

# Relevance of Human Rights Education in Indian Education System

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## **Abstract:**

**Background:** Human rights education is a crucial component of the right to education and has recently received more attention as a separate human right. Understanding one's own and other people's rights and freedoms is regarded as a crucial component of ensuring that every person's rights are respected. The fundamental tenet of human rights education is that students should be instilled with a greater feeling of responsibility for other people's rights in addition to being trained as professionals. Human rights education strives to provide people, particularly Indian youth, the skills they need to effect societal change.

**Methods:** Currently, there are numerous obstacles affecting human rights including poverty, food security, terrorism, income inequalities and many more. An open and honest discussion of the challenges, international and regional coordination, resource convergence, and technological cooperation are all very important.

**Conclusion:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), which was the first organization in India to promote human rights, believes that cooperation and coordination between various organizations at the regional, national, and international levels are crucial for improved human rights protection and promotion. Only by enhancing Human Rights Education at all levels via the efforts of NHRC this will be accomplished. This paper aims at highlighting the role of The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in spreading human rights education for creating awareness and respect for human rights.

**Keywords:** Human Rights Education, Societal Changes, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Human Rights.

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## I. Introduction

Humanity and human rights coexist. The idea of human rights as a whole has undergone certain changes, though, over time. Human rights are obviously more and more important in the modern world. There are many different aspects of human rights, but for a very long period, only civil and political rights were prioritized. Today, however, emphasis is also put on the economic, social, and cultural rights. As a result, new laws, charters, and agreements have been facilitated by the expansion of human rights. Notwithstanding this, there has been a major threat to human rights in the changing national and worldwide context as a result of globalization. One approach to address this issue is by implementing human rights education at all educational levels. Since the National Human Rights Commission was established in 1993, it has made every effort to raise awareness of human rights, which is one of its responsibilities under Section 12(h) of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. The Protection of Human Rights Act of 1993 obligates the National Human Rights Commission to promote human rights literacy and awareness through a number of schools, colleges, educational institutions, etc. The National Human Rights Commission has been working tirelessly to enforce these obligations.

## **Keywords**

- **Human Rights Education:** Human rights education is a lifelong process that builds knowledge and skills, as well as attitudes and behaviours, to promote and uphold human rights.
- **Societal Changes:** Societal change refers to an alteration in the social order of the society. It may include changes in nature, social institutions, social behaviours or social relations.
- **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC):** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India is an autonomous public body constituted on 12 October 1993 under the Protection of Human Rights Ordinance of 28 September 1993. It was given a statutory basis by the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.
- **Human Rights:** 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.

## **II. Literature Review**

Devaki Jain & Sitharamam Kakarala in their research paper, "Locating Human Rights Education in the broader human rights landscape" (2005), found that the National Human Rights Commission's initiatives are of various kinds, ranging from actively engaging and advising various apex educational agencies like the University Grants Commission to focus human rights education in a big way at the college and university levels, and the National Council for Educational Rights.

Srividhya Jayakumar in a research paper, "Human Rights Education – The Role of Teachers", (2007), recommended that the school should make serious efforts to equip teachers with knowledge and streamline planning, management, and instruction for effective human rights teaching. Institutional accountability will become a powerful foundation in the advancement of human rights education in India.

Pranati Panda in her research paper, "Human Rights Education in Indian Schools: Curriculum Development", stated that, human rights education must have an impact beginning with early childhood education and extending across a variety of disciplines in order to create a culture that values human rights. The human rights movement can therefore become a mass movement to promote improved social order and a peaceful environment for the nation with stronger commitment from all sectors and the creation of a sound, realistic plan of action.

### **Objectives**

- To Investigate the National Human Rights Commission's (NHRC) role in advancing human rights education in India
- To examine the basic aspects addressed in India's human rights education.

### **Limitations**

- The study is undertaken by the use of secondary data collected from various sources which may have some deficiencies.
- Due to the limitation of time, Researcher was unable to develop a detailed insight into the topic

### **Research Methodology**

The study is based on secondary data. Relevant data are availed from various sources of information such as Research Papers, Reports, Books, Websites etc.

### **National Human Rights Commission: History**

The National Human Rights Commission of India was set up in 1993 for "better protection of human rights and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto". It is a legally recognized, independent organisation. It has a broad mandate and complete financial and operational autonomy. "SarveBhavantuSukhinah," the National Human Rights Commission's motto, is intended to be attained through a rights-based system in which respect for human beings and their dignity is fundamental. The fundamental structure for this rights-based system is provided by the Indian Constitution. The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, set forth several goals, which the Commission has worked to give a positive meaning and content during the past 14 years. The Commission has also made a strong and successful effort during this time to raise public authorities' understanding of the need to promote and preserve human rights in the nation. Early on after its creation, the Commission concentrated on civil and political rights issues including terrorism and insurgency, prisons, the observation of deaths in custody, instances involving people who were detained, including mental health facilities and juvenile detention facilities, etc. The economic, social, and cultural rights have, however, also received more attention in recent years. The Commission holds the view that all rights are interconnected and interdependent. The Commission has taken on work in a variety of areas, including the right to health, food, and education, as well as the rights of those who have been affected due to natural and man-made disasters, in addition to fighting for the abolition of bonded labour, the protection of children's rights, and the rights of women.

### **Role of National Human Rights Commission in Promoting Human Rights Education**

The NHRC, under Section 12(h) of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, is required to promote human rights literacy among the various societal segments and promote awareness of the safeguards offered for these rights through publications, the media, seminars, and other available means. Government believe that effective administration that is responsive to the needs for food, clothing, shelter, education, and health is the finest approach to defend their rights. Good governance would lead to a life of dignity and the ability for people to properly understand and protect their rights. In order to fulfil its obligations under Section 12(h) of the legislation, the Commission has so decided to adopt a diversified strategy. Thus, the Commission has made an effort to connect the educational system. In order to determine how human rights issues could be integrated into

the educational system, it has collaborated closely with the Department of Education's Ministry of Human Resource Development, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), and the National Council for Teachers Education (NCTE). A comprehensive approach and the participation of all relevant parties, both governmental and non-governmental, are necessary to address the issue of human rights education. The period 1995-2004 was designated by the United Nations as the UN Decade for Human Rights Education.

### **Functions & Powers of NHRC**

- The functions of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) as stated in Section 12 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 includes enquiry into complaints of violation of human rights or negligence in the prevention of such violation by a public servant. The Commission also studies treaties and international instruments on human rights and makes recommendations for their effective implementation to the Government.
- NHRC can investigate any complaints related to violations of Human Rights in India either suo-moto or after receiving a petition.
- NHRC can interfere in any judicial process that involves any allegation of violation of Human Rights.
- It can visit any prison/institute under the control of the state governments to observe the living conditions of inmates. It can further make recommendations based on its observations to the authorities.
- NHRC can review the provisions of the Constitution that safeguard Human Rights and can suggest necessary restorative measures.
- Research in the field of Human Rights is also promoted by the NHRC.
- Human Rights awareness and literacy through different media are promoted by NHRC in various sectors of society.
- NHRC has the power to recommend suitable steps that can prevent violation of Human Rights in India to both Central as well as State Governments.
- The President of India gets an annual report from NHRC which is laid before both the Houses of the Parliament.

### **Contents of Human Rights Education**

- The goal of human rights education should be to ensure that everyone can fully exercise their fundamental rights and liberties without prejudice to their caste, religion, gender, socioeconomic situation, or other factors. The NHRC's structure for promoting human rights education contained the following elements:
- While regional and national intricacies must be taken into consideration, it is the responsibility of States, regardless of their political, civil, economic, and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- All human rights are universal, indivisible, interrelated, and interdependent;
- All human rights are necessary for the full development of the human personality.
- Universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms contribute to stability, security and well-being, necessary for socio-economic development;
- Human rights, democracy, peace and development are interdependent and mutually reinforcing;
- Rights of women and girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights;
- Human rights education should be aimed at the full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life. Awareness towards prevention of gender based -violence, sexual harassment and exploitation should be a component of education programmes;
- Promotion and protection of the rights of the child is a priority and requires dissemination of knowledge of relevant standards. Special efforts are needed to eradicate child labour, child abuse and exploitation;
- Special attention should be paid to the rights of persons belonging to various vulnerable groups - national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, indigenous people, refugees and internally displaced persons, migrant workers, persons with HIV/AIDS and other health problems, disabled, and elderly;
- Special attention should be also given to the mobilization of the public opinion against major threats and challenges to human rights: terrorism, organized crime, corruption, trafficking of human beings for exploitative purposes, drug trafficking, violence etc. Education for human rights should be multidisciplinary and should include the following:
- Knowledge of internationally recognized human rights standards enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenants, international conventions, declarations and protocols, and international procedures and mechanisms for human rights protection as well as norms of international humanitarian law;
- Knowledge of national laws and procedures related to human rights;

- Skills necessary for the application of these standards and procedures in everyday life;
- Behavioural patterns based upon vigilance against violations of human rights wherever they occur;
- Knowledge of social realities and impact of globalization process.

### **III. Conclusion**

To raise a population's understanding of and respect for human rights, human rights education is crucial. Knowing about these rights is just the start of awareness. The NHRC has noted a direct connection between the development of an economically, socially, and culturally just society and the ability for a human rights culture to establish itself, endure, and flourish. So, the task at hand is to educate the powerful about their rights so that they may learn how to respect them and to educate the weak about their rights in order to learn how to protect them.

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