

## Role of Education in Human Right at different level: Indian Scenario

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Human rights are fundamental to the peace, stability, democracy and development of countries. Adoption of Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations on December 10, 1948 gave a global thrust to the Human Rights. The Human Rights in Indian constitution are fundamental rights i.e. Right to Life, Right to Liberty, Right to Freedom of Religion, Right to Equality, Protection against Torture, Right against Illegal Arrest, Right of Bail, Double Jeopardy, Benefit of Doubt, Right to Expression, Right to Assemble, Right to Vote, Right to Constitutional Remedies, Cultural and Educational Rights and Directive Principles of State Policies etc. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights stated that “Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom.” The education for human rights is defined as training, dissemination and information efforts aimed at building the universal culture of human rights through imparting the knowledge and skills, and molding the attitudes.

**Key Words:** Human Rights, Article 51A, Primary Level, Junior Level, Secondary Level, Role of Teacher.

### History of Human Rights

In ages past, there were no human rights. The human race has always been witnessing struggles for certain basic rights. Every part of the world has met with suppression & oppression & struggles & resistances against such onslaughts on basic rights & liberties. Then the idea emerged that people should have certain freedoms. And that idea, in the wake of World War II, resulted finally in the document called the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the thirty rights to which all people are entitled. During 1948, the United Nations’ new Human Rights Commission had captured the attention of the world. Under the dynamic chairmanship of Eleanor Roosevelt—President Franklin Roosevelt’s widow, a human rights champion in her own right and the United States delegate to the UN—the Commission set out to draft the document that became the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Roosevelt, credited with its inspiration, referred to the Declaration as the “*international Magna Carta for all mankind.*” It was adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948.

In its preamble and in Article 1, the Declaration unequivocally proclaims the inherent rights of all human beings: “Disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts

which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people....All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

The Member States of the United Nations pledged to work together to promote the thirty Articles of human rights that, for the first time in history, had been assembled and codified into a single document. In consequence, many of these rights, in various forms, are today part of the constitutional laws of democratic nations. Every year 10 December is celebrated as Human Rights Day.

### Role of Teacher Human Rights

Role of the teacher is progressively being broadened from that of the expert who imparts knowledge to one that includes a mentor or guide, one who extends students’ deep understandings & facilitates the acquisition of higher order thinking skills & creative problem solving skills – skills that are critical for the development of an innovative culture for tomorrow. Our commitment to secure full and universal enjoyment of the human rights imposes on us a duty to work and struggle for a human rights culture. In the establishment of

such a human rights culture the role of teachers is undoubtedly illustrious. Teachers occupy a crucial position in the educational process and substantially influence the shaping of the future. The teachers relate to administrators, parents, community members, to teachers, other staff and students. In relationship with students, teachers are clearly super-ordinate. The recognition of the power of the teacher is the predominant feature of the relationship between the teacher and the student. The teacher plays the roles of diagnostician & prognostics an of student behavior, planner, initiator & supervisor of classroom learning activities, evaluator, model, counselor & guide, disciplinarian, machine operator and clerk. Even before we embark on Human Rights Education, the teachers should know the rights of children and respect them. As teachers, it is not just what we teach matters, but it is also what we do that matters. Equality, the principle that the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration in actions concerning children; respects for the views of the child are the general principles of the Convention on the Rights of a Child. Children have right to leisure, play, recreational & cultural activities, apart from civil rights, liberties, right to health, right to family environment & educational right. While devising class room activities, disciplining, and evaluating, the interests of the child shall be borne in mind. 'Student Welfare' shall be the beacon light guiding all actions.

### **Responsibility of Teachers**

1. Bring to the notice of other teachers, the principal, the textbook writers and the concerned government authority any aberrations in text books. Wrong messages should have no room. The textbooks should be meticulously examined.
2. Take initiatives to enrich the school library and personal collection with books and materials on human rights.
3. Resolve not to violate human rights. Object to and take efforts to correct human rights violations in the school. Lack of basic facilities like water and sanitation, denial of recess for students, excessive corporal punishments, in dignifying remarks etc shall not be tolerated. Conditions of mutual respect shall prevail in the

dealings with parents, other staff and community.

4. Teachers need to be receptive and be constantly learning. Teaching of human rights is not merely a matter of narrating or learning by rote the provisions of various human rights instruments. There is a momentum for revising and redesigning the universal human rights norms. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights is considered to be inadequate as it does not reflect the ethos and norms of all peoples. A modern view points out that the concept of human being under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is limited to that of male, western, white, adult, hetero sexual and owner of assets. Advances in human rights thinking should be taken in to account. The horizon of human rights is ever expanding. The idea that the philosophy of human rights is limited to the civil and political rights often called the "first generation" rights has been discarded. Economic social and cultural rights which place a more positive responsibility on the state are as important as the civil and political rights.

Supplementing these individual rights, collective rights of the people have also emerged as "third generation" rights (rights to peace and development). Human rights movement has progressed further by its new channels of expression. Different classes of people who need assistance and protection are identified. Rights of women, children, minorities and the disabled are some of them.

5. Teachers should not merely follow the textbooks prescribed. Examination of school syllabus is neither adequate. Teachers need to be prepared to analyze the curricular framework and policy implications. Objectives laid down shall be understood and realized.

6. Teachers shall give adequate importance to duty education as well. Indian society is duty based and Human Rights Education must aim at accepting responsibilities by following that for every right there is a responsibility. Duties under Indian Constitution and Universal Declaration of Human Rights shall be emphasized.

7. Teachers shall actively involve themselves in value education. Planning of activities and

conscious efforts are a must. Sidelining values will be an abdication of their responsibility.

8. The teachers positive attitude will go a long way in lowering anxiety levels of learners, while raising their awareness levels of self respect, self discipline, respect and care for others, interdependence and co-operation.

### **Education Human Rights**

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 there 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 it is very important that we know what is the role of education in promotion and protection of human rights. Being a tool to spread awareness and information and assimilating, creating and disseminating knowledge amongst its recipients, education can play a crucial role at each of levels for promotion and protection of human rights.

Human Rights Education teaches us the practice of various values to be adhered. At the same time, the knowledge of it, transforms individuals accountable for their acts either at personal level or societal level. The knowledge of human rights would also lead us to establish an orderly, peaceful, and friendly society both at the international and national spheres. The global task of promoting & protecting all human rights & fundamental freedoms so as to secure full & universal enjoyment of these rights cannot be fulfilled without mass awareness and sensitivity to human rights issues. The grand agenda of global peace & prosperity is possible only with people understanding & imbibing the human rights values. Peoples' participation is a must in resolving human rights conflicts. This matured participation can be a possibility only with human rights education. The Vienna Declaration adopted by General Assembly in 1993 incorporates a separate section on Human Rights Education.

The General Assembly has defined Human Rights Education as 'a lifelong process by which people at all levels of development & in all strata of society learn respect for the dignity of others & the means & methods of ensuring that respect in all societies. The UN General Assembly called upon governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, professional associations & all other sectors of civil society to concentrate their efforts for Human Rights Education. Human Rights Education is a human right, a pre-condition for sustainable development, the civil society and democracy. UN mandates that education shall be directed to the strengthening of respect for human rights & fundamental freedoms.

### **Education at Primary Level**

The children will be very young and just beginning to communicate. Respecting them and their views & and needs is key to inculcate respect for others. Cultural diversity & the values of unity shall be inculcated. Introduction to the human family, friendship, mutual help & appreciation of nature can be valuable. National policy on education discourages the 3R's at this stage; the fourth R 'rights' shall also wait. Moral stories and songs close to human rights themes can be tried on an experimental basis. For integration of human rights, the relevant subjects at the primary stage are languages & environmental studies. Stories, poems and songs concerning human rights values will have to be selected. Even if the prescribed textbook does not cater to the needs of Human Rights Education, the teacher shall supplement from beyond. Instances around & even abroad having implications on human rights may be discussed in the class rooms. The syllabus for Environmental Studies is woven around six common themes close to the child's life such as family, and friends, food, shelter, water, travel and things we make & do. Environmental study covers both natural and the social environment. National Curriculum Framework 2005 identifies objectives of environmental studies amongst which 'to be able to critically address gender concerns and issues of marginalization & oppression with values of equality and justice, and respect for human dignity and rights' is noteworthy. At this stage, students may find it

difficult to understand the concept of 'right' in the sense of a legally recognized & protected interest. Therefore it is suggested that the importance of family, food and shelter be thoroughly clarified. Human rights are those basic and minimal requirements or conditions for dignified human life. The values of equality & justice are reinforced. This information should be the broad base or foundation on which the human rights education will be built later.

### **Education at Junior Level**

The major subjects relevant for human rights education in this stage are social sciences, science & languages. Human rights concepts of religious freedom and religious tolerance can be inculcated while teaching history topics on Buddhism, Jainism. While teaching about tribes & nomads under social change in the subject history, rights of indigenous people can be introduced. Dealing with regional cultures, students can be asked to appreciate cultural diversity, and they can be introduced to cultural rights. Human rights concerns about self determination can be introduced to students while teaching them colonialism and Imperialism. While teaching about sati and widow marriage, suppression of women and the need for reverse discrimination can be taught. Study of freedom struggle can facilitate the introduction of democratic values. Topics of diversity, inequality and government should be utilized to introduce duties of government to protect and promote rights of people. "Democracy and Equality" can be well utilized to inculcate human values.

Rule of Law and Social Justice" gives immense opportunities to discuss the constitutional values of Human Rights and Human Duties. Role of Parliament and Judiciary in promoting and upholding human rights can be discussed with the students. Science sub- theme on food can be used to introduce to the students right to food, freedom from hunger and also health rights. Reproductive Science can be used to impress upon the equal worth of human lives. Pollution topics can help in discussing the right to health and quality environment. Languages offer many gateways for Human Rights Education. Stories, poems, paragraphs can be carefully selected. Sentence framing, role plays,

dramatics etc., can also be used to the optimum. Students can be asked to write essays or poems on human rights issues. One noteworthy difference is that while teaching languages there is no problem of linking it to the relevant limited human rights topics. From the whole range of human rights, anything can be chosen to disseminate information. At this stage it will be ideal to build on the concept of rights and human rights. The gaps between recognition of rights and their realization shall be highlighted. This will put the students on the path towards achieving a future where people will enjoy the benefits of human rights.

### **Role of Education at Secondary Level**

Undoubtedly languages can be very flexibly used in Human Rights Education. National Curriculum Framework 2005 introduces in the 'social sciences' a variety of subjects viz. history, geography, political science and economics. French Revolution, Nazism can be used to discuss the evolution of human rights. A discussion on the omnibus violations of human rights during world wars can sensitize the students. The topic on civil disobedience can well bring out the idea of right to self determination and democracy. Globalizations impact on livelihood and labour can be discussed. Political science subject has great potential in introducing UNO, democracy and fundamental rights under the Constitution. 'Challenges to democracy' can be used to emphasise on the right to education and socio economic empowerment of the people. The subject 'civics' under the existing system is also equally potent in dealing with these human rights topics. The theme 'Financial Institutions for Savings and Credit' of Economics can be used to develop inquiry into suicides of farmers and the violation of their social security rights. The theme on Consumer Rights will reinforce their understanding of rights and help them to distinguish these from human rights. The human rights approach will help the learners to develop a humane outlook. Co-curricular and other activities. The teacher can play a decisive role in selecting and assigning projects on human rights. 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. Parent day, grandparent day can be used to create awareness among parents and grandparents thereby reaching to people beyond the learners in the school. Students can be taken to old age homes and orphanages. They can be motivated to respect and include the handicapped and help them in need. Children from schools for special children can be invited for interaction and togetherness. Students can be made to read out books etc. for the visually impaired. While planning and carrying out activities or functions in schools, the small jobs assigned to students shall not imitate stereo type roles for girls and boys. National Curriculum Framework has taken up gender concerns seriously. It has echoed that 'it is extremely important that text book writers and teachers begin to appreciate that the passive and deferential roles generally assigned to women are socio-culturally constructed and need to be destroyed as quickly as possible. Voices of women in all their glory need to find a prominent place in our textbooks and teaching strategies.' It is pertinent to note that Article 5(a) of Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women casts an obligation on State Parties to take all appropriate measures to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women. Achievers from women and handicapped shall be highlighted. The significance of every member in the society shall be made evident. Dignity of labour and the worth of elders shall be explained. Every opportunity is golden and resourcefulness shall aid the teacher in inculcating human rights in children. Teachers need to interact with other teachers and plan well.

#### **Human Rights Education: Indian Scenario**

Article 51A (1) of Indian Constitution 1950, imposes a duty on all citizens to develop

scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry & reform. The effective discharge of this duty will require Human Rights Education to give people enhanced awareness & greater openness. Right to education has also been incorporated. The Constitution mandates the state to direct its policy towards securing that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in healthy manner and in conditions of freedom & dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral & material abandonment. Human Rights Education 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 Universal Declaration of Human Rights & has ratified Civil and Political Rights Convention, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Convention, Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, commission on the status of women etc. Human Rights Education is inescapable and a legal obligation. Human Rights Education can foster a spirit of respect for others and high citizenship qualities. 'Citizenship in a democracy involves many intellectual, social and moral qualities a democratic citizen should have the understanding and an intellectual integrity to sift truth from falsehood, facts from propaganda & to reject the dangerous appeal of fanaticism & prejudice ... should neither reject the old because it is old nor accept the new because it is new, but dispassionately examine both and courageously reject what arrests the forces of justice and progress. Human Rights Education is important because it can prevent violation of human rights, promote assertion of human rights and human right is an essential part of social studies curriculum.

The National System of Education envisages a common educational structure. The 10 + 2 +3 structure has now been accepted in all parts of the country. Regarding the further break-up of the first 10 years efforts will be made to move towards an elementary system comprising 5 years of primary education & 3 years of upper

primary, followed by 2 years of High School. Higher Education follows in graduate, post graduate and doctoral degree programmes in various subjects including management, professions & technology. The National Policy on Education underlines the importance of value education. The growing concern over the erosion of essential values and an increasing cynicism in society has brought to focus the need for readjustments in the curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for the cultivation of social & moral values. 'Human Rights' is not treated as a separate subject in the curricula. 'National Council of Education Research' and Training has felt that all contemporary concerns & 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. This is in line with the UNESCO suggestion.

Human rights education cannot be reduced to the simple introduction of human rights content in already overburdened curricula. It brings about a profound reform of education, which touches upon curriculum in-service & pre-service training, text books, methodology, classroom management & the organization of the education system at all levels. But it is disappointing to observe that the NCF (National Curriculum Framework) 2005 has failed in identifying the content of the Human Rights Education in schools. University Grants Commission appointed SIKRI Committee in 1980 to consider and report on the different ways and means for promoting Human Rights Education in India. The committee suggested inculcating values without marks weightage in

schools. At college levels it was felt that all disciplines should be including human rights topics at least which are directly relevant to their disciplines. Now Human Rights Education is part of many university programmes. Interestingly, certificate, diploma, postgraduate diploma and even masters' programme in human rights are available today. Bar Council of India has made human rights a compulsory subject for professional law degree programme. Many universities offer human rights subject for postgraduate programme in law.

### **Conclusion**

There is no doubt that education has a major role to play for protection and promotion of human rights. Human Rights Education is considered as one of the major tools to stop the violations against human rights. From the above discussion we saw the importance and how education can play a vital role in this regard.

Education should be imparted to each and everyone so that they understand the importance of 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. For integration of human rights, the relevant subjects at the primary stage are languages & environmental studies. Stories, poems and songs concerning human rights values will have to be selected. Education should impart gender equality, respect for human dignity and rights.

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