

Role of Education in Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

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Abstract

Human rights are those rights one enjoys by virtue of being human. These are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever the place of birth, residence, sex or ethnic origin, color, religion, languages, or any other status may be. Human rights encompassing civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and freedoms, and based on the notion of personal human dignity and worth, without which one cannot live as human beings. Human rights are the basic rights that a person irrespective of race, gender or any other background cannot be denied anywhere or at any condition. Education is a tool for creating the awareness of human rights and making people know its importance in their day to day life. It is also a tool for eliminating the violations of human rights. Education inculcates and imbibes the values of human rights and values in a person and uses them in their life. This paper tries to focus on the role of education in promotion and protection of human rights and extends some suggestive measures.

Keywords: Education, Human Rights and Human Rights of Education (HRE).

Introduction

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. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, guaranteed by law, in the forms of international law, general principles and other sources of international law. International human rights law lays down obligations of governments to act in certain ways or to cease from certain acts, in order to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals of groups. Human rights are commonly understood as basic fundamental rights that a person cannot be denied by any individual or any government simply because he or she is a human being. Most of the basic ideas and norms of human rights existing now adopted as Universal Declaration of Human Rights by United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Have the root from Second World War and the atrocities of The Holocaust Every year 10 December is celebrated as Human Rights Day.

Education has a very important role to play for promotion and protection of human rights. Education makes us aware about our civil and political right often called as the first generation rights and the social, economic and cultural rights as the second generation rights. Without proper education one cannot be introduced with these essential philosophic and the basic rights and obligations. The concept of expanding human rights through education is now popularly present and traveled to encompass as the third generation rights itself. So the role of education is very important in promotion and protection of human rights.

Objectives Of The Study

The present study carries on some aims and objectives. These aims and objectives are: To study the role of education in the promotion and protection of human rights.

To extend some suggestive measures regarding the role of education in the promotion and protection of human rights.

Methodology

The paper is basically based on secondary data collected from various journals, magazines, periodicals, internet, statistical handbook, etc. The analysis and discussion of this paper are made on the basis of the collected information and some personal observations and opinions.

Importance

A comprehensive education in human rights consists of two components, knowledge and information on human rights and the mechanisms that protect these inalienable rights. It is important that education also imparts the skills needed to promote, defend, and apply human rights in daily life. Education about human rights is distinct from other types of value education. For example, citizenship education or education for democratic citizenship (EDC) is a set of practices and activities aimed at making young people and adults better equipped to participate actively in democratic life by assuming and exercising their rights and responsibilities in the society.

The need of promoting and protecting all human rights is important in order to secure full and universal enjoyment of these rights which cannot be fulfilled without mass awareness and sensitivity to human rights issues. The grand agenda of global peace and prosperity is possible only with understanding and imbibing the values of human rights. Awareness is important in order to resolve the conflicts of human right. This strong participation can be achieved only with human rights education. The Vienna Declaration adopted by General Assembly in 1993 incorporates a separate section on the role of education in the protection and promotion of human rights. The human rights protection and promotion of gender equality requires more than numerical equilibrium, it also requires conceptual equilibrium, and a conscientious effort to redress inequality, as it exists.

Problems

Unfortunately, the motivations and benefits of human rights pose direct challenges to their existence. Human rights are universal since they are said to belong to all humans in every society. Human rights are also supposed to be undeniable, because they flow from and protect human existence; they cannot be taken away without endangering the value of that existence. However, these universal and inalienable qualities of human rights are disputable in both their conception and operation. Beyond the genesis of human rights, wherever they come from, lies a fundamental challenge to their universality, regardless of their origin. With any inception of human rights, one faced with having to acquire acceptance of their authority. There is a problem in that not everyone will share the same motivation or inspiration for human rights. Not everyone will agree that everything asserted as a human right is indeed one. At a very basic level, the proclamation and acceptance of human rights norms inherently involves majoritarian morality.

Notwithstanding that it has been more than six decades since the concept of spreading and protecting human rights as Human Right Education (HRE) first entered the dictionary of international law, it is readily apparent that HRE has not succeeded in preventing widespread human rights abuses. Wards like Rwanda, Srebrenica and Darfur immediately bring to mind examples of our failure to prevent catastrophic human rights violations. This because of inadequacy of education in the prevailing society. Within many nations many political debates rage over the denial or abuse of human rights. Even in prosperous, democratic countries like Canada much public discourse is phrased in the rhetoric of rights. Racism and related phenomena thrive where there is ignorance, unfounded fears of racial, ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic or other forms of difference, the exploitation of prejudices, or the teaching or dissemination of distorted values.

India is the largest democracy in the world. It is also a big country with lots of human rights challenges. And when we have concerns, we raise them with the Indian Government, US Assistant Secretary for democracy human rights and labor Michael Posner said. The major population of India resides in villages which do not get sufficient education support. Problems like human trafficking, exploitation of women commercially and sexually, religious violations, caste related issues are some example leading to human right violations. Moreover, many prisoners in India are also denied their human rights. They are detained without adequate reason.

Role of Education in promotion and protection of Human Rights

The mandate for human rights education is undeniable; you have a human right to know your rights. The Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) exhorts "every individual and every organ of society" to "strive by teaching and education to promote respect for

these rights and freedoms." Article 30 of the UDHR declares that one goal of education should be "the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms." A comprehensive education in human rights consists of two components: Knowledge and information on human rights and the mechanisms that protect these inalienable rights. It is important that education also imparts the skills needed to promote, defend and apply human rights in daily life. The need of promoting and protecting all human rights is important in order to secure full and universal enjoyment of these rights which cannot be fulfilled without mass awareness and sensitivity of human rights issues. Human Rights Education promotes democratic principles. It examines human rights issues without bias and from diverse perspectives through a variety of educational practices. Human Rights Education helps to develop the communication skills and informed critical thinking essential to a democracy. It provides multicultural and historical perspectives on the universal struggle for justice and dignity. Human Rights Education engages the heart as well as the mind. It challenges students to ask what human rights mean to them personally and encourages them to translate caring into informed, nonviolent action. Human Rights Education affirms the interdependence of the human family. It promotes understanding of the complex global forces that create abuses, as well as the ways in which abuses can be abolished and avoided.

Article 51A (1) of Indian Constitution 1950, imposes a duty on all citizens to develop scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform. The effective discharge of this duty will require HRE to give people enhanced awareness and greater openness. Right to Education has also been incorporated.⁷ The Constitution mandates the state to direct its policy towards securing that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral & material abandonment. HRE of the children as well as the other people is indispensable to the full realization of the responsibility under this constitutional directive. Indian state has an obligation to foster respect for international law and treaty obligations as laid down in Article 51 of the Constitution. India is a signatory to UDHR and has ratified Civil and Political Rights Convention, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Convention, CEDAWCRC etc. HRE is inescapable and a legal obligation.

It is important to make each and every people literate just not in order to make them educated and capable of earning but also recognize their rights towards themselves and each other. An educated person only can stand for its right. 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 global responsibility of every person and the government to promote education and hence promote human rights.

Human Rights are not treated as a separate subject in the curricula. NCERT has felt that all contemporary concerns and issues cannot be included in the curriculum as separate subjects of study. It has called upon incorporation of certain emerging concerns including human rights in the course content. University Grants Commission appointed Sikri Committee in 1980 to consider and report on the different ways and means for promoting HRE in India. The committee suggested inculcating values without marks weight age in schools. At college levels it was felt that all disciplines should include human rights' topics, at least which are directly relevant to their disciplines. But it is disappointing to observe that the NCF 2005 has failed in identifying the content of the HRE in schools.

Suggestions

Education is one of the primary human rights. It is the one right which largely conditions in a very substantial manner all other rights. A more cooperative relationship between governments and civil society should be built to protect the human rights. Human rights concepts of religious freedom and religious tolerance can be inculcated while teaching history topics in school. While teaching about sati and widow remarriage, suppression of women and the need for reverse discrimination can be taught. Democracy, equality can enhance human values in a person. 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 awareness 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 right.

Education can ensure human rights in following ways

Education makes an individual aware of his/her rights. At the same time instill respect for the rights of others.

Educational programs should be organized among the illiterate people to aware about their rights. Education must aim at fostering the attitudes of tolerance, respect and solidarity inherent in human rights

Providing knowledge about human rights, in both their national and international dimensions and the institutions established for their implementation.

Developing the individual's awareness of the ways and means by which human rights can be translated into social and political reality at both national and international levels.

Constant care should be taken to create educational awareness about the close relationship between human rights and development and peace including inter alia disarmament.

Education of the youth is important. Schools can work with local communities to deliver anti-violence education. Curricula that teach non-violence, conflict resolution, human rights and gender issues should be included in elementary and secondary schools, universities, professional colleges, and other training settings.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that education has a major role to play for protection and promotion of human rights. HRE is considered as one of the major tools to stop the violations against human rights. Education should be imparted to each and everyone so that they understand the importance of human rights.. 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. According to Kofi Annan the former Secretary General of United Nations, 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.

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Democracy in Whitman's "Songs of Myself"

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Abstract

Walt Whitman (1819-1892) is a democratic poet. His democratic tone is found in the collection 'The Leaves of Grass'. In the poem "Songs of Myself" Walt Whitman sings of America herself. Here, the poet gives a panoramic view of America scene as well as expresses those ideals which make Americanness. The poet addresses himself as an American and so the poem really is 'the epic of America', the song of America' and the 'Bible of Democracy'.

Whitman's 'Songs of Myself' bears the theme of self, the identification of the self with other selves, and the poets relationship with the elements of nature and the universe. Houses and rooms represent Civilization; perfumes indicate individual selves and the atmosphere symbolizes the universal self. 'Song of Myself' is a good example of stylistic features of Leaves of Grass.

Keywords: Self, Selves, Houses, Rooms, Perfumes, Oneself, Individual Selves, Universal Self

Grass, etc.

Walt Whitman is one of the leading greatest poets of America. The great writers like Emerson and Ezra Pound have praised him for his creative power in the field of poetry. His 'Leaves of Grass' is now regarded as one of the greatest immortal classics of the world literature.

Sections 1-5, Line 1-98- In this section, Whitman presents his self and at the same time his self is universalized. While the 'I' is the poet himself. The poet will 'Sing Myself', but "What I assume you shall assume,/For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you". The poet loafs on the grass and invites his soul to appear. He tells that he was formed from this soil. So, he was born there and all his parents, grandparents and great-grandparents were also born in America.

In section 2, Whitman says "Houses and rooms are full of perfume". Here 'Houses' are symbols of other individual self; but outdoors, the earth's atmosphere deals with the universal self. The poet is submerged by other individual selves but he tries to maintain his individuality. Section 5 is the poet's union with his soul. His feeling of fraternity and democratic note are beautifully explained in the poem. He says; "And I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own/And I know that the spirit of God is the brother of my own". This is the union with God bringing him peace and joy.

Section 6-19, Lines 99-388, Section 6 introduces the central theme expressed in 'Song of Myself'. In this section a child appears with both hands full of leaves from the fields and asks the poet, 'What is the grass?'. The poet becomes perplexed to answer but continues thinking about it. He imagines that the grass itself may be the child or it may be the handkerchief of the lord. Here, the grass is a symbol of the divinity latent in the ordinary, common life of man and it is a symbol of the continuity in the life-death cycle. Actually there is no death. Life is a continuous process. In Section 7, Whitman considers each and every atom of this universe which is his part. He sees all and condemns nothing. The universal self finds both 'the earth good and the starts good'. The poet shares with everything around him. Section 8-16 includes a catalog of all that the poet sees-people of sexes, all ages, and all conditions, in many different walks of life, in the city and in the country, by mountain and by the sea. He even includes animals in the catalogue:

'And these tend inward to me, and I tend outward to them, And such as it is to be of these more or less I am,

And of these one and all I weave the song of myself'.

Section 17 again expresses the universality of the poet – his thoughts are "the thoughts of all men in all ages and lands". Sections 18-19 salute all members of humanity. Grass, a central symbol of this epic poem, suggests the divinity of common things. Grass symbolizes the continuation of life after death. Nature is an emblem of God. It indicates that God is everything and everything is God.

Section 20-25, Line 389-58: In this section, the poet proclaims himself to be “solid and sound”, deathless and august and while no one is better than he, no one is worse, either. In section 21, Whitman determines himself “The poets of the body” and also “The poet of the soul”. He is a poet of pleasure and pain and of men and women. In section 22, Whitman declares that he loves sea. He says, “I am integral with you”. He is poet of good and evil. Section 24 presents some of Whitman’s basic theme. He calls himself “kosmos”. The word “kosmos” meaning a universe, is significant and amounts to a renewed definition of the poet’s self as one who loves all people.

Section 26-38 Lines 582-975: Whitman was familiar with the sounds of the bravura’s of birds”, the “bustle of growing wheat” and “the sound of human voice”. The poet can percept everything with his senses. Section 31-33 contains a catalog of the infinite wonders in small things. He believes, for example, that “a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars”. Whitman says the importance of body and soul. He says, within the body there is soul and within the soul there is over soul. So the body has great combination with the soul. The poet praises the primitive life of animals (Section 32) because they have achieved this union – they are born pure. In section 33-37, Whitman experiences a spiritual illumination, passing through suffering despair and the dark night of the soul to finally achieve purification. His self, purified, comprehends the Divine Reality, the ‘transcendental self’. In Section 41, the poet assumes the role of the prophet of a new religion, incorporating all religions :

Taking myself the exact dimensions of Jehovah, Lithographing kronos, zeus his son and Hercules his grandson, Buying drafts of Osiris, Isis, Belus, Brahma, Buddha

In my portfolio placing Manito loose, Allah on a leaf, the crucifix engraved.

He acknowledges that men are divine. They possess power being unified with God. He negates the importance of worshipping old God because God is found everywhere with everyman. He says, “The supernatural is of no account”.

Section 42-52 Lines 1054-1347, In section 42, Whitman says “A call in the midst of the crowd/My own voice, orotund (strong and clear) sweeping and final”. He means that even the position of prophet is perfectly acknowledged with the mankind. He sees the injustice that prevails in society but recognizes that the reality beneath the corruption is deathless. In section 43, he makes distinction between the worship ancient and modern. He practices all religions and even looks beyond them to “What is yet untried”. Section 45 expresses the eternity and ages of man. Everything leads to the mystical union with God. In Section 46, the poet launches himself on the “perpetual journey”, urging all to join him and uttering the warning, “Not I, not anyone else can travel that road for you/you must travel it for yourself”. The poet (Section 47) says that he is a teacher, but he hopes that those he teaches will learn to assert their own individuality. Section 48 repeats the idea that “the soul is not more than the body”, just as “the body is not more than the soul”. The poet asks man not to be “curious about God” because God is everywhere and in everything: In the faces of men and women. I see God and in my own face in the glass”.

Walt Whitman’s Song of Myself contains democratic note in all respects. In every atom he finds his relationship. He acknowledges that all the things around him are the part of him. All the religions and practices that the people follow are his own religions. There is no distinction worshipping ancient and modern. God is everywhere. Man has union with God. Life death is a continuing process. It is one kind of mystical journey to acquire knowledge and wisdom and nothing more.

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