Dakar Framework of Action.<sup>23</sup> The Dakar declaration emphasizes that schools should be respected and protected as sanctuaries and zones of peace. It also calls for the engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for educational development. It underlines how conflicts, instability and natural disasters take their toll on education and are a major barrier towards attaining education for all. It thus argues for a need to sensitize and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance that help to prevent violence and conflict.

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<sup>18</sup> The concept of culture of violence and its antidote a culture of peace was first conceptualized by Peruvian peace researcher Felipe Mc Gregor. The concept inspired UNESCO's Culture of Peace program undertaken in 1993.

<sup>19</sup>UN Resolution 53/25, 'International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World', 2001-2010 ( November 1998); Available at :[www.un-documents.net](http://www.un-documents.net).

<sup>20</sup> UN Resolution 53/243 (A), 'Declaration on a Culture of Peace' ( October 1999); Available at: [www.un-documents.net](http://www.un-documents.net).

<sup>21</sup> A campaign to facilitate the introduction of peace and human rights education into all educational institutions was called for by the 'Hague Appeal' for Peace Civil Society Conference in May 1999. An initiative of individual educators and education NGOs committed to peace, it is conducted through a global network of education associations, and regional, national and local task forces of citizens and educators who will lobby and inform ministries of education and teacher education institutions about the UNESCO Framework and the multiplicities of methods and materials that now exist to practice peace education in all learning environments. The goal of campaign is to assure that all educational systems throughout the world will educate for a culture of peace.

<sup>22</sup>UN Resolution 44/25, ' Convention on the Rights of the Child' ( November 1989) Available at : [www.un.org](http://www.un.org).

<sup>23</sup> The World Education Forum (26-28 April 2000, Dakar) adopted the Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments. Available at :[www.unesdoc.unesco.org](http://www.unesdoc.unesco.org).



The above paradigms of education in the direction of peace can be classified into two categories based on the content, goals and values: Education *for* Peace and Education *about* Peace. Thus the critical question for exploration is what is Education *for* Peace and Education *about* Peace?

Betty Reardon asserts Education *for* Peace is 'education to create some of the preconditions for the achievement of peace.'<sup>24</sup> Education *for* Peace is primarily concerned with knowledge and skills related to requirements of and obstacles to achievement of Peace.<sup>25</sup> Multiculturalism, environmental and international education are important components of Education *for* Peace.<sup>26</sup> The major educational goal of global or international education is imparting knowledge and skills about the international system and global issues. The apparent assumption underlying this goal is that well informed public is essential to citizens calling for and supporting policies which are more likely to lead to Peace.

Multicultural education even when not self consciously practiced as Education *for* Peace makes a significant contribution to the goal. The fundamental objectives are detailed knowledge of one or more cultures besides one's own as a means to comprehend the various ways of life, respect for the integrity of other cultures and an appreciation of the positive potential of cultural diversity. Multicultural Education is widely practiced in American and European schools and to some extent is being introduced in other areas experiencing ethnic tensions and conflicts. It is a popular approach with schools around the world, such as UNESCO associated schools.

Environmental education can be considered an approach to Education *for* Peace when it argues the preservation of environment to be an essential prerequisite to all human endeavours, including the achievement of Peace.<sup>27</sup>

Education *about* Peace is education for the development and practice of institutions and processes that comprise a peaceful social order. These approaches which include creative

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<sup>24</sup> Betty A. Reardon, "Peace Education: A Review and Projection," in Bob Moon, Sally Brown and Miriam Ben Peretz, eds., *International Companion to Education*. (New York, Routledge, 2000).

<sup>25</sup> International Education and the term Education for International Understanding had currency in the first three decades following World War II. This no longer has the same currency now, and the term "Global Education" which evolved from these approaches is more widely used.

<sup>26</sup> For an in depth analysis of Multicultural, environmental and international education see: Betty Reardon, *Educating for Global Responsibility: Teacher-designed Curricula for Peace Education, K-12*. (New York: Teachers College Press, 1988); Betty Reardon, *Comprehensive Peace Education: Educating for Global Responsibility*. (New York: Teachers College Press.,1988); Betty Reardon, "Peace Education: A Review and Projection," in Bob Moon, Sally Brown and Miriam Ben Peretz, eds., *International Companion to Education*. (New York: Routledge,2000).

<sup>27</sup> Among those who are interlinking environment with peace education are the Finnish educator Riitta Wahlström, "Promoting Commitment to Peace and Environmental Responsibility," *Peace, Environment and Education*, Vol. 3, no. 1, 1992, and the Swedish educational researcher Åke Bjerstedt. Another stream that informs this school of thought is developed by Edmund O'Sullivan. He stresses the need to contextualize peace and peace education in a larger framework that is linked to sustainability and well being of the whole earth. For an in depth analysis see Edmund O'Sullivan, *Transformative Learning: Educational Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*.(New York: Zed Books,1999).

or constructive conflict resolution training; human rights education; and peace studies, which as practiced in elementary and secondary schools is generally designated as ‘peace education’. Most of the subject matter, peace education transmits is derived from the field of peace research, which like conflict resolution emerged in the 1950’s out of the work of individual researchers. International Peace Research Association established in 1964, was one of the early establishments that contributed to the development of the field. At present three components can be identified in Education *about* Peace, namely human rights education, conflict resolution and traditional peace education. These three approaches are primarily concerned with avoiding, reducing and eliminating violence.

Given the distinction between Education *for* Peace and Education *about* Peace from a broadly western perspective, it is now important to bring into the focus the Education *for* Peace paradigm in India. This is also an attempt to specifically locate the content, goals and value of Education *for* Peace in India.

### Education for Peace in India

The National Curriculum Framework formulated by the National Council of Educational Research and Training asserts that education must be able to promote values that foster peace, humanness and tolerance in a multicultural society.<sup>28</sup> The position paper on Education *for* Peace of the National Curriculum Framework is a critical lens for this purpose in India.

The paper provides insights on the ‘what’ of Education *for* Peace paradigm in India. It clearly emphasizes the need for ‘Peace as an integrative perspective for the school curriculum.’<sup>29</sup> Based on the earlier classification this approach clearly falls under the Education *for* Peace paradigm, draws substantially from the ideals and values enshrined in the Indian Constitution and highlights personality development and citizenship education as key goals of Education *for* Peace. However, it has consciously eschewed any increase in the curriculum load for the students, and has therefore introduced peace orientation, peace values and skills as the basis of *all* knowledge instead of adding separate curriculum on peace.

In this context, the National Focus Group on Education *for* Peace<sup>30</sup> states that ‘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.’ Krishna Kumar<sup>31</sup> states, “The Education for peace, focus group made a very major decision and that decision was that it will not recommend a separate subject called Peace Education at any level in school education. They thought that if a separate subject is recommended, the subject will become like any other subject. And then Education *for* Peace will cease to be a philosophical underpinning of all knowledge, so the group recommends that knowledge in every area of the curriculum should be infused with values that are

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<sup>28</sup> Available at: [www.ncert.nic.in](http://www.ncert.nic.in).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*, 31.

<sup>31</sup> Interview with author, New Delhi, March 4, 2008.



consistent with peace.” The National Focus Group emphasizes that Education *for* peace in India calls for a significant reduction, not an increase in curriculum load. The group examines the major issues and concerns that an effective implementation of Education *for* Peace needs to address. They include: teacher education, textbook writing, school setting, evaluation, media literacy, parent–teacher partnership and the need to attend to the practical implications of integration as the preferred strategy for implementing Education *for* Peace.

A close examination of this Education *for* Peace approach brings to the fore the fact that it recognizes the need to address not just direct or visible violence but also structural violence and thus emphasizes building just peace, which is marked by goals of social justice, secularism, tolerance, democratic participation, human needs and human rights which are also highlighted in the Indian Constitution. However, the approach as delineated in the position paper is based on more comprehensive, holistic and developmental understanding of peace, which though is essential, is not complete in itself. While an overarching ‘integrative’ approach is essential for the purpose of meaning making in the educational endeavour, but what is also needed is a need to recognize that Education *for* Peace, would operate differently in varied contexts within India. To take the argument a little further, while there is a universal character to the “Why” of Education *for* Peace in India in the context of issues like secularism, minority rights, gender and caste discrimination all examples of structural violence, yet there are also contexts in India, which are or have been marked by direct and visible violence. Such contexts are marked by collective memories of conflict, traumatic memories of pain, continuous humiliation, discrimination and dehumanization (For example, Gujarat post 2002 riots, Kashmir and North East).<sup>32</sup> Therefore there is a need to recognise that while the National Curriculum Framework and the position paper on Education *for* Peace are landmark blueprints for the implementation of Education *for* Peace paradigm in India, the daunting challenge ahead is to recognize the specific needs of each context within India. Nevertheless it must be acknowledged that education as a tool *for* Peace building is

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<sup>32</sup> An examination of Education for Peace initiatives by Samerth an NGO working in Ahmedabad, Gujarat brings to focus some of the critical dilemma’s that Education for Peace intervention faces in a context which is largely divided along religious lines and is marked by traumatic memories of pain, humiliation, discrimination and dehumanization of the minority community. The school curricula, textbooks and media here play a critical role in shaping of collective narratives which exacerbates tensions between the two communities.

Samerth envisions promoting secular and rationalist education through executing peace education modules in schools with a long-term goal to integrate such modules in the school curriculum. However the challenges are manifold for this peace approach.

During her interactions with the author Gazala Paul provided insights into some of these challenges. She noted that firstly; it was difficult for Samerth to find an entry point into the schools. Secondly, for most State-controlled schools, the content of the module on Education for Peace had to be so designed that it didn’t appear that the organization was directly engaging with the sensitive issue of communalism. Thirdly, and most importantly since the memories of pain, humiliation, discrimination and dehumanization were fresh in the minds of children what the traditional peace education modules sought to do was insufficient. Since the children here were in many instances direct ‘victims’ of violence the need for reconciliation was vital. Thus in divided contexts which are marked by memories of recent violence the ‘needs’ would be different and thus the need for ‘context specific spaces’ within the broader paradigm of Education for Peace in India.

still in its fledging stages and it is too early to make a definitive comment about the efficacy of the NCF approach.

### **‘Why’ Education *for* Peace in India?**

India today, faces critical questions on issues of secularism, minority rights, gender discrimination along with a process of dehumanization and ‘othering’ on the basis of caste/religion/ethnicity/gender. Institutions and particularly schools to a great extent shape the thinking and behaviour of young people about the ‘others’. The content of education influences both social attitudes and perceptions of what constitutes knowledge among the youth. In fact it is argued that the equality principle in democracy must extend to education. In quantitative terms this means the right of every Indian child to primary and secondary education. In qualitative terms, wedded to the equality principle is the need for the democratization of content and pedagogy of school education.

However, both the content and the process of teaching-learning in schools have witnessed systematic intrusions of communal prejudices and gender biases. There has been the inculcation of perceptions of ‘difference’ across communities, and even distortion of facts, especially in history and social science texts.

Over the years, many of our history and social science texts, more and more, emphasize a prejudicial understanding and rendering of history that is certainly not borne out by historical facts.<sup>33</sup> Hate language, hate politics, prejudice and division have been unfortunately guiding principles of many textbook boards across the country.

Through hate writing and the distorted teaching of history, many of these institutions have generated deep rooted prejudices about ‘other’ communities. For example, in Gujarat, some state run textbooks contain material that exacerbates tension between Hindus and Muslims.<sup>34</sup> Efforts in the direction of Education *for* Peace would fundamentally help address the much challenged goals of secularism, citizenship, tolerance and democracy in the contemporary era of growth and consumerism.

Krishna Kumar also in some of his writings has raised important questions on ‘how far education in India has served the secular creed and why it could not prevent the spread of communal ideas’. In examining India’s education policy, from a theoretical point of view, Kumar examines the relationship between child’s learning at home and at school. Applying various models of this home-school binary to the Indian scene, he sees the ambivalent role of education in serving the state in disseminating the message of secularism.<sup>35</sup> Krishna Kumar argues that though this has been achieved to some degree,

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<sup>33</sup> The Report “The Constitution Mandate and Education” was presented to the CABE sub-Committee on “Regulatory Mechanisms for Textbooks and Parallel Textbooks Taught in Schools Outside the Government System” (April 6-7; 2005). It is edited and produced by KHOJ for a plural India Programme, Sabrang, Mumbai. And is available at: <http://www.sabrang.com/khoj/CABEReport.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Krishna Kumar, “Education and Culture: India’s quest for a secular policy,” in Krishna Kumar and Jaochin Oesterheld, (ed.), *Education and Social Change in South Asia*, (Hyderabad: Orient Longman 2007).

this process, owing to certain limitations of the system of education (professionally weak teachers, dominance of prescribed textbooks and overarching importance of annual examinations), has separated the orbit of home and school. And thus the process did not combat the ideas and values opposed to the creed of secularism.<sup>36</sup>

Sam Pitroda, Chairman of The Knowledge Commission, asserts, “Curriculum reform remains a critically important issue in almost all schools. School education must be made more relevant to the lives of children. There is need to move away from rote-learning to understanding concepts, developing good comprehension and communication skills and learning how to access knowledge independently.”<sup>37</sup>

The need, therefore, is to integrate concepts of Education ‘for’ and ‘about’ Peace both at the level of design and implementation. Education *for* Peace explores multi disciplinary and developmental approaches to address violence in all its varied forms. Therefore, approaches to peace education (including both *for* and *about*) are contextual and situation dependent. They are designed towards developing peace related *capacities* and development of *peace making skills* and intentionally directed towards ‘transformative learning’. Therefore at the level of design firstly, there is need to direct attention to curriculum reform, secondly, examine the process and content of textbook writing and thirdly, facilitate pedagogical innovations in the teaching-learning process. Integrating the goals of Education *for* peace in school system and teacher-training programs would help find a proper pedagogical response to the problem of dealing with the issue of religion and culture at school, while taking into consideration the extremely complex nature of Indian society. Kumar makes an argument in favour of integrating peace education progressively in the existing curriculum.

Further, Education *for* Peace also makes education more relevant to the lives of children and thus contributes to constructive social change. It challenges, what can be called ‘tyranny of rote memorization’. The Yashpal Committee Report highlights, “Majority of our school going children view learning at school as a boring, even unpleasant and bitter experience.”<sup>38</sup> Yashpal asserts, ‘a lot is taught but little is learnt’.<sup>39</sup> Education *for* Peace provides a valuable link to child’s experience at home and community to what the child learns at school and thus helps foreground the process of constructive meaning making. This process of meaning making is not just influenced by the content of the defined curriculum but also by the learning process, school and family spaces. Thus an integrative approach to Education *for* Peace facilitates a space for a mutual learning community that treads on the path of dialogical exploration which is ‘child centered’ and ‘child inspired’ and provides space for critical thinking, action and reflection.

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<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Sam Pitroda, Chairman, The Knowledge Commission’s statement to the Prime Minister (3rd February 2008). The Knowledge Commission’s Recommendation on School Education are available at <http://www.knowledgecommission.gov.in/recommendations/school2.asp>

<sup>38</sup> A National Advisory Committee was set up by the Government in March 1992 under the chairmanship of Prof. Yash Pal, former Chairman of the University Grants Commission to suggest ways and means to reduce academic burden on school students. The Yashpal Committee Report is available at <http://www.education.nic.in/cd50years/r/2R/I3/2RI30201.htm>

<sup>39</sup> *ibid*

Krishna Kumar brings in a powerful reflection by Yashpal, “All that if we need to give in Education is a taste of what it means to learn, this taste we will never forget.”<sup>40</sup> Krishna Kumar asserts the need to create what he calls, “Sanskar of Learning”, which is also linked to the process of “what it means *not just to know* but what it *means to know* it”.<sup>41</sup>

Krishna Kumar further states, “The National Curriculum framework exercise was concerned about the ‘sense of hollowness’, which a lot of young people today find in our institutional life. They find nobody cares for them, the learning game is essentially a marks-examination game and the success game is essentially a game which is being played to eliminate a lot of people from the race. Thus students don’t associate purposiveness and integrity to education....So when it comes to peace, gaining peace either within oneself is the first condition to gain peace between people or relationships. And if this is so, then gaining peace is virtually an impossible thing today, if the child doesn’t see ‘meaning’ in education. And therefore, Education *for* Peace would give a purpose and meaning to education.”<sup>42</sup>

Former Chief of Navy turned nuclear disarmament campaigner, Admiral Ramadas along with peace activists Praful Bidwai, Anil Chaudhary, Achin Vanaik, and Karamat Ali (of Pakistan) have made a clarion call for including peace education in school syllabus. Admiral Ramdas states, “In our school days we barely learnt anything about the heavy costs of war and impact of weapons of mass destruction. But at least the new generation should learn the lessons for lasting peace.”<sup>43</sup>

Peace education is now a part of the teacher-training programme of the National Council of Educational Training and Research (NCERT), which formulates school curricula and teacher-training programmes in India. Daya Pant, the programme coordinator, states, “Peace is the most vital thing in human life. It is the need of the hour to sow the seeds of peace among students. Teachers under the peace education programme are taught the nitty-gritty of inculcating peace among students in a holistic manner.”<sup>44</sup>

The following section attempts to discuss the ‘How’ of Education *for* Peace. This is essential, as it builds a symbiotic argument that building peace through education is also a dynamic and dialogical process and thus the pedagogy or the ‘how’ is as important as the “what” of Education *for* Peace. The attempt is to delineate a possible pedagogical tool kit which could facilitate the process of the ‘How’ of Education *for* Peace paradigm in India. Given the present state of school education (at least in majority of schools), this approach would necessitate paradigmatic shift from the prescriptive/banking model of education to an elicitive one.

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<sup>40</sup> In an interview with author, New Delhi, March 4, 2008.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> The Times of India (Nagpur, Feb 3, 2008)

Available at: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/rssarticleshow/msid-2752047,prtpage-1.cms>

<sup>44</sup> Available at : <http://news.in.msn.com/national/article.aspx?cp-documentid=1215653>

## The “How” of Education *for* Peace: Pedagogical Tool Kit

Paulo Freire, one of the pioneers of critical pedagogy writes, “Human Activity consists of action and reflection: It is transformation of the world...And as praxis it requires theory to illuminate it. Human activity is theory and practice; it is reflection and action. It cannot be reduced to either verbalism or activism”.<sup>45</sup> The assertion though revolutionary for a time when prescriptive teaching- learning was the norm is really the essence of theory and praxis of Pedagogy for Peace. Drawing from the writings of Freire and based on contemporary experience, one would argue that education in India is based more on prescription and transfer of knowledge than on conscientization and participation.<sup>46</sup> This greatly inhibits the transformative power of education. The ‘prescriptive/banking’ model understands the ‘teacher/trainer’ as the expert. The learning process is built around his or her expertise, knowledge and experience of the subject. Learning and mastering the curriculum is the key goal of the event.

The pedagogical framework is built around cognitive descriptions of subjects/events/models/theories presented through readings lectures and in occasional cases visual graphics. The pedagogical methods focus on the primary role of the ‘teacher’ and the teaching learning process focuses on students mastering the contents through cognitive understanding of the subject. In this context, perceptions, experiences, cultural and ideological underpinnings of the process are rarely made explicit.

The prescriptive model as Lederach says, works on the premise of transferability and universality.<sup>47</sup> In fact what Betty Reardon identifies as seven negative R’s: Resignation, Repression, Reduction, Rejection, Redress, Retribution and Reservations, which are major obstacles to the transformative process sought by Education *for* Peace,<sup>48</sup> are implicit in the pedagogical framework in the Indian classroom; a framework largely dominated by the banking/prescriptive approach to learning. One could take it a step further and argue that this also inhibits the process of ‘meaning making’ and development of critical consciousness, which is an essential goal of Education *for* peace and social change.

The pedagogy for peace faces two critical challenges. Firstly, the process and tools of pedagogy must understand how people learn and how learning is transferred to real life application. Secondly, provide training content and structure that fosters both personal and systemic change.

Therefore, firstly, a pedagogical tool kit for teaching *for* peace should not merely be an expansion of the field or transfer of techniques but should be able to provide a context for

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<sup>45</sup> Friere argues that conscientization as a process seeks to foster in students a critical awareness of the social and political conditions existing in their societies and shaping their lives, and to help them discover their own capacities to re-create alternative conditions. Paulo Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. (New York: Herder & Herder,1973).

<sup>47</sup> John Paul Lederach, *Preparing for Peace*. (Syracuse University Press, Syracuse: New York,1995).

<sup>48</sup> Betty Reardon, *Educating for Global Responsibility: Teacher-designed Curricula for Peace Education*, K-12. ( New York: Teachers College Press,1988).



dialogical engagement with a larger purpose of developing critical consciousness. The teaching-training therefore will need to transcend the boundaries created by the classroom. The teaching-learning will have to become a process of action-reflection, in which people are invited to participate actively in the development and application of Peacebuilding strategies and practices.<sup>49</sup> The teaching/training in order to prepare the teachers/trainers for peace would be a dance of inductive and deductive forms of learning.

Secondly, the task of the pedagogical process is to create a space for transformation at personal, relational, cultural and structural levels. The essence of the process will be its ability to catalyze change.<sup>50</sup> Thirdly, promoting goals of justice, empowerment and social justice through the process of education for peace requires that a pedagogical framework encourages critical and reflective thinking; provide space for dialogical engagement with the culture, context and achieve the ultimate values and goals.

Fourthly, the framework recognizes the importance of 'relationships' as a form of social capital. A pedagogical process therefore should not annul the process of creativity and critical consciousness that play a critical role in giving meaning to human relationships and consequently to education itself.<sup>51</sup>

It is important to reiterate that values, skills and analytical tools and processes of Education *for* peace should draw from diverse cultural settings. There is a two-fold need to recognize participants as 'resources' who bring to the classroom their knowledge based on experience and learning and secondly to design learner centred process that not just teaches 'how' to integrate goals of Peace Education but also more importantly 'how' to integrate these goals in their own cultural setting. To put it pithily in Lederach's words, "It is not just important to teach people how to fish, but more importantly how to fish in your own pond."

### **Learner 'Centred' Pedagogical Tool Kit**

A 'Learner centred' pedagogical tool kit is an attempt to identify some basic tools based on dialogical methods that steer away from traditional form of educating learners that 'deposit' information into them. The pedagogical tool kit is an effort to help learners become full participants in their own education-liberatory education that encompasses problem posing, building of a critical consciousness of questioning the role of the

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<sup>49</sup> John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1997).

<sup>50</sup> The central argument here is that knowledge is no longer abstract and decontextualized, but is grounded in students' own lived reality and leads to an unveiling of the social, political, and economic contradictions emerging in their experience of the world. The pedagogical process is seen as a necessary foundation for this process of dialogical construction of knowledge.

<sup>51</sup> Through their actions, educators consciously or unwittingly contribute either to humanization or dehumanization (Freire, 1998). A pedagogy that dehumanizes is one that immobilizes students, failing to acknowledge them as historical beings with a capacity to think and act and thereby reduce them to things rather than human beings. Paulo Freire "Cultural action and conscientization" *Harvard Educational Review* 68 (1998)

teacher/student and changing education from a process of domestication to one of empowerment.

### **Tool: 1** **The Problem Tree**

1. Listening Project: Identify the problems in the teaching learning process that are against the culture of peace.
2. Identify some of the problems that you are facing as Teacher Educator/Teacher/Learner.
3. Describe the problems and challenges as you see them and brainstorm on ideas and resources that you might need to solve the problems or meet the challenges

### **Tool: 2** **Imaging the future**

Fred Polak, a Dutch historian in his writings on 'positive images', contends that history has shown positive images of the future, which has empowered creative action for social change. Action on a Culture of Peace will be the fruit of human imagination and creativity. Teachers can cultivate imagination and creativity. One such effective way is described in the writings of Elise Boulding.<sup>52</sup>

### **Tool: 3** **Building Capacities for Peace**

Two key areas would be elaborated upon in this section. Firstly, 'what' are the relevant 'capacities, values, skills and attitudes' that serve the long term goal of commitment to peace? Secondly, 'how' does the teacher-educator/teacher/trainer facilitate the building of these capacities, skills, values and attitudes?

#### **Tool 3.1**

#### **What are the relevant 'capacities, values, skills and attitudes' that serve the long term goal of commitment to peace?**

Firstly, tolerance of differences is a key capacity for peace. UNESCO<sup>53</sup> recognizes tolerance as a 'threshold capacity' or value which opens the way to the development of higher order capacities leading to the more fully complementary and mutually enhancing relationships of a truly peaceful community. Secondly, appreciation of and ability to view human diversity in terms of complementarity is important. Reflection on the questions of human universality and cultural diversity can help students understand that cultures are constructed, not given and that they do change and evolve in time and space. Thirdly, reflective capacities are essential to all forms of learning and authentic inquiry into all issues studied in schools. Fourthly, schools across the world have been charged

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<sup>52</sup> Elise Boulding, *The Underside of History: A View of Women through Time*. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1976).

<sup>53</sup> Betty Reardon, *Tolerance: The Threshold of Peace*. (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 1997).

with the responsibility of educating for ‘citizenship’, which is also the basic component for the development of political capacities of the learner. The rationale for citizenship education for a culture of peace is located in the need for developing capacities for informed and responsible political action.

The National Curriculum Framework 2005 also recognizes the intrinsic linkage between citizenship, socialism, secularism, national integration and democracy and the goals of Education *for* Peace. Fifthly, building skills and capacity for non violent conflict resolution are an essential component of education for a culture of peace.

### Tool 3.2

#### How does the teacher-educator/teacher/trainer facilitate the building of these capacities, skills, values and attitudes?

- **Developing mutually learning communities:** Learning communities are an effective route to enhance the experience of learning itself. The teacher as the learner is also the teacher as the inquirer, one who has the capacity to pose instructive questions and to plan inquiries into the conditions that impede and enhance possibilities for achieving a culture of peace.

- **Reflections/Open Questions**

When the teacher asks open questions, what she/he demonstrates is respect for the participants and honoring them as subjects of their own learning. This allows the learner to explore the meaning of what has been said and grasp its implications for his/her life.

An open question is a question without a set ‘correct’ answer. It is a question that invites the participants to draw upon their own life experiences and creativity. It invites dialogue. Open questions engage participants by requiring reflection and critical thinking. Examples of open questions include: “Why do you say that?”, “What does that mean to you?”, “How did you arrive at that decision?”, “And tell me about that.” When Teacher/trainer use materials or questions that invite participants to describe, analyse, apply and implement new learning, they engage participants in praxis. Open questions encourage reflection about experiences which leads to theory becoming personalized and useful to learners.

- **Recognize Learners as Decision Makers:**<sup>54</sup> Adults are required by daily life to be decision makers and they generally expect to be treated as such. Teachers should resist treating ‘learners’ as objects. This will ensure that learners are treated as subjects, which means they will be honored for their experience and

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<sup>54</sup> An understanding of the process of ‘learner’ centered trainings and designs owes a great deal to author’s engagement with Robb Davis, who teaches the course on ‘Designing Learner Centered Training for Conflict Transformation at Eastern Mennonite University, Virginia, USA(2006)

their ability to make decisions. Treating participants of a learning session as subjects of their own learning as decision makers is a key principle in learning. The learning is in doing and in deciding. Through the process of Dialogue Education, participants have many opportunities to teach others. Recognize the resources that are being brought to the classroom. An important assertion in the context is “People are resources, not recipients.” An imperative need in the process of training is to recognize how ‘Adults’ learn. Critical questions for the process are what characteristics during the learning event would you add that strengthen engagement with goals of Education *for* Peace? Are there any key distinctions between engagement and participation?

- **Listening:** Reflective listening and participatory hearing. Scholars and practitioners argue that when emphasis is on understanding before responding and on clarifying before challenging, all exchanges are more productive and relationships are mutually enhancing.

#### **Tool: 4**

### **Creative Strokes in the Pedagogical Design**

#### **4.1 Drumming Circle for Peace**

The Drumming Circle for Peace is a powerful pedagogical practice that helps in essence, to expand and put into action, conscious awareness of creating peaceful, harmonious, non-violent relations with others, which is key objective of Education *for* Peace. Fundamentally, the ‘Drumming Circle for Peace’ is a strategy using the concept of the circle to link people together to engender unity, encourage interpersonal relations, increase communication and foster harmonious contact between participants. Within this safe environment, this strategy makes the difference between fortuitous relating and consciously created relating. The concept of the circle symbolizes a non-linear connecting of elements that has no beginning or ending. It evokes creativity and a flow of physical movement of the participants in structured or improvisational actions. The energy generated from person-to-person and from drum-to-drum resonates individually and collectively.<sup>55</sup>

#### **4.2 Theatre of the Oppressed**

The Theatre of the Oppressed, established in the early 1970s by Brazilian Director and political activist, Augusto Boal, is a form of popular theatre, of, by, and for people engaged in the struggle for liberation. Accordingly, the ‘Theatre of the Oppressed’, is a participatory theatre that fosters democratic and co-operative forms of interaction among participants.

‘Theatre of the Oppressed’ techniques are practical pedagogical tools that can be integrated into the framework of Education *for* Peace. They are easy to learn and complement existing course material. The techniques directly address the problem of ‘learners’ motivation, passivity and engagement. By enabling students to create parallel

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<sup>55</sup> Edith Hillman Boxill & Cella Schieffelin Roberts “Drumming Circle for Peace” (7th March, 2003). Available at : [http://www.voices.no/discussions/discm19\\_01.html](http://www.voices.no/discussions/discm19_01.html)

physical and verbal texts based on their own experience, the techniques both validate students' lives and skills and help create new structures of interaction between the students, between the students and the teacher, and also the students and the course texts.

With its emphasis on physical dialogue, Image Theatre can be advantageously integrated into the existing curriculum, for example, to explore problems related to external or internalized forms of oppression, power relations, prejudices and stereotypes. The non-verbal imagery stimulates individual expression even among the most timid, and gives rise to perspectives that can greatly enrich writing, language, literature and history courses. Due to the fact that the images evoke subconscious thought processes, they have proven especially useful in initiating insightful discussions on complex topics such as religion, caste, gender, identity and prejudices. Indeed, living body imagery can function as a powerful tool for in-depth critical analysis across the curriculum.

### **4.3 Role Plays**

Role plays and simulations are another methodology that can be a part of a pedagogical toolkit for peace. They can be used to practice a given skill, learn an overall process or work on specific kind of situations teachers may face in the classroom. Role plays can also be used in conflict resolution and problem solving

### **Critical Reflections**

On a reflective note, there are some critical questions around the broader paradigm of Education *for* Peace that still remain unaddressed or are only marginally addressed. Firstly, while the Education *for* Peace paradigm provides an overarching concept under which many varied topics and approaches that comprise the field can be integrated, and more easily comprehended as multiple components of a single field of education, it also brings to fore the point of conceptual ambiguity in the field. There is paucity of research and evaluation of Education *for* Peace programs in India. Conceptually, the Education *for* Peace paradigm in India largely draws from National Curriculum Framework and the position paper on Education for Peace, which argues for an 'integrative' approach for the purposes of implementation of Education *for* Peace at school level. However, a fundamental contention is that while an overarching 'integrative' approach is essential for the purpose of meaning making in our education endeavour but what is also needed is a recognition that Education *for* Peace, would operate differently in contexts that are marked by collective memories of conflict, traumatic memories of pain, humiliation, discrimination and dehumanization. Thus in divided contexts which are marked by memories of recent violence the 'needs' would be different and thus the need for 'context specific spaces' within the broader paradigm of Education for Peace in India. This argument also links to the proposition that the 'How' is as important as the 'What' of Education *for* Peace as the pedagogical frame can be a catalyst for change. It can play an important role in promoting goals of justice and empowerment. Further research in the field is required to understand and analyze these challenges and it is hoped that writing on Education *for* peace in India will be able to address not only these challenges but the ones that arise in future.



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