

ROLE OF EDUCATION IN REALIZATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present article is to discuss the role and importance of the education in realization of human rights and in the strengthening of democracy. This formation is understood from the perspective of the concepts of democracy and active citizenship that allow the human being to comprehend both its own society's historical process and the importance of human rights to develop projects that seeks to convert a reality. The other objective of this paper is to focus on the respect for cultural diversity and for humandignity, as multiculturalism should articulate itself towards the realization of human rights. Therefore, this text seeks to contribute to the discussion on the existent difficulties and possibilities, bearing in mind the creation of a citizenship formation that is able to confront secular problems and to promote the evolution into a society that is participative, active and conscious of its rights and duties a real tolerant and democratic society.

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. All human being are equally entitled to human rights without discrimination. These rights are guaranteed by the international law, national law, general principles and other sources. International lawlays down obligations of Governments to act incertain ways or to refrain from certain acts, inorder to promote humanrights. Human rights are understoodas basic fundamental rights that any person cannotbe denied by any individual or any governmentsimply because he or she is a human being.

INTRODUCTION

Human rights refer to the fundamental freedoms and basic liberties without which men, women and children can't live with respect and dignity. We all live in a society and all our activities revolve round this societal system. We all have ambitions and aspirations in life. Nevertheless, right to life, liberty and security are the basic rights which every man, woman and child must possess.

People's rights are regulated by rule of law and it is the duty of the government to enforce and protect these rights and fundamental freedoms irrespective of their caste, creed, colour, race, sex, religion and place of birth. Right to live with dignity is the natural right of a person and it is for both the society and government to ensure the full development of all men, women and children. Human survival is based on the fulfillment of these needs. The history of human rights has been shaped by some important events of the world such as the Renaissance, the French Revolution (1789), the Bolshevik

Revolution in Russia (1917), World War II and the Industrial Revolution in England (1930). All these historical events taking place in different parts of the world at different times tell us the story of human struggle for securing human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Besides this, the Indian Constitutional provisions have equally played a rightful role for shaping the concept of human rights into a reality. The Preamble, the Fundamental Rights, the Fundamental Duties and the Directive Principles of State Policy are the concrete steps towards the realization of human rights.

The United Nations and Human Rights

Education: Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration, the United Nations General Assembly has called on Member States and all segments of society to disseminate and educate about this fundamental document. In 1993 the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna reaffirmed the importance of human rights education, training and public information, declaring it "essential for the promotion and

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achievement of stable and harmonious relations among communities and for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace." In response to an appeal by this World Conference, the General Assembly proclaimed the period 1995 to 2004 the UN Decade for Human Rights Education.

During this Decade, the UN is urging and supporting all its Member States to make information about human rights available to everyone through both the formal school system and popular and adult education.

Constitution of India and Human Rights: The preamble provides for all citizens justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. It has implications in all walks of life of an Indian. In a school situation, it ensures to every child the right to life, liberty and security and to freedom from any form of cruelty, inhuman or degrading treatment in any way.

Fundamental Rights: In a democratic set up people are given great importance in the whole philosophy of a State. It emphasizes the fact that State exists for the individuals. Hence, certain rights of men, women and children are absolutely necessary for the effective functioning of a democratic government. Description of all fundamental rights as enshrined in the Constitution is a stupendous task; however, some of the Fundamental Rights important from the point of view of school education are discussed here.

The concept of equality is the guiding principle of our social living. Dynamics of social change speak of the fact that equality in every sphere of life is very essential. Article 14 deals with equality before law and equal protection of law. Article 15 prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth. Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity. Article 17 lays down that no title, not being military or academic, shall be conferred by the State. Right to Freedom- the right to freedom has been explained in Articles 19 to 22 of the Constitution. Article 19 codifies the usual liberties of men, women and children. Article 20- offers protection in respect of conviction for certain offences. Article 21- provides that no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to the procedure established by law. Article 22 states that no person shall be detained in custody without being informed of the

grounds of such arrest/detention nor he is to be denied the right to consult or to be defended by a legal practitioner of his choice. Right against Exploitation- Article 23 of the Constitution prohibits traffic in human beings and forced labour and any contravention of this provision is an offence punishable in accordance with the law of the land. Article 24- guarantees prohibition of employment of children in factories who are below 14 years of age. Right to Freedom of Religion - Article 25: States that subject to public order, morality and health, all persons are equally entitled to the freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practice and propagate any religion. Article 28: Emphasizes that no religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of state funds except in those institutions established under a Trust. Cultural and Educational Rights are provisioned under - Article 29 and Article-30. Right to Constitutional Remedies - The Supreme Court (under Art.32) and the High Courts (under Art.226) have the powers to issue writs or orders for the enforcement of these fundamental rights. However, it is once again reiterated that only the relevant portions of the Fundamental Rights have been discussed here which happen to be useful and significant for teacher educators.

Directive Principles of State Policy: Certain 'directive principles of state policy' based on social, political and economic justice have been laid down for the guidance of the legislatures as well as the government authorities. Although these directive principles need to be understood in totality yet only the most relevant of them are being discussed here for the sake of convenience. Art. 38 (1) - The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of national life. Art. 39- Certain principles of policy to be followed by the State, Art. 41- Right to work, to education and to public assistance in certain areas. Art. 45- Provision for free and compulsory education for children, Art. 46- Promotion of educational and economic interest of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections.

Role of Education in Realizing Human Rights:

Education is a key instrument for creating the real appropriate environment for promotion and protection of human rights. It plays a vital role in making people aware about the human rights and their importance. It is also an effective weapon for eliminating the violations of human rights. The educated people in the society only can know their rights and duties towards self, towards others and towards the society, towards community and nation, hence have the knowledge to protect their rights and perform their duties. Mr. Kofi Annan, the former Secretary General of United Nations correctly said that “without education, we can see beyond ourselves and our narrow surroundings to the reality of global interdependence. Without education, we cannot realize how people of other races and religions share the same dreams, the same hopes. Without education, we cannot recognize the universality of human aims and aspirations. UN mandates that education shall be directed to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom.

Education is essential for everyone just not in order to become educated and capable of earning but also recognize their rights and duties towards themselves and others. An educated person only can raise voice and can stand for his/her rights. HRE is about empowering the individual to both recognize human rights abuses and to commit to their prevention. Thus, a core part of HRE is the strengthening of respect for human rights. It is now a universal responsibility of every government and individual to promote education and hence promote human rights. The education can play a significant role in the promotion and protection of human rights in the following way.

Policy and Research on Human Right

Education: The link between research and policy development in the area of human rights education (HRE) is a key issue. The development of effective educational policies requires knowledge and understanding of current research on key human rights issues. A strong partnership between the two is needed for the sustainability of human rights education through appropriate programmes and monitoring mechanisms.

Promoting Human Rights Education-Curricula Consideration:

While it is important to learn about specific human rights principles, it is equally important to introduce these principles into the overall learning process so that educational practices, curricular development, teacher training, teaching methodologies, learning resources and the school environment all reflect the human rights principles taught.

Current Practices and Future Innovation:

Strong institutional partnerships are required between Ministries of Education, national human rights institutions, NGOs, schools and colleges, teacher unions, teacher training institutions, research institutions and universities, to ensure the effective implementation of human rights education. The National Commissions have the potential to mobilize these stakeholders for the building of institutional partnerships critical to fostering cooperation, and achieving sustainable outcomes.

Human Rights Education beyond Schooling:

If human rights education is to effect positive changes within society, it is essential that concern for human rights be extended beyond the immediate school environment to the community-at-large. To this end, several countries have begun to examine the possibility of mainstreaming human rights education in both formal and non-formal educational settings and linking the two in a complementary manner.

Implementation of RTE 2009: A Human rights-based approach of education assures every child a quality education that respects and promotes her or his right to dignity and optimum development. The right to education is marked priority on the agenda of the international community since right to education is not only a human right in itself but also is quintessential for the exercise of all other human rights. A number of human rights treaties accepted and development and social transformation. The right to education flows directly from the right to life. The right to life and the dignity of an individual cannot be assured unless it is accompanied by the right to education. Victims of injustice and violations of human rights will have no faith in justice and values. Right to education and HRE will fall through. The government and the society should be prepared to foot the bill if concrete results are desired.

CONCLUSIONS

There is no doubt that education plays a key role for promotion of human rights. Education is considered as one of the significant weapon to stop the violations against human rights. Equality shall be the primary consideration in actions concerning children, respect for the views of the child are the general principals of the Convention on the Rights of a child. Education in their own mother language about human rights will make the learners more prompt about their values and ways to use them in their day to day life. The values of cultural diversity and social diversity should be inculcated as a basic teaching. Human rights concepts of religious freedom and religious tolerance can be inculcated while teaching history topics. Democracy equality can enhance human values in a person. Rule of law and social justice gives immense opportunities to discuss and understand human rights and human duties. Languages offer many gateways for HRE. Stories, poems, paragraphs can be carefully selected..

A discussion on the omnibus violations of human rights during world wars can sensitize the students. Dramatic clubs and literary activities can be utilized effectively. Students can be motivated to write poetry, drama and essays on human rights. Poster making competition, elocution or contests, debates etc. can also be held on similar themes. The school can celebrate the World Human Rights Day which can go a long way to create wariness among students, parents and the neighborhood community. Initiatives should be taken to enrich the school library and personal collection with books and materials on human rights. All of this suggests that the time is ripe for HRE to come to the forefront of international consciousness, and to fulfill its intended role as a preventive tool. Education should be granted to one and all across the country and world. Human Rights are the basis of human values, disciplines and dignity. It should be enhanced, protected and promoted to every nook and corner with the help of education.

SUGGESTIONS

Policies and Curricula: Educational policies, such as legislation, national plans of action, policy statements, curricula and training policies, should explicitly promote a rights-based approach to education.

Environment: Learning environment should be one in which human rights are practiced and lived in the daily life of the whole school community.

Practices and tools: Teaching and learning practices and tools should reflect human rights values. For example, materials and textbooks should be consistent with principles of human rights education, and teaching methodologies should be democratic and participatory.

Professional development: Professional development of teachers and other educational personnel should be targeted to enable educators and school staff to demonstrate and transmit human rights values.

Evaluation: The policies as well as educational activities aiming at integrating human rights education should be subject to impact evaluation and analysis.

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