Guiding Principles and Practices of Peace Education Followed in Secondary Schools of Mizoram

**Prof.Lokanath Mishra1, Dr. Tushar Gupta2, Dr. Abhashree3**

1 Director, Faculty Development center,Mizoram University, India

2 Post Doctoral Fellow,Mizoram University, India

3Assistant Professor, Mizoram University, India

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| **Article Info** |  | **ABSTRACT** |
| ***Article history:***  Received May 19, 2020  Revised May 20, 201x  Accepted 26, 201x |  | The importance of peace education at the school level is universally recognized for a safe and prospering future for the world as peace education aims at equipping the future citizens with necessary knowledge, attitude and skills so that they would acknowledge and respect all kinds of diversity and understand human dignity. This paper is based on an empirical research aiming how far guiding principles and practices of peace education followed in secondary schools of Mizoram. The concept of peace education, guiding principles of peace education and practices on peace related activities being followed in the secondary schools of Mizoram were revealed. The study revealed that peace education was not being taught as a separate subject. Peace education component were infused in the existing curriculum and also was being taught through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Besides, teachers must reflect in their behavior all the guiding principles of peace and should encourage the students for critical thinking, reasoning, develop awareness on societal problems and issues, broaden their outlook, concentrate on studies, and to be associated with various activities. In Mizoram Students Unions and Church Organizations used to play very prominent role in shaping and molding the character of the people starting from the early stages of life which ultimately benefits the society and the nation. However, in the context of rapid change in social structure and modernization process, there is need for inculcating the values of peace for which schools have to play important role. |
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| ***Corresponding Author:***  Prof.Lokanath Mishra,  Department of Education, Mizoram University, Aizawl, India  Email: [munumishra7@gmail.com](mailto:munumishra7@gmail.com) | | |

1. **INTRODUCTION**

Peace education in school must be man action oriented. It should be built practical oriented rather than indoor study, classroom study, no doubt, is important, but action only makes a long last impact. Gandhi said, “Our action must be a co-ordinate work of our hand, head and heart (peace)”. Peace education is skill building. It empowers children to joined creative and non-destructive ways to settle conflict and to live in harmony with themselves, others and their world Peace building is the task of every human being and the challenge of the human family. Peace education can be understood education for facilitating peace. “A fundamental concern of peace education is education to prevent the suffering and wastage of warfare within the modern era”. [13] argue that “peace education refers to teaching about peace-what is, why it doesn’t exist and how to achieve it”. According to Peace Education Working group at UNICEF[21], Peace education, “refers to the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to prevent conflict and violence.” Hague Appeal for Peace defines peace education as a participatory holistic process that includes teaching for and about democracy and human rights among other issues. Peace education as activities that develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to explore concepts of peace, enquire into the obstacles to peace (both in individuals and societies), to resolve conflicts in adjust and non-violent way, and to study ways of constructing just and sustainable alternative futures [11]. Let us teach our youths the principles of peace in our classrooms, not the principles of war. Only a peace-oriented education system and curriculum can help the nations overcome the mutual fear and distrust and bridge the gap rather than create it, and playing international understanding and peace. Hence, peace education is regarded as an avenue to improve the social well-being and responsibilities of the future of the tiny tots who are in the schools[1]. Peace education can be introduced in different ways in schools, colleges, homes, communities, churches and workplaces.Analysis, however, the most prominent approaches for implementing peace education are the school and the societal approach[2,3-4]. The school approach to peace education as highlighted by [2] views the school system as a major agent of socialisation and in this context, the focus is on utilising the school in order to transform the conflictive intergroup relations within society. This approach is based on the assumption that the school is one of the key agencies of socialisation and hence the introduction of peace education in schools will influence behavioural changes on students, teachers, and parents and eventually have a ripple effect on the entire community [4]. The school approach, in addition, emphasises the formal training of teachers, development of peace education curricula, writing new textbooks and promotion of conducive and peaceful teaching and learning environments in order to formally initiate peace education in schools.

In developing countries like India, peace education at the school level seems to have been given a back seat, though in our social context, it is very much relevant and crucial. It is desired that serious attention need to be given for imparting peace education in our schools for developing the desired personality characteristics with the children during their formative stage[14-15]. In order to achieve the objectives of peace education, a school system has to be prepared for drastic changes including setting new educational objectives, preparing new curricula, (re)writing school textbooks, developing instructional material, and training teachers to create a school climate that is conducive to peace education [16]. Researchers further argue that teacher education programs need to provide opportunities for collaborative and interactive learning so that teachers can make the peace values part of their own personality. Similarly,[8]argued that the peace educator who works with students to develop a more positive and detailed concept of peace, plays a pivotal role in peace pedagogy.[7], while developing their “Peace Education Kit”, focused on the use of child-centred, innovative, and participatory pedagogies. They emphasize combining pedagogy with curriculum content and creating a teacher resource that is easy to use and written in plain language. Peace Education Programme strongly influences the mind of the teacher and the students. The students enlightened on how to lead a contented life, to live a conflict free life in school to build up mutual co-operation and make their future happy and successful and most fall, to live as a peaceful citizen. A teacher who had received a short course training on Peace Education viewed that most of the attitudes were changes to live in peaceful life.

Voluntary standards for peace education” suggests that peace education is comprehensive. It encompasses instruction by all members of a school[9]. Although the voluntary standards are a response to new liberal policies in the field of education, they were born of enduring concepts along with research on educational practice and peace development. As the international community and its various school's grapple with several types of violence, comprehensive peace education provides student preparation for responsible stewardship through an enacted vision of a better world. According to [5] “Peace is everyone’s responsibility within any given community. Instead of focusing training on selected group of individuals. (Those considered opinion leaders) it is preferable to target all school children and to involve self-selected participants in the community programme.

Families and schools are the two most important institutions that influence children’s concepts of hate and love. He argues that a cooperative learning environment, conflict management initiatives, the constructive use of controversy, and establishment of resolution dispute centres in schools will enhance a constructive relationship which will ultimately help prepare children to live in a peaceful world[10]. Providing maximum opportunities of speaking and expressing their views to children which may in turn boost their moral courage and be part of their personality for their later life[20].The pedagogy of experiential learning can be instrumental for enhancing the knowledge about peace and violence, developing ideas, motivations and skills for making this world a better place to live[22]. A more comprehensive and direct link between peace education and experiential learning. They argue that experiential learning can help in reorienting the school culture towards peace, provide the youth an opportunity to influence and educate the public, and practice conflict resolution and violence prevention programs[6]. In their view, participants of such an experiential program enjoy the opportunities of reflecting on their own position in connection with the earth, building peaceful relationships with others, and taking on responsibilities for the wellbeing of communities[19]

India is a vast country having around 135 billion population belonging to different race, religion, caste and region. People speak different languages and they vary among themselves culturally. Due to such differences, cultural and communal tensions occur frequently. All such tensions are the obstacles for development of our nation. India can march ahead, if the people would be able to realise the importance of peace and leave in harmony. For the success of the mission of peace education, it is desired that the socio-cultural contexts of different societies to be assessed, policies and programmes need to be formulated, imparters (teachers) be trained and peace education has to be effectively transacted. India has many diversities, particularly, geographical, socio-cultural and political. It is desired that research support in various contexts be available to design for peace education.

The state of Mizoram, secondary school have been found a place where different kinds of violence are tolerated and perpetrated by the stakeholders. As per the government data 99 child raped and registered under POSCO Act in Mizoram in 2016 where as it is 129 in 2017 and 66 in 2018. Similarly, 27 cases found child rape under IPC in 2018. Sexually assault is very high in Mizoram, 74 cases registered in 2017, 40 cases in 2018 and 62 cases in 2016.Crime against women and girls also seen in Mizoram. Twenty-three girls raped in 2016, Forty-six cases registered in 2017, whereas 24 cases in 2018. Molestation cases are very high i.e. 115 in 2017, 71 in 2016 and 64 in 2018. The total gross enrolment ratio of Mizoram is 21.6. The girls GER is 21.1. So researcher wants to identify what are the causes of low GER in case of girls in Mizoram[12].

Though the unrest in the region of north east has a history of political causes, the regional conflict is much related to multi-ethnicity. These conflicts are social, political and economic conflicts between groups who identify themselves and others in ethnic terms. They are distinguished as they tend to be asymmetrical ambiguous and tough to differentiate between associates and opponent, fought unconventionally using political and psychological means and methods and these conflicts often develop into protracted war of attribution. Mizoram is one of the north-eastern states of our country which has followed the path of peace for its development and is marching ahead, after long time of insurgency. It is desired that the state should continue to follow the path of peace. This will be possible when the peace values and culture will prevail among the citizens.Though there are number of studies conducted[6,7,14,15-17] across the world, no such comprehensive study has been conducted in India though National Curriculum Frame Work (NCF)- 2005 and National Curriculum Frame Work for Teacher Education (NCFTE)-2014 highlight about peace education in secondary schools and one optional paper in teacher education programme has been introduced. Since peace is always related to socio-cultural and political factors, one study in one such context may not be sufficed to draw any inference for all situations[18]. The secondary school students are the future citizens. It is imperative to inculcate the values of peace so that the culture of peace would prevail in all walks of life among the students. Hence, there is a need to explore how far the concept of peace education, guiding principles of peace education and practices on peace related activities being followed in the secondary schools of Mizoram.

2.**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1 To explore the guiding principles of peace education being followed in secondary schools of Mizoram.

2 To examine the practices on peace related activities in secondary schools of Mizoram.

3 To explore the suggestions of secondary school students, teachers about successful promotion of peace values among secondary school students in Mizoram.

1. **RESEARCH METHOD**

The study was of descriptive survey in nature in which secondary school students, and the teachers of Mizoram were the target populations. The total sample of the study comprised of 200 students, 100 boys and 100 girls of class IX, 100 teachers from 20 Government secondary schools of Mizoram.For the present study it was decided to use questionnaire and interview as the techniques of data collection. The questionnaire was structured and developed in simple English which can be easily comprehended by the class IX and X students. Focus Group Discussions[16] were held in the schools to collect relevant information from the teachers and students.

1. **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Majority of the sampled students, teachers were of the opinion that the guiding principles of peace like equality of all, dignity of others; liberty of all; security in the school; justice for all; non-violence practices; sharing responsibility; cooperation among students, teachers and parents; democratic principles; human rights; environment friendly behaviour; cultural diversity; and sustainable development were being respected/ followed in their schools. Majority of the sampled students, teachers, expressed that morning prayer, celebration of important national and international days, and celebration of birthdays of great personalities used to be organized in the schools. But, activities like peace club, peace march, peace poster competition, discussion on social issues, arrangement of extramural lecturers, organization of essay and debate competitions, establishment of peace museum, practice of yoga, film show, creation blogs in social media, community participation, organization of street play, organization of drama etc either were not organized or rarely organized. In the FGD it is revealed that morning prayer not used to be organized daily in many schools, national and international days and birth days of great personalities used to be celebrated as notified by the higher authorities.

Majority (78%)of the sampled students, teachers, expressed that values like respect for others, practicing non-violence, forgiveness and reconciliation, justice and equality, conflict resolution, environmental protection, promotion of democratic values, secular attitude, development of ideal citizenship, promotion of national integration and international understanding, cultural identity and acculturation and socialization need to be emphasized in the secondary schools of Mizoram for promoting peace culture with the students.

Majority(63%) of the respondents expressed that personality characteristics like respect to humanity, empathy, compassion for all creatures, self-discipline, and tolerance were not duly emphasized with the secondary school students of Mizoram. But, qualities like honesty, truthfulness, cleanliness, positive thought, charity, gentleness, modesty, patience, straightforwardness, and altruism used to be emphasized with them[13-14].

Majority of the secondary school teachers of Mizoram (76%) were not aware of the concept of peace education. All the sampled secondary school teachers felt the need for imparting peace education in secondary schools of Mizoram. Peace education was not being taught as a separate subject, but peace education components were infused in the existing curriculum and also was being taught through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. In the FGD it is found that teachers must act as role models for students in propagating peace and specific training on peace education is required for in-service secondary school teachers. Seventy two percent teachers said that teachers must reflect in their behaviour all the guiding principles of peace i.e. equality of all, dignity of others, liberty of all, justice for all, non-violence practices, sharing responsibility, cooperation and harmony among teachers, and between teachers and parents, democratic principles, human rights values, environment friendly behaviour, tolerance and respect to cultural diversity, and sustainable development. Teachers should also show compassion, empathy, discipline, and proper manners and follow professional ethics[17]. Teachers should encourage the students for critical thinking, reasoning, develop awareness on societal problems and issues, broaden their outlook, concentrate on studies, and to be associated with various activities.

The teachers suggested that society can play a greater role in developing peace values as Mizo society is a knit society. Through different non-government organizations it can prohibit divorce which is rampant, impose dress code for girls, organize youth camps to inculcate values, insist on maintaining cultural ethics and respecting human rights, maintain objectivity and impartiality in local and village councils, support and cooperate government in implementation of welfare policies, rules and regulations, discourage mob rules, and control/eradicate social evils. The society can have a vigilant eye on the activities of the school students. Public meetings may be organised to explain the increasing relevance of non-violence and communal harmony. Peace volunteers can be identified in every locality and peace preacher centre can be organized through teaching.

Suggestions for Accomplishment of the Mission of Peace Education:

Mizoram is a peaceful state and the people live in harmony without any violence in the society. For better promotion of peace values among the secondary school students the following suggestions are offered based on the suggestions received from the stakeholders. Teaching of peace related concepts can be done in five stages namely engage, explore, explain, elaborate and evaluate (5Es). Engagement is to involve the students in the learning activities. Exploration comprises accessing the resources and exploring the information necessary to solve the problem and/or define the peace related concepts to be learnt. Explaining implies that students will be able to explain the concepts learnt, and also the methods of solving the problem of violence. That a new curriculum as peace education with the infusion of civic and moral instruction should serve as a tool in promoting peace education for moral rearmament. Elaboration is for achieving higher order cognition or extended abstraction Evaluating learning using a set of pre-defined criteria for success. Teachers should be oriented with the right kind of pedagogy to handle peace related contents through in-service programmes. That school administrators and teachers be encouraged to develop interest in peace education as curriculum takes into consideration the interest of the community. The state government should take stringent measures on drug trafficking and prevent corruption. The entire community should be encouraged by the relevant government authority on the need to involve school administrators, teachers, parents and communities to support the implementation and promotion of peace education in order for the programme to be effective.

1. **CONCLUSION**

Peace education is based on a philosophy that teaches love, compassion, trust, fairness, co-operation and reverence for all life. Teachers must ensure the culture of peace in the schools and they must project themselves as models of peace. They must resolve any issue and conflict among themselves, and amongst students through dialogue. The pedagogy of peace education which becomes particularly important since peace education is not to be taught as a separate subject. The concept like Peace – families, Peace – society, Peace – initiatives taken up by UNO, UNESCO, YMCA, YWCA, Red Cross, Scout and guides. policies, treaties and award for world peace, role of different philosophers – world peace and consequence of war and violence may include in secondary school curriculum. More activities will be organised in the secondary schools for promotion of peace. That a new curriculum as peace education with the infusion of civic and moral instruction should serve as a tool in promoting peace education for moral rearmament. The state government may issue order to establish peace clubs, self-defence training centre in all secondary schools of Mizoram.

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|  | **Author Information** |
|  | Professor. Lokanath Mishra, Director, Faculty Development Centre, Mizoram University (A Central University), Aizawl, India. He is the coordinator of National Resource Centre of Educational Research (NRC)under the Government of India. He has published 67 research papers and 18 books in national and international Publishers. He is chief editor of the International Journal of Education and Research and International Journal of Peace Education and Development and a member of the editorial boards of a number of different journals. |