THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PEACE EDUCATION: THE CASE OF ALBANIA

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The concept of peace education is directly connected with the rise of western modernity. This concerns that, the concept of both peace and education as well as the combined concept of peace education. Thus, education is the most important tool of engaging in the creation of a culture of peace. It is a key factor when it comes to the enhancement and realization of positive and negative social change and it allows an individual to make informed decisions on various aspects that affect his or her life. In that way one aims towards achieving the greatest good for the majority of people. The concept of education gives people a sense of their own power to achieve their potential. It motivates and enables one to try and solve other problems and is a key mind opener that has a ripple effect. However, in this paper is going to be presented a theoretical and analytical framework of peace education in Albania.

The current views on peace education in Albania

Albania is a post communist country that still performs some situations of transition caused by the passing from communist regime to democratic regime. Thus, this transition brought out radical changes in politic, social, economic, legislation system, education system etc. These changes were so much needed for concurring a radical change in social life of Albanians. Consequently to this, it was needed also for the reflection of changes in theory, policy, legislative and practice of education in general and of peace education in particular. However, as we all, as Albanian academics are aware of, during the communist regime, the development of education in all its aspects, forms and levels were depended on communist ideology, promoting real sciences of Marxism. According to this, at the each beginning of changes, the transformation of education was considered to be a long-term process, but in the very few years, the education has undergone indeed a very important changes. Firstly by introducing new subjects such as Economics and Philosophy and secondly, the education for peace as well is being introduced as a new area of peace.

Albania as a post-communist society and going through problematic transitions was faced by weak civil society and weak governance. As a matter of fact, due to this issue, the country was contained in illegal weapons after the civil unrest or Albanian civil war of 1997, where nearly one of illegal weapon has been property per 15 people. Thus, this showed clearly, that the government of Albania did not do much for the establishment of

regular form of society security. This caused non functioning of cultural and education for peace in the country. After 1998 in Albania, beside other changes in general, the governmental institutions, particularly schools, operating directly with education should come up with new peaceful programs and curricula, introduce new and flexible peace programmers that will indeed be very useful not only for the schools and community but for all society and the entire country. Hence, Albanian society still need responsibility of citizens, open to other societies members, their society social members, their cultures and traditions, capable of dealing with and solving conflicts through peaceful human means.

Thus idea of peace education in Albania has been transformative to be all involved in it, where as there are applied cross- and extra-curricular activities program at local and regional levels, where as teachers and youngsters are being trained to promote education for peace at their schools and the society surrounding them. Even thought, may not be said that this is the end, because peace education has just begun its application in Albania and hopefully will be firmly established in practice in all classrooms in Albania for a long time. Peace education is important to be applicable because it help peace in promoting understanding, acceptance and friendship among all societies members and nations.

Educating for Values: Imperative for Promotion of Democratic Culture

Almost 170 years later, nothing of what Hugo projected has become a reality. On the contrary more sophisticated arms are in the hands, justice and election rights have been achieved but bullets and shells are still used to deprive us of our rights to life. Thus, human conflicts and wars are still present in every society and to somehow it is our duty to get rid of it and promote peace. The conflicts in the society should be solved by using peaceful means and by approaching peace education. We should try to bring to an end all human conflicts at each society. Therefore, what makes today's efforts specific when compared to the past is the understanding of peace not only for a single society or nation, but of humanity as whole.

The promotion of peace should be introduced as separate curricula in all school levels and children's education always should begin with socialization of their culture and community. Thus, listed as the following are some of the curriculum inputs essential to promoting a culture of peace through education such as: love, truth, purity particularly both physical and mental one, a sense of responsibility, humility, the willingness to be corrected and the courage to accept one's mistakes, leadership, initiatives make peace or to improve a given situation, positive thinking and optimism.

In order for Peace Education to be effective at any society, the following values are important to be observed and applied by all human beings: dignity, equality, justice, protection of the rights of all individuals, participation freedom of speech and expression, human dignity, social justice, protection of the rights of all peoples, participation, and freedom of speech and expression.

Democracy as a Social Factor in Peace Education

As we know, the most important value in the social life and in education is the promotion of democracy. Democracy is one of the best systems available for managing conflicts without having recourse of violence. Violence excludes and disables all, except those who wield power. In times of large-scale conflict or war, citizenship rights get de-activated. People can be empowered only in a state of peace. A democracy that fails to foster a culture of peace stands is in danger of degenerating into oligarchy, dictatorship, or fascism, as in Hitler's Germany.

Consequently to this, we can say that, differences of opinion, belief, ideology, culture etc are a natural part of every society. Conflicts emerge from the disharmony of differences. People may choose to approach these conflicts from a perspective of peace or from a perspective of violence. Education is basic to people participation, which is the hallmark of democracy. For this reason we can say that choose of conflicts in nowadays can concur by forming and applying of peace education in schools curricula. Illiteracy disables democracy and limits people to participation for the casting of their vote, as and when elections take place. As we can say that democracy cannot be a government of the people, by the people for the people. Peace is a pre-requisite for participation and occurring by the help of education.

However, the main elements of peace in education are teachers and academics, whose conduct in the symphony of education. More than any other subject or educational goal, education for peace depends on the academics and teacher's sense of vocation and the kind of person that she/he is. Thus, it is obvious that the success of the initiative for education for peace substantially depends on the vision, manner of motivations, skills and awareness of academics and teachers. Academics and teachers who carry out education for peace have to cherish its values, hold comparable attitudes, and exhibit similar behavioral tendencies. We can stress on the little point in introducing a curriculum for education for peace in schools if the teachers who implement it and the teacher-educators who train them, are culturally prejudiced, intolerant, and pedagogically ill-equipped to transact the messages of the text in the classroom in a way that promotes peace. Teacher education institutions, in this context, have a very vital role to play as they are the centers that mould the teaching fraternity of the country through their pre-service and in-service teacher education program.

Developing a Peace School Culture

It is really very important to focus on some aspects of school culture because this may serve as a fertile ground for promoting the objective of peace education. Thus, learning to make a living is not the only reason for getting education because there is found another important feature such as equally important byproduct learning to make a life, a life that is beneficial, useful and peaceful. It is so important to stress that humans are social beings and not social animals where their success in life is largely a matter of successful social relations. So, according to the social sciences literatures student age is the crucially important period which enriches one's personal life, nurtures social adjustments, fosters friendship and understanding and affects one's whole life pattern. Seen from this perspective, one could say that, the critical necessity of teaching students, youth and young leaders the art of living together, in mutual respect, justice, love and peace is peace education

performers. Thus, to perform a good cohabitation between the different social classes and the new reorganization of Albania society is necessary peace education. As well, one of the main factors of the peace education within a society is school, in which the children from different social classes take place and are socializing with the main issues of social life and society where they are living on.

The strategic pedagogy of education for peace presupposed in this paper is as well that of integration. Integration is the ideal, especially since peace is an integrative and all-embracing concept. The integrated approach is to be understood from two points of view. At first point of view or at the broader level, integration occurs when all the activities of the school, curricular as well as co-curricular are geared toward education for peace. At the classroom level, peace dimensions are woven into the contents of the lessons, which are treated also as a means of helping students to imbibe peace values. Here, emphasis is not merely on acquisition of knowledge but also on the process through which peace is achieved. The primary stage of education is the ideal time for laying the foundation of a peace-oriented personality.

Thus, the values that make up a peace-oriented personality include hygiene both of the self and of the surroundings, respect for others and for elders, recognition of the dignity of labor, honesty, love, sharing and cooperation, tolerance, regularity, punctuality, responsibility, etc. All children are naturally loving and kind, but they are also imbued with the potential to be otherwise. Education for peace for primary school children is about helping them enjoy and celebrate diversity, beauty, and harmony in nature.

Instead of Conclusion: Recommendation of the Undertaken Steps in Implementing Peace Education

Therefore, based to my point of view and the above-mentioned issues, it is an imperative duty to educate the younger generation to accept a life of peace and harmony with others remains an indisputable priority for Albanian schools. The growing tendency to refer to violent means in solving conflicts is a great challenge to schools. It is reflected in school life too, when it comes to solving conflicts among students, teachers, parents community and the society at large. Fear that it will continue to be considered a way of resolving social and civil conflict later, in adult life, is strong. The trained teachers must try to integrate into the general curriculum, issues of tolerance, peace education, human rights, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, mediation, etc. Trying to achieve these objectives, schools have constantly been engaged in projects, which, though different in focus, have the same aim of democratic citizenship education.

As well, I strongly do recommend that, by promoting education for peace and writing good curriculum and the outputs of each socio-cultural course that are being teaching in Albanian schools must be reversed according to the European conditions and European integration that are bringing Albanian and other society toward a world without bounders. This world has been formed from the ideas of, no discrimination between races, communities and cultures. In the curricula and outputs of history, geography, draw lesson, music and literature courses must take an important place a new notions for education of peace, education of forming new values against war and conflicts for different issues. In schools, most important place must take

common recreational and cultural activities, throw which new generation take new human and cultural values.

The main idea and feature of peace education can be reached by so many ways, but here in this paper it is suggested to be reaching by common activities between different nations and societies by applying common cultural activities such as films, theatre, festivals, sports game, scientific conferences in philosophy and politics and vice versa touristic tours.