



Role of Peace and Value Education for National Integration and Communal Harmony in India

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Abstract: National Integration and Communal Harmony are necessary also for the security and development of the nation. India is a very large country. We have the second largest population in the world and our land area is about the same size as Europe minus the former Soviet Union. About one thousand six hundred fifty-two languages and dialects are spoken in our country. From among these eighteen have been given special recognition by our Constitution as National languages of our country. In fact, national unity and integrity, i.e. national integration has been one of the most important priorities of our country. Peace and Value Education have the significant contribution to maintain national integration and communal harmony in the country. In this paper the role of value and peace education to maintain national integration and communal harmony is discussed in brief.

Introduction

National integration is essential for any nation with socio-cultural, religious, linguistic and geographical diversities. And for a country like ours, it is still more necessary. As we know, India is a very large country. We have the second largest population in the world. A unique feature of our country is that all the major religions of the world are practiced here such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism, and Zoroastrianism. There are more than one thousand languages that people of India speak. There are also great varieties in costume, food habits, and social customs. Geographically, our land is diverse and there are amazing differences in climate. Despite all these differences India is one political entity. We have to co-exist with each other peacefully, respect the culture and religion of our fellow Indians. This is possible only when national integration is realised in true sense of the term.

Communal Harmony is the most important pre-condition for feeling of Unity and National Integration in India. From time Immemorial, it has been seen that different races fought battles against each other on Indian soil and got themselves firmly entrenched, but India has assimilated them all into her blood. The conflicting cultures were at last modeled by this country to her own genesis and pattern. India has witnessed a great diversity of faith and religion from the earliest times, but this has not interfered with the peaceful pursuit of the ways of life of different sections. Christians and Jews who came to India in the first century of the Christian era found hospitable reception here. After several centuries, the Parsis and Muslims received equal reception. Ever since then, India has been marked by the prosperity of communities belonging to different religions.

It was this inherent unity and communal harmony which enabled India to fight against the British might as one man for



freedom. The Preamble to the Constitution described India as a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic and secures to all citizens liberty of thought, expression belief, faith and worship. Articles 25 to 30, in particular, guarantee to everyone the right of freedom of religion freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion.

Threats towards National Integration and Communal Harmony:

The cause of anxiety is the separatist tendency which tends to endanger the age-old communal harmony and unity of the country. The fissiparous tendencies like aggressive communalism, regionalism, linguism, religious bigotry and casteism are threatening the natural integration. Let us therefore, study the genesis and forms of operation of these tendencies, so that concrete steps may be taken to eliminate these trends from our society. Communalism's ugliest manifest is communal riots which occur in this country with a disconcerting frequency. Admittedly, there is no doubt that the communal question was nurtured and grew to menacing proportions with the politically motivated encouragement given by British rulers to certain communities. The expectations of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru did not come into reality. The spurt of communal riots in the post independence years is as a reminder of the harsh reality and proved that communalism has now deeper roots than before. Now, steps should therefore, be taken to strengthen the feeling of National Integration, Unity and Communal Harmony.

The danger of communalism can be averted if the self-defeating and suicidal

slogans like 'my state', my language', my caste' and after all 'my religion' are supreme, give way to the noble sentiment of India first and last and always. It will integrate our emotions and aspirations and ensure Communal Harmony and National integration of the country. Then the slogan 'unity in diversity' will be true and be our hopes and aspirations.

The youth is that demographic in India which is burgeoning rapidly. This demographic has a more modern outlook. It is more tech-savvy, rebellious, broad-minded, open to ideas and cultures other than the one it grew up in, more aware of world affairs, and more vocal in the socio-economic issues affecting India right now. They are the globe-trotters, the people making alternative career choices and breaking the glass ceiling. Youth in India is both a catalyzing and galvanizing factor in promoting harmony between different religions. It is this segment which will bring about change, long-term, in both attitudes and laws. The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow, and any change fostered in the large-scale psyche of a nation is largely led by its youth.

Role of Peace and Value Education

One of the biggest mobilizing factors is education. Today, the youth is no longer limiting itself to the medical and engineering professions. Now, there is more of an influx into other exciting disciplines like pharmacy, journalism, research, biotechnology, bioinformatics, event management, media, and mass communication etc. This foray into other professions is ensuring an opening up of minds and mentalities like never before. If the youth is empowered with a liberal mindset, it can lead the change which will prod people into overcoming their



differences and live as one community, irrespective of caste, creed, religion or ethnicity. education plays vital role in the man's behaviour. Education gives idea to live and how to communicate each other. It does not change the ideology that could make with once own view point. If education change once ideology then every educated people does not involve in any illegal sources. Today education gives not only language knowledge, but how to live in the society. Education implants values in people's life. People will learn to respect each other and may not hurt the sentiments of others even if don't like it. It enlightens with the fact that every religion says the GOD is great and non of the belief and its scriptures state to hurt anyone.

Value education is rooted in Indian philosophy and culture and ingrained in every tradition of Indian culture. Educational institutions play a significant role in the promotion of value. The Vedas and Upanishads form the source of inspiration for value education. In the Vedic period, In Ashram education, the Guru insists his sishya to follow certain values throughout his life. Socialist, Secular, Democratic, Justice, Liberty Equality, Fraternity, Dignity of the individuals and integrity of the nation are the ideal conditions in the Constitution. Our values in life must draw their inspiration from these ideals. University education commission 1948-49 mentioned the various aspects of morality as: loyalty, courage, discipline, self-sacrifice and spirituality. The Secondary Education Commission 1952-53 laid special emphasis on the following values in the formation of character of the students: Efficiency Good Temper Cooperation Integrity Discipline

In view of promoting national integration in November 1960, the Education Ministers of all the States met to consider this matter. The problem of National Integration was considered in all its gravity. It was then decided that a committee be constituted under the leadership of Dr. Sampurnananda for promoting national and emotional unity in the country. The committee apart from considering other aspects of the problem, devoted thought to the role of education in promoting national integration. The Committee was set up in May 1961 and it began it's work soon thereafter. Education and the Recommendations of National and Emotional Integration Committee .The Committee recommended that the aim of education should be merely to give or exchange knowledge, but also to bring about the all round development of personality of the students. Through the medium of education, the qualities of sacrifice and tolerance should not be evolved in the student behaviour so that, the feeling of national unity may be fostered.

Education highlights the real problem to learners. It gives a clear cut to about what is right and what is wrong. It is believed that teachers are "Visible God" through whom students can understand the reality. Basic learning from an educational institution can be read and write well in once own mother tongue. It makes the people aware about the day to day activity in the society through different sources mainly like News Papers. Education always cultivates good social relationship from the childhood itself. Students belonging to different religion caste and creed study together and a brotherhood love is developed.



The whole enterprise of education is extricably linked with the development of values. Devoid of the potential to nurture values, education loses its heart and soul. No one who attempts to depict the spirit of age in which we live can possibly overlook the importance of education for values. Peace and security are facing new challenges that could have negative implications if we do not address them positively. The malleable years of youth in schools are crucial. Whatever is learnt and imbibed will determine to how students would live out their lives in future. The concern about value degradation is not new to this era. Even before independence such concern were pronounced in policy documents. Policy makers and educators have all along seriously mediated on this concern and have been trying to discern the potential of schooling, pinning their hopes on education to fulfill the aspirations and expectations of the public and the society.

Education has a major role to play in the integration of this country. The way history lessons are presented in the texts and the boring manner they are taught in schools ,its become only dates to be remembered. History as a subject lends itself to drama giving emphasis and reasons to events. By dramatising history lessons learners can realise mistakes of the past and not repeat it but create history by understanding ! All of us are taking history only as middle aged people when precious young minds are already corrupted by distorted truths and made distant by disinterested rendering.

Education gives a holistic development to the learners. Education not only restricted in textbook learning but also sports, arts and culture. These aspects

help to develop sports man sprit, respect other people"s culture etc. Education installs ethical values and makes the learners understand that most aspirations are common in mankind. It installs an awareness and appreciation of not only an individual"s cultural heritage but also an awareness and appreciation of the cultural heritage of the others. Education gives the learners knowledge of as individuals and by extension of those around them. Education produces „thinking“ persons and who can understand their limitations and can learn from those who transcend these limitations. It teaches persons with respect for others. Education produces persons who seek to learn the Wisdom distilled from previous generations and from those of learning and wisdom in their society and the world- at- large. Education understands the distinction between rhetoric and truth/ facts. It helps us to reconcile the duality we see in everything around us and appreciate the whole- the concept of reconciling the opposites. Education is the key in achieving harmony in any society. Education transforms into an „Ethical nation“ from one that is built on expediency.

Most of the students try to follow the teacher"s viewpoints as it is very easy to transform the children. Teachers should be role model for the children even in their personal life. They should not be partial towards their own religion, caste and creed. Real aim of education can be fulfilled by teachers only. So it is the duty of every teacher to pass on proper education to coming generation. So that coming generation will be grown up with good values which will help for the National Integration and Peace in our country. Further, the menace of private



tuition in school subjects should be eradicated to provide the child the time to learn other things of value of life.

The government must work with the youth of today, and empower them so they can bring about unity in diversity, and harness the power of a liberal, scientific minded society, existing peacefully community-wise, to ensure a better future for the nation. The education system in this country should be overhauled at all levels to incorporate components of our heritage and culture in greater measure. The education system should embrace the dedicated institutions, the home and society. The best from the west should be incorporated, but not permitted to diminish or blow away what is ours and makes us what we are. The story, poem, song, arts, aphorisms, morals, proverbs, values and meaning that have come down to us from generations past, should remain essential parts of who are and should be cherished.

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