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The Interrelationship and Importance of Peace Education, Moral Education, and Value Education in Contemporary Society

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Abstract

In contemporary society, rapid globalization, technological advancement, and socio-political conflicts have created a need to strengthen the ethical and humanitarian foundations of education. Peace education, moral education, and value education are three interconnected pedagogical domains that aim to nurture responsible, empathetic, and ethically conscious citizens. Peace education emphasizes conflict resolution, harmony, and non-violence; moral education cultivates ethical reasoning and integrity; and value education instills respect, tolerance, and compassion. Their interrelationship lies in their shared goal of human development and social harmony, where peace acts as the outcome, morality as the guiding principle, and values as the foundation. This paper explores their convergence, highlighting their importance in shaping contemporary education systems, reducing violence, fostering intercultural understanding, and ensuring sustainable societal development.

Keywords- Moral education, peace education, value education, vedic period, Buddhist era, moral reasoning, moral conscience

Introduction

In present society, we have seen a rapid change in the context of education. Nowadays in our society education has become a merit base. Now we have almost forgotten the true and wide meaning of education which means overall development of students including their moral and spiritual development as well.

There are riots, emotional stress and religious hatred among the members of our contemporary society. It is easily evident from a worldly perspective, nowadays there are many wars going on in our world. Community based riots could be easily seen in almost every country, religious intolerance is increasing rapidly and all of this is happening in educated society. We can not say that people are illiterate, perhaps we have a great number of graduates and post graduates in our society. Still these problems are increasing. It clearly indicates that there is a clear lack of morals, values and peace among our societies. This paper reflects light on the importance of peace, value and moral education, their interconnectedness and their importance in the contemporary



world.

Research questions

1. What is the conceptual relationship between peace education, moral education, and value education in contemporary society?
2. How do these three domains complement one another in addressing present-day social, cultural, and ethical challenges?
3. What role can educational institutions play in integrating peace, moral, and value education into their curricula?
4. How does the convergence of these educational approaches contribute to sustainable development, tolerance, and conflict resolution?
5. What pedagogical strategies are most effective for fostering peace, morality, and values among learners

Research objectives

1. To analyze the theoretical foundations of peace education, moral education, and value education.
2. To examine the interrelationship between these three approaches in the context of contemporary global challenges.
3. To highlight the role of educational institutions in promoting ethical citizenship and social harmony.
4. To assess the importance of integrating peace, moral, and value education in fostering intercultural understanding and conflict resolution.
5. To propose strategies for effectively embedding these approaches into modern teaching and learning practices.

Moral education

Moral education focuses on teaching individuals the difference between right and wrong and how to behave respectfully and honestly. It aims to develop character and good behaviour that align with societal principles. It deals with our moral reasoning to understand and differentiate between what to do and what not to do as per societal rules and principles. Psychologists like Lawrence Kohlberg (1981) have significantly influenced moral education by dividing its stages among individuals. He clearly stated how moral reasoning and engineering develops among individuals. It clearly states that moral starts to develop from a very young age and developed till the end of the life. Moral education is particularly important in today's society, where ethical lapses could be easily seen among politics, business and daily life. School must not be seen only as the epicenter of only academic growth but as place to develop morals among the student such as honesty, empathy, justice and respect, where teachers should be trained to model ethical behaviour poster moral reasoning among peoples and address ethical dilemmas in the classrooms.

Value education

The etymological meaning of value is utility, desirability , significance. Generally, the ideals to which weightage is given in a society and by which the behaviour of the persons of the society is governed and called the values of the society. Value education is that education which helps a person to have proper and moral resolve and shapes his conduct and behaviour as based on values. The process of moral and spiritual development proceeds forward with the help of value education. It helps in character building and personality development.

An individual learns values in his/her character by participating in society and family considerations. There are different values in different cultures, religions and traditions which are

right or wrong according to their beliefs. So the universal values also could be considered as democratic values should be imported in children right from the early age which are listed here: Honesty, truthfulness, dutifulness, fraternity, love sympathy, cooperation and coexistence. These values could be considered as social, democratic and universal as well. A value based approach to education enriches the entire educational experience and contributes to building more compassionate and inclusive societies.

Peace education

Peace is the most critical and important phenomena for the development of family, society and community as well. So peace education should infuse love and corporation among people in place of hatred and enmity. The first goal of this education is to acquaint the people with the evil consequences of the war. It's second goal is to protect the people from the devastation of the war. The third goal is to prevent the next World war and The fourth goal is to give peace education for all of these. According to UNESCO (1981) peace education is essential in promoting a culture of peace, non violence and social justice. it involves teaching students how to manage conflict constructively, respect human rights, embrace diversity and uphold democratic values.

It could be both preventive and transformative. It is transformative because we can solve existing conflicts and issues through peace education and it is preventive because we can prevent the upcoming concrete issues concerning the different societies and different countries and different cultures. It means peace education could be beneficial for both prevention and transformation of issues, conflicts and concerns which are affecting our society in a great measure.

Peace, Moral, and Value Education in the Vedic Era

Introduction

The Vedic era, roughly dated between 1500 BCE to 500 BCE, is considered the foundational period of Indian civilization and education. The Vedas — Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda — were not only spiritual texts but also repositories of knowledge, ethics, and social harmony. Education during this time aimed at holistic development — integrating intellectual, physical, moral, and spiritual growth.

1. Concept of Education in the Vedic Era

Education (Vidya) in the Vedic age was not confined to literacy or intellectual growth. It was considered a means to self-realization (Atma-Vidya). The primary goal was the development of character, discipline, righteousness (Dharma), and peace (Shanti).

The Guru-Shishya tradition was central, emphasizing respect, obedience, and humility.

Education was imparted orally in Gurukulas, where students lived simple and disciplined lives.

2. Peace Education in the Vedic Era

The Vedas and Upanishads stress peace — both internal and external — as the highest goal of human life. Shanti Pathas (Peace Chants) such as “Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti” reflect the aspiration for peace in body, mind, and society. Peace was seen as a product of harmony with nature, society, and the divine. The Atharvaveda particularly promotes the idea of peaceful coexistence, universal brotherhood, and non-violence. The Vedic philosophy of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” (the world is one family) symbolizes global peace and universal harmony.

Educational Implication:

Students were taught to cultivate calmness, tolerance, compassion, and cooperation — the



essential elements of peace education even in modern contexts.

3. Moral Education in the Vedic Era

Moral education (Naitik Shiksha) was deeply rooted in Dharma, or the principle of righteousness. The Rigveda emphasizes virtues like truth (Satya), self-control (Dama), and faith (Shraddha). The Upanishads highlight values such as honesty, humility, and service to others. The Taittiriya Upanishad includes the famous injunction:

“Speak the truth, practice righteousness, do not neglect self-study.”

The Guru served as the moral exemplar, and moral conduct was cultivated through imitation, reflection, and spiritual discipline.

Educational Implication:

Education aimed to build character, moral judgment, and a sense of duty toward family, community, and humanity.

4. Value Education in the Vedic Era

Value education was interwoven with all aspects of learning.

Core Vedic values included truth, non-violence, respect for elders, simplicity, gratitude, self-reliance, and devotion. Students were trained to follow “Satyam Vada, Dharmam Chara” (Speak truth, follow righteousness). The concept of Yajna (sacrifice) symbolized dedication to the welfare of others — fostering social and moral responsibility. Values were transmitted not only through religious instruction but through daily conduct, rituals, and community participation.

Educational Implication:

The aim was to create a balanced personality — intellectually strong, morally upright, and socially responsible.

Peace, Moral, and Value Education in the Buddhist Era

Introduction

The Buddhist era (6th century BCE onwards) marked a profound transformation in the Indian educational and philosophical system. Founded by Gautama Buddha, this period emphasized education as a means to attain inner peace, moral purification, and universal compassion. Unlike the ritual-based Vedic system, Buddhist education focused on ethical conduct, mindfulness, and social welfare. It aimed at developing a harmonious individual who contributes to peace within self and society.

1. Concept of Education in the Buddhist Era

Buddhist education was centered on the Threefold Training (Trisiksha):

1. Sila– Moral discipline
2. Samadhi– Mental concentration
3. Prajna– Wisdom or insight

Education was seen as a process of liberation from ignorance and suffering (Avidya and Dukkha). The monastic system (Viharas) served as both spiritual and academic centers, promoting learning, discipline, and service to humanity.

Purpose of education:

To achieve enlightenment (Nirvana) through self-awareness and moral living. To cultivate

compassion, understanding, and right conduct in everyday life.

2. Peace Education in the Buddhist Era

Peace lies at the heart of Buddhist philosophy. Buddha preached Ahimsa (non-violence) not only in action but also in thought and speech. The Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path guide individuals toward inner peace and the cessation of suffering. Right View, Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood are direct teachings on maintaining social and mental harmony. The ideal of “Metta” (loving-kindness) and “Karuna” (compassion) fostered universal peace and goodwill.

Educational Implication:

Learners were encouraged to practice tolerance, forgiveness, and empathy, which are essential for peaceful coexistence in society.

Buddhist education thus promoted conflict resolution through dialogue, self-control, and understanding, not aggression.

3. Moral Education in the Buddhist Era

Buddhist moral education was based on ethical living and moral self-discipline.

The Five Precepts (Panchsila) formed the foundation of moral conduct:

1. Not to kill (Ahimsa)
2. Not to steal
3. Not to commit sexual misconduct
4. Not to lie
5. Not to consume intoxicants

These precepts developed respect for life, honesty, self-restraint, and purity of conduct.

The Vinaya Pitaka (disciplinary code) guided the monks and students toward maintaining ethical behavior, modesty, and social order.

Educational Implication:

Moral education was experiential—students learned through practice, meditation, and example rather than through theory alone. The teacher (Bhikshu) served as a moral guide and role model for the pupils.

4. Value Education in the Buddhist Era

Value education in Buddhism emphasized the cultivation of inner virtues and universal human values rather than external rituals.

Key values promoted were:

- Compassion (Karuna) – empathy for all living beings
- Loving-kindness (Metta) – wishing happiness for others
- Equanimity (Upekkha) – emotional balance and self-control
- Selflessness (Anatta) – understanding that ego is the root of suffering
- Wisdom (Prajna) – discerning truth through reflection and mindfulness

The Buddhist system aimed to create a morally responsible and socially aware individual who contributes to the welfare of all beings (Bahujana Hitaya, Bahujana Sukhaya — “For the happiness and welfare of many”).

Educational Implication:



Through moral stories, meditation practices, and communal living, students imbibed ethical and social values naturally, leading to a peaceful and cooperative society.

Interrelationship between peace, moral and value education

Although distinct in focus, peace education value education and moral education are deeply interconnected and mutually reinforcing. As an integrated approach it could be much beneficial for the development of society, culture, community, country and world as well. Here are some points which highlights the importance of their inter relationship with each other:

- Focus on share goals
- Helps in development of culture
- Provides integrated approach
- Develops harmony in society
- Focus on holistic development
- Preventive measure against hatred
- Contributes in establishment of a progressive society

Importance in contemporary society

There is a lot of importance to all these types of education in our contemporary society. Right now all the countries of this world are somewhere facing hatred, communal conflicts among different groups and communities, gender based discrimination, wars and many other problems, which could be reduced by an integrated approach of peace, value and moral education. Some of its importance are listed below :

- To develop responsible citizens
- To develop harmonious society
- To develop rightly process country
- To create harmony in world
- To prevent wars
- To stop gender based violence
- To foster right values among citizens
- To prepare relevant curriculum
- To end and prevent religious conflicts among different groups and communities
- To end gender based discrimination

Recommendations

1. Integrated curriculum - to inculcate values and morals in students and society we need to prepare an integrated curriculum comprising the essence of all three types of education. We need to prepare an integrated approach for that.
2. Training of Teachers - we need to provide the right kind of emotional values and training to our teachers so that they can impart it to our future students. Teachers are the sources to improve the functioning of our policies and system.
3. Pragmatic teaching methods - Activity based methods are the sources to impart right values. Students learn better with the hands on experience methods, they learn empathy and sympathy by participating in activities which involve cooperation and coordination.
4. Participation in community activities - We should encourage our students from time to time to participate in communal activities, it will help them to develop moral reasoning and conscience as well and it will help them to learn empathy which is really required in present society.
5. Parental participation - Parents are the first learning source of children, they start to develop their moral reasoning in their shadow, their impressions of life comes from there as well. So we need to

encourage parental participation in order to improve their point of view and it will directly help in improving the perception of children as well.

Conclusion

Peace education, moral education, and value education form a triad essential for building compassionate, ethical, and peaceful societies. In an era marked by conflict, intolerance, and ethical dilemmas, their integration into educational systems is not merely desirable but imperative. By nurturing holistic development, these approaches ensure not only academic success but also social justice, intercultural understanding, and sustainable peace for future generations.

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