

Assessing Effectiveness of Teacher Training in Cultivating Peace: An Experimental Study

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Abstract

Peace is pre-requisite for sustainable socio-economic development. The condition of peace has been deteriorating for last many decades in many parts of the world. Global Peace Index report 2018 gives very dismal picture of the global peace. In this context it has become imperative to construct the defence of peace through education. As peace education is missing in the majority of teacher education programs therefore teachers are neither properly prepared nor skilled to teach peace and other related concepts. Therefore, this experimental study had been designed to assess the effectiveness of teachers' training in cultivating and teaching peace. In this study we had hypothesized that teachers' capacity building in teaching of peace has a positive effect on the students' understanding about peace. The data through pre and post-intervention approach was collected and analysed through paired sample two tailed t-test. Pre-intervention (N=120, m=29.88, s=12.6) and post-intervention (N=120, m=74.29, s=10.3) scores show an increase of 148.6% in students understanding about peace related ideas. The difference of two means (m= -44.417, s=12.17, SE=1.11) and value of t (119) -39.97 with p-value of 0.000. Therefore we have sufficient evidence to conclude that teachers' capacity building and training is very effective in teaching and promoting peace education and it also have a significant positive effect on the students' understanding and skills related to peace. Hence we recommend that integration of peace education in teacher education programs can be helpful in building peace in the mind of new generation.

Introduction

According to the UNESCO Preamble, "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed" (UNESCO, 1945). Today the need for defence of peace has further increased in the wake of recent socio-political shifts and new threats to peace at local and global levels. The world

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peace is under attack in different ways; ethnic, political or religious riots on the rise and countries with economic disparities face tension, conflicts, terrorism, political instability or civil war (Sinclair, 2008). Peace is the biggest issue in Pakistan also. According to the Global Peace Index (GPI) 2018, published by *Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)*, the condition of peace in Pakistan has deteriorated further during last few years (IEP, 2018). A comparison of GPI 2008 and 2018 shows a negative change in peace in Pakistan and the overall socio-political condition in many parts aggravated further during this period. This country is faced with identity based conflicts, terrorism, violence, religious extremism and political instability. Although government of Pakistan, with the help of international society, is trying to reinstate peace but these efforts are failing (Ali, 2013). Durable peace is possible only when *peace* is in the mind of men that is only possible through integration of peace in human behaviour by sowing, nurturing, and promoting ideas related to peace. Education is an effective mean to mould human behaviour and it can contribute to the process of peace building as well (Smith, 2010).

Peace is prerequisite for social, cultural and economic development of every society thus it is imperative to integrate *peace education* in school curriculum. The idea of educating peace through peace education is not new in the human society. It has been practiced informally and conflict resolution traditions have been passed down from generation to generation that help promote peace within their communities (Harris, *Encyclopedia of Peace Education: History of Peace Education*, 2008). As principal objective of education is to serve the basic needs of individuals and society; peace is a basic need so education should be designed to promote peace in the society. In 1948, peace education was first introduced in formal education system at Manchester College, USA. According to the scientific studies schools are helpful in bringing a change in the society and they can contribute to multi-faceted efforts towards a positive changes goal (Sinclair & Davies, 2008).

In a classroom teacher or peace educator equips the students with necessary tools through practical teaching, case studies, activities and situation analysis (Harris, *Encyclopedia of Peace Education: History of Peace Education*, 2008). Teachers should be given necessary training not only to teach Peace Education, but also developing students' attitude and skills (Lydia, *The Peace Education Programme (PEP) Evaluation*, 2009). Educational institutions are the best places to promote the idea of peaceful coexistence whereas teachers and students are the best society members to start with because the future of planet earth is in their hands. Peace education equips students with peace cultivating and peace promoting skills that can be used to understand the individuals and societal problems and limitations, to trace the root causes of conflicts and negative peace, to manage interpersonal conflicts, to analyse civil, cultural, environmental, and global violence that take place outside schools (Danesh, 2008). Development of peace skills at school age is very important. Acquisition of peaceful

conflict resolution skills by the youngsters can make their personalities stronger and acceptable, their lives easier and more pleasant, and the society more peaceful and prosperous (Luis & Maria, 2018). Furthermore, well planned, nicely organized and evocative activities for children are very much helpful in developing their emotions and adjusting their behaviour (Dana & Amy, 2016).

When peace education is considered a multi-disciplinary field of study then it share content with other disciplines that may include social sciences, applied sciences and humanities, likewise when it is linked with life skills education comprised of many themes including human rights, humanitarian rules and principles, conflict resolution, causes of conflict, and citizenship. Furthermore teacher training in education for peace can add considerable value to the existing programs and projects, aim at constructing defence of peace in the mind of men.

Gap between teachers' perspective and responsiveness of curricula has serious implications but this gap can be bridged through support for teachers based on peace education (Lauritzen & Nodel, 2017). In response to changing local and global needs many institutes, around the world, are offering courses or programs related or supportive to peace and peace education. In this regard different programs are being taught in educational institutions that directly or indirectly contribute to "peace education", such programs may include; Citizenship, Coexistence, Cognitive and Emotional Aspects of Conflict, Conflict Analysis, Conflict management, Conflict resolution, Democracy, Freedom and war, Gender issues, history of peace and war, Human Rights and Democracy, Human rights, Identity based conflicts, Interfaith dialogues, International Relations, Interpersonal Skills, Learning to Live Together, Peace Studies, Political Science, Policy studies, Media and Peace, Psychology of conflict and coexistence, Public Policy, Refugee Studies, Regional Integration and Co-operation, Right to Peace, Religion, Socio-Emotional Skills, Social studies, Social Work, Sociology of Peace and War, Spiritualism, Terrorism, Values in Education, Violence against children and women, and War and Peace. In the majority of the cases "Peace Education" as separate domain does not exist but with the passage of time it is being introduced in more and more institutions. Such initiatives will provide a foundation for further advancement in this field and promote a culture of coexistence. Likewise researchers are investing time and energies to understand the different factors contributing to the peace and to solve the peace related problems. Training program should be designed to enable and encourage educators, teachers, and peace trainers to think constructively about social and political issues, to develop constructive attitudes towards living together and solving problem peacefully (Lydia, The Peace Education Programme (PEP) Evaluation, 2009). Peace studies provide an opportunity to analyze the contributing factors to peace and war, to find the durable solutions, to develop useful tools pertaining to peace promotion and preservation.

According to the National Education Policy of Pakistan 2009 pp. 45, “peace education shall be infused in the curricula and awareness and training materials shall be developed for students and teachers”. But policy on peace education has not been implemented with true spirit; neither significant reforms have been introduced in school curricula nor have serious efforts been taken to integrate peace education in teacher programs. Teacher education institutions, in all parts of Pakistan, did not respond to the policy guidelines accordingly. A review National Curriculum for Teacher Education taught at Bachelor or Education (B.Ed.) level in teacher education institution in Pakistan reveals that *Peace Education* as a subject is not being taught to the prospective and in-service teachers (HEC, 2012). Likewise no significant reforms have been introduced in the curriculum at primary, elementary and secondary levels to introduce and promote peace education in Pakistan (Ali, 2013) . Similarly, integration of peace education in teacher training programs is a missing element in a majority of the universities in the world as well. For instance, ten largest universities where more that eleven million students are enrolled are offering a wide range of programs in *Teacher Education* but no university is providing training in peace education or education for peace at graduate or post-graduate levels or building the capacity of teachers. Recently only Indira Gandhi National Open University in India has offered M.Phil and Ph.D. programs in peace education (IGNOU, 2016).

The Global Peace Index (GPI) 2018 shows that Libya, Syria, Bahrain, Ukraine and Egypt have witnessed the least change on the peace index. In South Asia, peace condition has deteriorated in most of the countries during the last decade. Religious fanaticism and political tug war have brooded and boosted terrorism and extremism particularly in Afghanistan, India and Pakistan. On the Peace Index, Pakistan is on 150th position among 163 nations of the world and it stands on the lowest rung on GPI table in South Asia. These indicators are pointing that socio-political environment at regional level has continuously been heating up that could become a danger for global peace. In this context there is an urgent need to neutralize the exiting situation and cool down the environment through sustainable peace building measures that may include; social and economic parity, inclusion, political reforms, and peace education. Peace education is a mean to learn to live together, to promote coexistence, cooperation, tolerance and ultimately acceptance of diversity.

Table 1

Table is based on GPI data

South Asia					
Global Peace Index (GPI) 2008 & 2018					
Country	Change in Rank	2018		2008	
		Rank	Score	Rank	Score
Bhutan	0	19	1.545	19	1.44
Mauritius	1	20	1.548	21	1.47
Sri Lanka	59	67	1.954	126	2.571
Nepal	-8	84	2.053	76	1.967
Bangladesh	0	93	2.084	93	2.1
India	-13	136	2.504	123	2.49
Pakistan	-19	151	3.079	132	2.89

As the peace education is not part of teacher education curriculum in Pakistan therefore teachers are not well equipped with pedagogical skills and knowledge essential for the teaching of peace education. So we can assumed that school teachers are either ignoring teaching of peace education or they teach it in their own ways; purely depending on their limited knowledge and self devised skills to promote peace. We argue that teachers' capacity building in the teaching of peace education is essential to equip them with skills to teach, integrate and promote peace in schools. It can also be helpful in promoting students' true understanding of peace that is prerequisite for a peaceful society. Thus main objective of this research was to study the effect of teacher knowledge and skills related to peace education on the students understanding of peace. This research was guided by the following hypothesis:

Null hypothesis was:

H_0 : Teachers' knowledge and skills in the teaching of peace education have NO effect on students' understanding about peace

Whereas alternative hypothesis was:

H_a : Teachers' knowledge and skills in the teaching of peace education have an effect on students' understanding about peace

Methodology

Experimental research design was used to study the impact of the teachers' knowledge and skills related to peace education on the students' knowledge, understanding and skills in peace education. Population for this study comprised of students of age group from 13 to 15 years studying in Hyderabad Pakistan. Why this age group? Because students of this age group are doing secondary education or

studying in class 9th and 10th. In Pakistan students complete their primary education at the age of ten and their secondary level education usually lasts up to the fifteen year of age. After passing secondary school examination they go to colleges where fields of studies branched off further.

At the second stage four schools located in Hyderabad, Pakistan were selected through systematic random sampling technique. This sample comprised of two high schools in public sectors and two from private sector. Equal representation to the female gender had been given in the selection of schools. Through proportionate random sampling technique a sample of 200 students of specified age group was drawn from the selected schools. This technique of sampling had been used to ensure a fair representation of female gender in the study. Likewise, in each school, teachers of the selected students were also included in the study. In this way we selected 30 teachers and 200 students. In our sample 50% of the students were female. As all subject teachers teaching at secondary school was the population of the study therefore the researcher did not apply any filter while taking the sample. Thus the sample of 30 thirty teachers was composed of all subject teachers i.e. science, religion, history and language.

For data collection a questionnaire based on close ended questions was used as data collection tool. This tool was developed to assess the students' knowledge and understanding regarding peace education. The validity of data collection tool was tested through construct validation process. The measurement of construct validity enabled us to ensure that the tool is suitable and capable for measuring the construct that it should measure. For this purpose we conducted a pilot study. Based on pre and post intervention data obtained from the pilot study we calculated construct validity through Student's t-test ($t=0.83$). Similarly reliability or internal consistency of the data collection tool was determined through Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha=0.91$).

As the principal objective of this experimental study was to find the effect of teachers' training in education for peace on students' understanding of peace and coexistence thus in this experiment same groups of students were assessed twice; pre-intervention and post- intervention. Since students' knowledge and understanding about peace and coexistence is dependent on their teachers' knowledge and skills in teaching of peace education so at the first part of our study we administered the questionnaires to the sampled students in their schools and collected the data. Then capacity of sampled teachers' was build in the teaching of education for peace through eight short duration workshops in their respective schools twice a week for a period of one month. In these training sessions they were provided basic knowledge and essential skills for the teaching of ideas related to peace education. We used *UNESCO teachers' guide to peace education* for the preparation of workshops and we also extracted teaching

material and training modules for teachers from this guide. This supportive material comprised of awareness material and activities for classroom teaching.

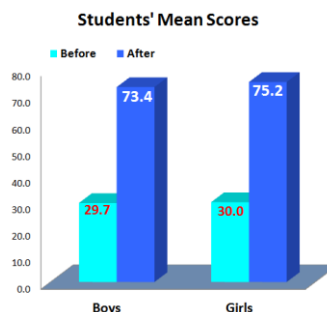
Once the teachers' capacity had been built then they were asked to use the given knowledge and skills to promote ideas and understanding related to the peace during routine teaching of their own subjects. And they were encouraged to use and share supportive material with students. Teachers in each school were also informed that the selected students would be assessed again one month after the teachers' capacity building workshop. During that period researcher stayed in contact with the teachers through social media, email, phone and SMS to assist, motivate and encourage them, and to track teaching and learning process. After one month researcher again visited the sampled schools and re-administered questionnaire to collect data on the students' post teacher training (post-intervention) understanding of peace education. The data was analysed using Paired sample two tailed t-test through SPSS software. Paired sample t-test was used to see if there is a significant difference between pre and post-intervention sample means.

Table 2

Sample Summary

Students' Knowledge of peace education (pre & post intervention)		
	Pre	Post
N	120	120
Mean	29.88	74.29
Median	32.00	74.00
Mode	21	74
Std. Deviation	12.654	10.384
Variance	160.127	107.822
Skewness	.016	-.206
Std. Error of Skewness	.221	.221
Kurtosis	-1.446	-.678
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.438	.438
Correlation	0.46	
Percentiles	25	18.25
	50	32.00
	75	41.75

We conducted normality test for both data sets. A visual inspection of histograms, normal Q-Q plots and box plots showed that pre and post intervention scores were approximately normally distributed, with a skewness of 0.16 (SE=0.221) and a kurtosis of -1.45 (SE=0.438) for pre-intervention and a skewness of -0.206 (SE=.221) and kurtosis of -0.678 (SE= 0.483) for post intervention group.



Descriptive statistics table shows that students' *pre-intervention* mean score is 29.88 with a standard deviation of 12.6 while *post-intervention* mean score is 74.29 with a standard deviation of 10.3 units. An average increase of 44.4 point or 148.6% rise in students score strongly supports the idea that teachers' training in the teaching of peace education can be very helpful in improving students' knowledge and understanding. A comparison of mean scores of boys and girls shows that girls performed little better than boys, both in pre and post-intervention tests; girls' mean score was 30 and 75.2 in pre and post tests respectively while boys mean score stood at 29.7 and 73.4.

The difference of two means ($m = -44.417$, $s = 12.17$, $SE = 1.11$) shows that students have better understanding of peace education when their teachers' capacity in the teaching of peace education is build.

Table 3

Paired Samples T-Test

	Diff. between Means	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Students' pre-Knowledge of peace education - Students' knowledge of peace education after teacher training	-44.417	12.173	1.111	46.617	42.216	39.971	119	0000

Here a question arises; is the difference between mean scores of pre and post interventions real or it is due to the chance? To answer this question, we used paired sample two tailed t-test with $\alpha = 0.05$ and tested null hypothesis (H_0). Tabulated value of t (119) is ± 1.96 whereas calculated t (119) is -39.97 and p-value (0.000) is less than α

($p < 0.05$). So results are statically significant and null hypothesis is rejected. Ultimately alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted; Teachers' knowledge and skills in the teaching of peace education have a positive effect on students' understanding of peace.

The results of this study support the idea that students have better understanding when taught by skilled teachers. Teaching of peace education is helpful in developing students' capacity, competence and skills related to peace that can be helpful to prevent and solve conflict and to mitigate violence. Students understanding of education for peace and skills can help him/her in managing diversity; promotes tolerance; foster the culture of respect; develops life skills, conflict management, citizenship, human rights, and learning to live together (INEE, 2010). To achieve peace at local level, there is a need to develop a curriculum and teaching strategies for prospective and in-service teachers. Awareness and training materials for teachers should be responsive to the nouvelle development and rapid changes at the local and global levels. It should be flexible enough to adjust itself with the multidisciplinary, multicultural and multi-ideological environment. We should keep in our mind that merely the absence of war, conflicts and tension cannot promise a durable peace unless the world community does not take effective measures to harness cultural, social and economic equity and quality. A culture of peace is prerequisite for a meaningful coexistence hence peace must begin with each one of us and peace from within should consist of pure thoughts, feelings, and motives (UNESCO-APNIEVE, 1998). In the context of Pakistan, there is an urgent need to implement National Education Policy 2009 direction regarding peace education with true spirit by integrating peace education in school curricula and teacher training programs. And by developing awareness and training materials for students and teachers to promote peace in the society.

Conclusions

This study was based on experimental designed to assess the effect of *teachers' knowledge and pedagogical skills* on students' understanding of peace related ideas. Results showed that teachers' knowledge and skill in the teaching of peace education contribute significantly to the students' knowledge and understanding regarding education for peace. Thus teaching of peace through effective teaching can play an important role in developing and strengthening students' attitude towards peaceful environment. It was also found that effectiveness of teaching of peace education is only possible when a teacher has sufficient knowledge and essential pedagogical skills to construct peace in the tender minds of children. Thus integration of peace education in teacher education programs and in school curriculum can be very helpful in constructing, developing and promoting peace.

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Annexure- A

Students' Mean Scores		
	Before	After
Boys	29.7	73.4
Girls	30.0	75.2
Combined (Boys & Girls)	29.8	74.3

Annexure- B

Paired Sample T-Test

Paired Samples Test								
	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Diff. between Means	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Students' pre-Knowledge of peace education - Students' knowledge of peace education after teacher training	-44.417	12.173	1.111	-46.617	-42.216	-39.971	119	0000