

Prof. Subhash Chandra

Board of Trustee

Global Peace Foundation

New Delhi

schandra101@gmail.com

Global Peace Values & Peace Education for Peace Building: Gandhian's thought

The world has been transformed into a global village. Globalization is having a major impact not only on the business world but also on the whole humanity. Global recession, Global warming, climate change, poverty, conflict and violence are challenges that have dominated the first decade of the 21st century.

At the beginning of the 21st century, our planet is in severe danger. The escalation of terrorism, culminating in the September Eleven attacks on the World Trade Centre New York, USA and Washington, and of counter-terrorism in many parts of the world, are interdependent links in a chain of growing globalization of violence and of violent globalization.

Human values are eroding at a very fast rate resulting in a decline in the quality of life of the people. The Gandhian strategy is the combination of truth, Love, non-violence, selfless service and cooperation. At the dawn of the new millennium, what is required most is 'Peace values & Education for conflict resolution & Peace building' in present age of globalization. Gandhi said that "There is no god higher than truth." According to Gandhi's thoughts, non-violence is ultimate solution of every kind of problem in the world.

The paper on "Global Peace Values & Peace Education for Peace Building: Gandhian's thought" is based on Philosophy & teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. The main objectives of the Paper are to explore: How Peace Education can best contribute to peace building for global civil society? What are the Values, Skills & attitudes are required for Peace Education for developing global culture of Peace & dialogue for Sustainable future?

Key Words: "Peace Education, Global Peace Values, Gandhian Thought, Peace-building

Introduction:

The world has been transformed into a global village. Globalization is having a major impact not only on the business world but also on the whole humanity. Global recession, Global warming, climate change, poverty, conflict and violence are challenges that have dominated the first decade of the 21st century.

We have built a society, which is violent & explosive. We are living in extremely explosive times where the context of human life is changing every moment. Our society is crumbling; the wave of destruction is constantly taking over the way of life. The ecological crisis, population increase with increasing poverty, hunger & violence, economically unbalanced world, arm race & expenditure on armament are facing man to think & face the realities of destruction of humanity.

This Oct. 2 marks the 145th anniversary of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's birth. And although the Mahatma (Great Soul), is acknowledged worldwide as one of the outstanding moral and political thinkers of our time, his approach to economics has been viewed largely in the somewhat limited context of his objections to machinery, advocacy of village industries and boycott of foreign goods. However, closer inspection of his writings reveals not only that his ideas on economics are a part of his world-view and a work in progress subject to change, but also that there is much for present-day education system, economic system & social welfare for the humanity in 21st century.

The main objectives of the Paper on “*Global Peace Values & Peace Education for Peace Building: Gandhian’s thought*” are two folds:

1. Creating social awareness for peace building & promoting Global Culture of Peace & dialogue through Peace Education;
2. Developing a Peaceful & Harmonious society by cultivating universal Global Peace values: Respect. Cooperation & ‘Embracing the other’ for world peace & human unity.

My presentation is divided into three parts:

- Part- I: Introduction – Global Challenges in 21st Century & Philosophy of Education.
 - Part-II: Culture of violence & Culture of Peace; Global Peace values for Social Transformation & global transformation in 21st Century.
 - Part-III: Peace Education & Gandhian’s Thought; ‘Shanti Chakra’ - Eight Global Values for Peace & Harmony.
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Culture of violence

The world has witnessed dramatic changes in the Twentieth Century. Humanity is facing a terrible challenge of its own existence. The present world is faced with many urgent problems –such as political, economic, social and cultural problems. The whole human

life is in a state of turmoil because modern civilization is based on violence. Our modern society is driven by a culture of violence while the whole of human life is in a state of turmoil.

We are living in a violent consciousness because our modern civilization is based on violence. There are constant repetitions of wars; the ceaseless conflict between classes, between peoples; the awful economic and social inequality; the gap between the rich and poor, and between the developed and developing countries.

According to Hindu Philosophy: *Violence in thoughts creates violence in action.* Hindu's strongly believe in karma's philosophy and reincarnation. They full well know that any thought, feeling or action sent out from them to another will return to them through yet another in equal or amplified velocity.. To do harm to others is to do harm to oneself. You are he whom you intend to kill. You are he whom you intend to dominate. We corrupt ourselves as soon as we intend to corrupt others. We kill ourselves as soon as we intend to kill others. Therefore, according to Indian philosophy *Ahimsa is higher consciousness i.e. Peace Consciousness and Himsa means Violence, hurtfulness, is lower consciousness i.e. violent consciousness.*

Mahatma Gandhi was against any form of violence, exploitation and injustice. According to him, evils must be opposed at any cost. But he insisted that the weapons must be non violent and moral ones.

The present day cycle is known as **cycle of violence** where violence, war and poverty are cumulatively growing and the social order is known as '**violent social order**'. One of the major challenges is that of stopping the vicious circle of armed and structural violence. Another is that of diminishing the greatest injustices in the world by giving priority to the basic needs of the poorest and weakest, today almost one billion. A third major one is to further develop peaceful and non-violent means of change.

Peace is not a static end-state; it is a dynamically on-going process, as Mahatma Gandhi said, "*There is no way to peace, peace is the way.*"

To meet these challenges of 21st century & to save the humanity from further destruction we have to change our attitude from '*Culture of violence*' to '*Culture of Peace*'; through Peace Values & Peace Education for saving the humanity & Earth planet

Culture of Peace & Peace Values?

The world is looking for a Non-Violent Global Sustainable Society and people in the world wants Freedom from Hunger & Poverty, freedom from Crimes & Violence, Freedom from diseases and freedom from wars conflicts. The world of tomorrow cannot be tamed by the '**Culture of violence**' but can be tamed only through the '**Culture of**

Peace i.e. peace consciousness. Current world conditions necessitate the urgency for ‘**Culture of Peace and Peace values** for social transformation & global transformation..

As we are living in culture of violence & hatred has created division of humanity, tremendous injustices and inequities thrive in our society, and it is important for us to constantly question what is and what can be. We must awaken ourselves and address the problems of our time, to develop strategies for the elimination of obstacles to a fuller humanity, for liberation. For the realization of a culture of peace, global **Peace** values are required for creating a Global nonviolent Society..

Peace Consciousness is the pure consciousness in which spirit predominates & matter is playing a secondary part, the result will be joy, peace, & harmony. In Eastern civilization focus is on the change the behavior of individual (self), the goal was to change the state of consciousness of the individual.

The Call for Values

The call for values is currently echoing throughout every land, as educators, parents and more and more children are increasingly concerned about and affected by violence, growing social problems, the lack of respect for each other and the world around them, and the lack of social cohesion. World leaders struggle with a myriad of problems. Educators are, therefore, once again being asked to address problems, which have arisen within their societies.

As UNESCO’s Commission, headed by Jacques Delors, reports in *Learning: The Treasure Within*, "In confronting the many challenges that the future holds in store, humankind sees in education an indispensable asset in its attempt to attain the ideals of peace, freedom and social justice. The Commission does not see education as a miracle cure or a magic formula opening the door to a world in which all ideals will be attained, but as one of the principal means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development and thereby to reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war."

Living Values: An Educational Program (LVEP) is a values education program. It offers a variety of experiential values activities and practical methodologies to teachers and facilitators to enable children and young adults to explore and develop 12 key universal values: Cooperation, Freedom, Happiness, Honesty, Humility, Love, Peace, Respect, Responsibility, Simplicity, Tolerance, and Unity.

As we move into the 21st century, the search for ways to improve the quality of education is global. One area of focus has been that of values, attitudes, and behavior and how to develop these aspects of character in a positive and productive way.

- How do we empower individuals to choose their own set of values?

- What kind of specialized training is necessary for educators to integrate values into existing programs?
- How can values-based education prepare students for lifelong learning in their communities?

Delors, Jacques, et al. Learning: The Treasure Within, Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century. UNESCO Publishing, 1996. ISBN 0 7306 9037 7

'Shanti Chakra' - A Peace Journey
'From Culture of violence to Culture of Peace.'

Peace and Harmony: The use of popular English word peace can be found in words like Pax [Vulgate], Eirene [Greek] and Shalom [Hebrew]. Besides wishing harmony [a word derived from harmonia of Greek to denote a state of accord, concord, friendliness and unity] in day-to-day human practices at individual and social levels, the urge for a situation free from conflicts and struggles is desired here. Generally, a situation free from tension, struggle, dispute or conflict, particularly in socio-economic spheres, is considered the state of peace in this context.

Peace is not just the absence of war. Peace is a way of life.

Peace, People, and Planet all are interconnected and interdependent. *Peace is a balance, a state of mind in which we feel good about our lives, our Families, our friends, our communities, our future, and ourselves.*

Peace is about people - how we handle problems and how we get along with others?

Peace is about community -- about working together, encouraging each other, helping each other to live better, more fulfilling lives. Peace is about the planet – how to save & protect the planet?

Peace is a journey of transformation from Culture of violence to Culture of Peace through Peace Education.

- **What is 'Shanti Chakra' - (Wheel of Peace)?**

The 'Chakra' is the Sanskrit word for "Wheel". The 'Chakra (Wheel)' is the symbol of Life and "Shanti Chakra is Wheel of Peace.

'Shanti Chakra' - Eight Global Values for Peace & Harmony

The "Chakra (Wheel)" is the Symbol of Life. The "Spokes of the wheel" symbolizes the "Pathways to Peace". There are eight spokes of the Wheel of Peace, which represents Eight Global Values for Peace & Harmony.

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|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Tolerance | 5. Purity |
| 2. Forgiveness | 6. Truth & Intuition |
| 3. Cooperation & Respect | 7. Peace |
| 4. Love & Compassion | 8. Unity |

Peace Education & Gandhian's Thought

Philosophy of Education:

"By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man-body, mind and spirit. Literacy is not the end of education or even the beginning." – Said M. K. Gandhi [Harijan: July 31, 1937]

Gandhiji regarded education as the light of life and the very source from which was created an awareness of oneness. Gandhi believed that the universality of religion can best be realized through the universalization of education, and that such universalization was the spring board for national integration

Peace Education

'Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men [and women] that the defenses of peace must be constructed.'

--Preamble to the UNESCO Constitution

'Peace Education is a living, dynamic organism, and as much as life itself is education, education must be living. This necessitates the transformation of anesthetized and oppressive classrooms into dynamic, participatory spaces of sharing and creating knowledge.'

What are the Goals of Peace Education?

In her book "Comprehensive Peace Education: Educating for Global Responsibility," Betty Reardon states that the overarching purpose of Peace Education is to "promote the development of an authentic planetary consciousness that will enable us to function as global citizens and to transform the present human condition by changing the social structures and the patterns of thought that have created it."

In essence, the goal of peace education can be seen as the development of certain knowledge, skills, and attitudes in learners and teachers.

Knowledge and exploration of: Human Rights, Environment, Structural Violence, Justice, Power, Freedom, Participation, and Human Welfare

Skills in: nonviolence, the ability to negotiate, compromise, assess personal feelings and the feelings of others, conflict resolution, listening, and communication. Attitudes or Values relating to: Empathy, Respect for Self, Others, and the Environment, Caring and Awareness, and Tolerance.

Education as Peace Building:

In the 21st century, people everywhere talk about money and material value. That is also important. Material wealth provides physical comfort. Mental comfort is possible only by faith, he said. *"A disturbed mind is very bad for health, while a healthy mind and health body go together. Material wealth alone will not bring happiness," the spiritual leader H.H. Dalai Lama said.*

Peace education includes the cultivation of peace building skills (e.g. dialogue, mediation, artistic endeavors). Peace educators, then, teach the values of respect, understanding, and nonviolence, present skills for analyzing international conflict, educate for alternative security. There are three levels of Peace building for developing global society

1. Peace building at individual level
2. Peace building at community level for developing peaceful communities , and
3. Peace building for developing global society

The individual level relates to person-centered awareness of the self (i.e. body, mind, emotions, and spirit), whereas the community level refers to interpersonal relations (i.e. trust, openness, and interdependence), and the global level concerns cultural and environmental consciousness (Montessori 1949).

- Montessori, M. 1949. Education and peace. Oxford, England: CLIO, 1995
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Education as Service to Humanity:

Mahatma Gandhi believes that the “True education lies in serving others, oblige them without the least feeling of one-uppishness. The more mature you grow, the more you will realise this. A great deal of religious obligations on us are fulfilled when we nurse the sick” .Letter to Ramdas Gandhi (The Making of the Mahatma , p. 97)

Children must be inspired to contribute to the betterment of the world. By taking care of the environment or the needy, for example, children gain additional confidence and motivation that a classroom setting alone cannot provide. Eventually, through such an education a man becomes a fruitful and productive

Thus, peace education as a practice and philosophy refers to matching complementary elements between education and society, where the social purposes (i.e. why teach), content (i.e. what to teach), and pedagogy (i.e. how to teach) of the educative process are conducive to fostering peace.

Choosing Nonviolence in the 21st Century

The Twentieth Century has been recorded as the most violent in the history of humankind, conflict will always be with us, and in the Twenty First Century we must break the pattern, and learn the skills required to solve conflict nonviolently.

India has great heritage. There is harmony among different religious traditions. India is a land where people of different religious faiths can live peacefully and harmoniously here. India’s tradition is very relevant in today’s world,” he said.

For thousands of years, India carried the message of ‘Ahimsa’ which was relevant even today, he said, adding, “we should ourselves create inner peace by practicing love and compassion in daily life.”

Ahimsa - The Culture of Non-Violence:

Relevance of Mahatma Gandhi in the Twenty-First Century

Gandhian's Non-violence as Religious Force: Gandhi devoted himself wholeheartedly to nonviolence as the indivisible part of Truth, which he identifies and adores as God. He followed the principle of Nonviolence as a great religious force because it enables everyone to unfold the invaluable divinity in him as best a way as possible.

As per Mahatma Gandhi, Non-violence is characterized as *Truth Force*, which he also characterizes as *Soul-force*. It is this force, which, as he strongly believes and advocates, bring about endless revolution both within and outside humanity.

Developing nonviolent society.

We need to examine the idea of moving away from violence and toward the practice of nonviolence and give serious consideration to the practicality of achieving a nonviolent society.

All around the world people are being asked to reflect on the most important of all human values: compassion, universal responsibility, tolerance and understanding. The time has come to look into our soul for profound change in our attitude & consciousness for developing nonviolent society. We should look underneath these qualities and notice the role of the individual in social transformation, the relationship between the human mind and human action, and the urgency in a world of threat and fear to move toward a higher achievement. Developing a nonviolent mind, is not only possible, but becomes an essential ingredient in moving urgently toward the achievement of peace on a worldwide scale. Several understandings will support these ideas: first, it is important to notice that violence doesn't seep through the air conditioning system; it begins in the mind of people. It can be seen in each one of us in our thought, speech and physical action.

Global Peace & Oneness of Humanity

The basis for Global Peace is self-transformation and self-transformation leads to world transformation. When we convince the people and the nations of the world to make peace on earth our priority and shared goal, we will create a culture of peace, and living peacefully will become the most natural way to live. The following are the five Principle creating Global Peace & Oneness of Humanity.

1. Principle of Purity
2. Principle of Understanding
3. Principle of Forgiveness
4. Principle of Tolerance
5. Principle of Love.

“PEACE Model for self Transformation & Developing Global Nonviolent society

P- Be Pure & Truthful in Mind:

Purity in Thoughts, Communications & Actions for peace & harmony. According to Gandhian thought, nothing was more sacred than truth and non- violence. Originally he believed that God is Truth. Later he changed this a little and maintained that Truth is God.

E- Education for Peace & Harmony - to save the humanity & Earth planet.

A-- Action for Peace building : Take Actions4 Peace & harmony: Without action you aren't going anywhere. **You have to take action and translate that knowledge (Wisdom) into results and building peaceful society.**

C – Be the Change: *Self-transformation leads to world transformation*

As Mahatma Gandhi once said: "We must be the change we wish to see, and not the darkness that we wish to leave behind".

Change your thoughts & Change the world: If you change your thoughts you can change your world. And so the world around you will change.

E – ‘Embracing the other’ for Peaceful coexistence & Human unity.

Concluding remarks:-

The name of Mahatma Gandhi transcends the bounds of race, religion and nation-states, and has emerged as the prophetic voice of the 21st century. He is remembered for his passionate adherence to the practice of non-violence and his supreme humanism. After the great Buddha and Jesus he once again demonstrated that non-violence could also be effective instruments of social change.

I can do no better than to quote the immortal tribute of India's first prime minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, at the time of Gandhi's passing, "The light has gone out of our lives".

Values & Ethics for Sustainable Future:

Gandhiji advocates Values & Ethics for Sustainable Future& described the seven social sins for the society :

*“Wealth without work, Pleasure without conscience;
Knowledge without character, Business without Ethics;
Science without Humanity, Religion without Sacrifice and
Politics without Principles are deadly Sins.” - SaidMahtama Gandhi Ji*

The values and attitudes we live by affect how we relate to other people and to all our activities in the environment, and so are a major influence on our prospects for achieving a sustainable future.

Gandhi successfully demonstrated to a world, weary with wars and continuing destruction that adherence to Truth and Non-violence is not meant for individual behaviour alone but can be applied in global affairs too.

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