

## Teachings of Human Rights Education: A Study Reasons

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### Abstract

The concept of human rights is one of the most widely deliberated and debated concepts of contemporary socio-political and religio-cultural spheres at national and international arenas. The term Human Rights are those minimal rights, freedoms and securities of life, which are incontrovertible, inviolable, universal, indivisible, interdependent, inter-related, equalitarian and non-discriminatory in nature, possessed or entitled by every human being, by virtue of their humanity (regardless of nationality, gender, ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other discriminatory parameters). These rights are inherent in our nature and without which we cannot live as human beings. These rights aim at conferring honour and dignity on mankind and eliminating exploitation, oppression, despotism and injustice, from severe political, legal, and social abuses. Human Rights are privilege belonging to all *Homo sapiens* and are standards that outline the conditions necessary to live in full dignity.

Human Rights Education as both abstract and practical, strives and uphold the inspiring vision of a free, just, and peaceful world and set minimum standards for (individual and institutions), towards an environment where human rights are practiced and lived in the daily life of the whole community. Human Rights Education is all learning that develops the knowledge, skills, and values of human rights and constitutes an essential contribution to the long-term prevention of human rights abuses and represents an important investment in the endeavour to achieve a just society in which all human rights of all persons are valued and cherished.

**Key Words:** Human Rights, Education, UNO, International Conventions,

### Introduction

Human Rights Education (henceforth HRE) refers to the expansion of the learning process designed to help people to realize and comprehend their evident and potential roles within their communities as well as establish their meaningful existence in the world. It also involves an in-depth exchange of experiences between diverse nationalities. Amnesty International mentioned the empowering effects of HRE that contribute to the development of the equality-grounded attitudes and skills.<sup>1</sup> Knowing your rights and respecting the rights of others can make you a valuable and well-revered member of your community or a particular society.

Creating the real idea of human rights and making people know its importance in their day to day life; Education (doubtless) serves a powerful instrument. It is thriving tool for eliminating the violations of human rights. An educated civilization can only know its rights and hence have the knowledge to protect it. Kofi Annan, (the former Secretary General of United Nations General Assembly) 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.

HRE is the thoughtful preparation of preparing individuals, groups, and communities with the content, attitudes, and skills that encourage the recognition, promotion, and protection of human rights<sup>2</sup> and encompasses cognitive, affective, and behavioural elements<sup>3</sup>.

HRE routinely includes teaching the various types of human rights (civil, political, economic, social, cultural), the legal basis of human rights (e.g., human rights instruments), historic and contemporary human rights violations, advocacy efforts on how human rights principles and concepts can be implemented in classrooms and beyond, and how one can design opportunities for students to engage in actions that promote and protect human rights<sup>4</sup>.

HRE has become a burning topic for learners, researcher as well as teachers with many varieties and continually changing the field and respond to the development of the world society.<sup>5</sup> Nowadays, in classroom HRE discusses with various names like Conflict Resolution, Multicultural Education, Development Education, World Order Studied, Environment Studies & ADR, and Restorative Justice Education.

In the preamble of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) the importance and significance of education with special reference to human rights are elaborated in following lines:

“... [E]very individual and every organ of society ... shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms...”<sup>6</sup>

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) identified education itself as fundamental to the promotion of human rights. Article 26 asserts “Everyone has the right to education...Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendships among all nations, racial or religious groups”. The centrality of HRE was highlighted at the United Nations’ World Conference on Human Rights held in 1993 which resulted in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (UN, 2003, paragraph 33 of Section I) wherein it is stated that “HRE, training and public information are essential for the promotion and achievement of stable and harmonious relations among communities and for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace”.

According to Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “The main objective to get a common standard of achievement for all nations and its peoples, and all provisions of the declaration shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedom; and to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance.”<sup>7</sup>

### **Rationale for Teaching of Human Rights Education**

Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 1993 emphasises HRE and calls on all states and institutions to include human humanitarian law, democracy and rule of law as subjects in the curriculum of all learning institutions in a formal and non-formal setting.<sup>8</sup> HRE is vital element in enabling people to understand, advocate for, and operationalize their rights and the rights of others in an educational context. Viewed as a process and embodied in the practice of education, HRE is linked with democratic ways of working and with the empowerment of individuals and groups. In a school context, it relates to governance, relations, classroom climate, pedagogy and curriculum content and has the capacity to transform educational relationships for children, parents and teachers.

**HRE** promotes democratic principles. It examines human rights issues without bias and from diverse perspectives through a variety of educational practices.

**HRE** 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.

**HRE** 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.

**HRE** 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.

**1) HRE enlightens on the diversity and decent attitude to it:**

In an ideal scenario, individuals should be taught on their human rights since young age. If children understand that the world is full of people with different ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds, they will likely begin to appreciate the diversity rather than similarity. Diversity teaches that every individual is unique; therefore their rights should be respected. Human rights education, in this case, nurtures kind-hearted personalities and even decreases the rates of bullying in schools.

**2) It unveils the historical development of the human rights' concept:**

Human rights education can be taught in the light of history and the pivotal changes, which led to the establishment of ultimate freedoms and values. Students learn about the challenges people faced when trying to fight for their integral right – freedom. You can travel throughout history pages from slavery times to emancipation, from restricted educational opportunities for women to rational feminism. The inclusion of the human rights history into the curriculum makes more and more people appreciate their rights, which should be inviolable in the modern world. In fact, many colleges and universities have incorporated studying human rights and their development history in various disciplines. While the subject is quite difficult and tricky to argue, students often seek help and buy college research papers on human rights and how those are adhered to in different communities and societies.

**3) It teaches to discern the existent problems and violations of human rights:**

If you estimate all the existent issues related to the human rights violation, you will have more justifiable reasons to talk about it and contribute to positive transformations. For instance, poverty is one of the greatest human rights issues. Knowing what exactly causes poverty may even help prevent it. Usually, the main cause is not even living in a developing country but having no access to high-quality education. Well-educated people tend to land jobs they deserve despite their citizenship because they know how to realize their rights.

**4) Educational programs on human rights enhance your critical thinking:**

The kernel of decent education is not cramming information into students' brains. Any well-organized educational model is aimed not only at providing the necessary information on the issue but also at delving into all its aspects profoundly. In other words, it teaches us to analyze circumstances and attitudes, as well as the reasons behind them. When learning about human rights, everyone interested should be able to analyze the fundamental principles critically through the lens of experience and facts.

**5) Human rights education develops empathetic potential and tolerance:**

It is imperative that all people comprehend the universality of human rights. So, these rights cannot be someone's privileges based on their social status. These rights are the same for the rich and the poor. Your human rights do not lose their power when you are in a different country. You should be treated without bias despite your race, intellectual capacity, and beliefs. If someone violates your rights, then they unknowingly violate their rights as well. The comprehension of the power of human rights universality unites us all and encourages mutual tolerance.

**6) It teaches you to defend your rights:**

If you know what your rights are, then you know when you should defend them. The pillars of the Human Rights Declaration are based on virtues and values, so this knowledge boosts your moral principles. If someone discriminates you, you will likely stand up for your rights and beliefs.

**7) It instigates righteous activities of social justice:**

We can assume that in most cases a person who knows and understands the human rights is compassionate and fair. Thus, such an individual will crave for social justice around them. In this regard, human rights education encourages protection of not only one's own rights but also the rights of the most vulnerable people within the communities. If such a person has a volunteering potential, then it is likely they will participate in charity events or create special groups to support people in need.

**8) It contributes to human rights activism:**

There is a range of organizations that promote and support fundamental human rights. Human rights education discloses the most useful organizations of this kind, encouraging promotion on sites and within the vulnerable communities.

**Conclusion**

Education is intrinsically valuable and most effective instrument for personal empowerment. Education takes on the status of a human right because it is integral to and enhances human dignity through its fruits of knowledge, wisdom and understanding. Moreover, for instrumental reasons education has the status of a multi-faceted social, economic and cultural human right. It is a social right because in the context of the community it promotes the full development of the human personality. It is an economic right because it facilitates economic self-sufficiency through employment or self-employment. It is a cultural right because the international community has directed education toward the building of a universal culture of human rights. In short, education is the very prerequisite for the individual to function fully as a human being in modern society.

Human Rights Education strives towards an environment where human rights are practised and lived in the daily life of the whole school community. As well as cognitive learning, Human Rights Education includes the social and emotional development of all those involved in the learning and teaching process. A rights-based environment respects and promotes the human rights of all school actors and is characterized by mutual understanding, respect and responsibility. It enables children to express their views freely and to participate in school life, and offers them appropriate opportunities for interacting with the wider community. and no doubt education is the most important tool for spreading fundamental/ human rights awareness. Research on Human Rights Education demonstrates its capacity to produce numerous positive outcomes for children and adolescents, including an improved sense of self-worth, increased empathy, and a reduction in bullying and harmful behaviours in classrooms. Thus, a core part of Human Rights Education is the strengthening of respect for human rights. It is now a global responsible of every person and the government to promote education and hence promote human rights. Through human rights education you can empower yourself and others to develop the skills and attitudes that promote equality, dignity and respect in your community, society and worldwide.

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