

An Analytical Study of Secondary School Textbooks with Reference to Peace Values

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Abstract

Peaceful coexistence for a stable and progressing world demands the creation of a culture of peace which may be developed by teaching certain peace values. This study examines the presence of peace values in the textbooks of compulsory subjects (English, Urdu, Islamic Studies and Pakistan Studies) for secondary school students (i.e. grade 9 and 10) of the Punjab, Pakistan. A self-developed content review format was used for this purpose. It was based on twelve peace values (Self-respect, Respect for others, Respect for Life/Nonviolence, Gender Equality, Compassion, Global Concern, Ecological Concern, Cooperation, Openness and Tolerance, Justice, Social Responsibility, and Positive Vision). Thematic analysis technique was employed to analyse the data. Findings of the study revealed that all the peace values had their representation in the textbooks but with unequal weightage. Four of the peace values 'Self-respect', 'Compassion', 'Justice', and 'Positive Vision' were highly focused particularly in the textbook of English. On the other hand, the peace values 'Cooperation', 'Respect for Life/Nonviolence', 'Gender Equality' and 'Openness and Tolerance' were least emphasized. The recommendations of the study urged to incorporate more learning material in the textbooks representing these peace values at secondary level.

Keywords: peace values, textbooks, peace education model, national education policy 2009

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Introduction

Since 9/11, Pakistan has been suffering from its worst ever social havoc. An augmented level of sectarian hatred and intolerance towards other religious and social entities has been witnessed in the society. Sectarian and communal violence have been among the major hazardous challenges for Pakistan which can endanger its security, social harmony and stability. These challenges may possibly result in affecting negatively the attitudes and behaviours of its people particularly the children (Khalid, 2013; Rana, 2015).

The social environment (of peace or violence what so ever), specifically the school environment, plays a decisive role in shaping the behaviour patterns of students (Balasooriya, 2001). Schools are commonly perceived as the wonderful places for educating peace to the youth and it is generally believed that more education will result in producing less violent attitudes among students (Krueger & Malečková, 2003). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that education, formal education in particular, impishly might be misused to produce stereotypes of intolerance, extreme nationalism and hate (Harber & Sakade, 2009). The schools could also be used as the source for personal, structural and cultural violence and as a mean to indoctrinate religious, ethnic and social conflicts and discriminations (Davies, 2013).

The impact of school education on students' behaviour heavily depends on the nature of content used for teaching. There is amassing number of evidences, over the globe, authenticating the effect of educational content on students' attitudes and behaviour (Afzal, 2015). Whereas, sustained and harmonized behaviours of the students are indispensable for promoting sustainable development and national integrity (Balasooriya, 2001). In this regard, secondary school students have special distinction to play a decisive role for certain reasons. The important to note thing here is that 57% of the gross enrolment of the total populace of students belongs to secondary school level (Afzal, 2015). The completion of secondary school certificate (SSC) has been a determining stage for majority of the students, in Pakistan, as to what they will opt for their future life. Numerous factors affect students intention to get higher education e.g. their personal attributes, financial aid by the parents and their social environment etc. (Loh, Chew, Leong, Tan, & Yan, 2014). Consequently, a large number of students choose job market; many of them opt small buisnesses to meet their day to day needs; and some of them choose to get higher education. But the relative ratio of students, who decide to get higher education, has been very low for many years

(Maqsood, Maqsood, & Raza, 2012). As the large majority of students start their practical life after matriculation hence it is vital to inculcate peace at secondary school level.

Peace education, through its essentially transformative nature, promotes the culture of peace by cultivating positive attitudes and values among people (Ardizzone, 2001; Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Khalid, 2013; Tanabe, 2014). It creates conditions and systems that help promote tolerance, justice, nonviolence, and other peace values (Castro & Galace, 2010). To highlight the urgency of peace, UNESCO declared to observe the first decade of 21st century (2001-2010) as the 'Decade of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World (Fountain, 1999). It follows that educating peace to the students should be placed at core in the education system so that they may be transformed into peace loving people by instilling certain peace values in them.

The evident urgency of peace education raises the ultimate question that 'does our curriculum contain sufficient content on peace values?'. To answer this question, Government of Pakistan emphasized on peace values in the objectives of National Education Policy 2009, National Education Policy 2017 and Vision 2025. Government's recent initiatives seem satisfactory at policy level. But it could bear fruit only when it would have been implemented in true letter and spirit. The very basic thing in this regard was to sufficiently include relevant material on peace values in secondary school curriculum in pursuance of achieving those objectives. Unluckily, in the past, serious deficiencies had been reported on the part of government in materializing the policy guidelines e.g. lack of commitment by the government towards education itself and the gap between policy and its application (GOP, 2009). It obviously necessitates examining textbooks for secondary school students if they contain peace values prescribed in the National Education Policy 2009, National Education Policy 2017 and Vision 2025.

Research Questions

The sole purpose of the study was to analyze secondary school textbooks with the aim to see the representation of peace values therein. Following research questions (RQ) were formulated for this purpose:

RQ1: Which of the peace values have maximum representation in the textbooks?

RQ2: Which of the peace values have minimum representation in the textbooks?

RQ3: Which of the peace values have been ignored in the textbooks?

Methodology

A self-developed content review format was used as research tool for data collection with the purpose to analyse the textbooks of compulsory subjects for grade 9 and 10 (English, Urdu, Islamic Studies and Pakistan Studies). The content review format included the 'peace values' which were found in the 'Affective Domain' of 'Schema of Peace Education'. This schema was developed by the Center for Peace Education, Miriam College, Quezon City, Philippines (Castro & Galace, 2010; Navarro-Castro & Nario-Galace, 2010). The 'Schema of Peace Education' was operationally named as Castro & Galace Model of Peace Education (CGMPE). It was taken from the globally acknowledged book "Peace Education: A Pathway to a Culture of Peace". The book was written in the final year of 'International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non Violence for the Children of the World' 2001-2010. It was also recommended as a resource book of 'Hague Appeal for Peace' for 'Global Campaign for Peace Education'.

Thematic analysis technique was employed to identify, analyse and interpret the presence of peace values in secondary school textbooks. Data set was prepared from the collected data corpus. The researcher used semantic approach to collect data extracts from the data set for the analysis and consequent interpretations (Braun, Clarke, & Terry, 2014; Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). The frequencies of occurrences with respect to the presence of peace values were noted by using tally method.

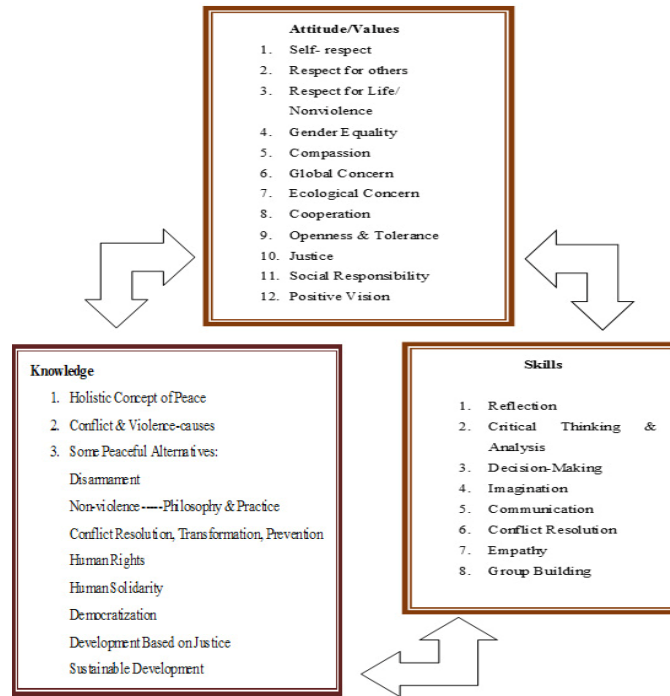


Figure 1. Castro & Galace Model of Peace Education (CGMPE, 2010). Castro, L Navarro, & Galace, J Nario. (2010). *Peace Education: A pathway to a culture of peace*. Quezon City: Center for Peace Education.

This peace education model comprised three domains. The affective domain is at the nucleus of this peace education model. It coincides with the UNESCO preamble which says, “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed” (Castro & Galace, 2010). Relying upon the UNESCO’s preamble, the ‘affective domain of peace education model was selected as the core construct of the study.

Results

Table 1

Relative Levels of the Presence of Peace Values in Secondary School Textbooks

Rank	Peace Values	English		Islamic Studies 9 & 10	Pakistan Studies		Urdu		Total	Relative Level of Presence
		9	10		9	10	9	10		
1	Self-respect	22	9	1	12	16	5	3	68 (18%)	High
2	Compassion	18	7	10	3	6	5	2	51 (13%)	
3	Justice	1	14	14	3	9	1	0	42 (11%)	
4	Positive Vision	7	16	2	4	6	3	2	40 (11%)	
5	Social Responsibility	7	2	4	7	9	5	1	35 (9%)	Moderate
6	Ecological Concern	1	8	3	4	2	1	2	31 (8%)	
7	Respect for others	5	3	7	1	5	2	0	23 (6%)	
8	Global Concern	7	2	7	4	1	0	0	21 (6%)	
9	Cooperation	3	4	1	3	6	2	1	20 (5%)	Low
10	Respect for Life/Nonviolence	2	5	3	2	6	1	0	19 (5%)	
11	Gender Equality	0	0	7	3	7	0	0	17 (5%)	
12	Openness and Tolerance	1	1	1	1	5	3	0	12 (3%)	
Total		84	71	60	47	78	28	11	379 (100%)	

Table 1 presents the consolidated results of the content analysis of textbooks in cross-tabulated form. It is evident from the table that, as a whole, three hundred and seventy-nine (379) cases of the presence of peace values were found in the textbooks of compulsory subjects (English, Urdu, Islamic Studies and Pakistan Studies). Results in the table

authenticate that maximum representation has been given to the peace value 'Self-respect' ($f=68$ out of 379 cases) while the least consideration has been given to 'Openness and Tolerance' ($f=12$ out of 379 cases). However, none of the peace values has been completely ignored in terms of its presence in textbooks. With reference to the relative level of presence of peace values, it is obvious that four of the peace values i.e. 'Self-respect' ($f=68$ out of 379); 'Compassion' ($f=51$), 'Justice' ($f=42$) and 'Positive Vision' ($f=40$) are being highly focused in the textbooks. On the other hand, the peace values 'Openness and Tolerance' ($f=12$) 'Gender Equality' ($f=17$), 'Respect for Life/Nonviolence' ($f=19$) and 'Cooperation' ($f=20$) hold a 'Low' level representation in these textbooks. Whereas, the peace values 'Social Responsibility' ($f=35$), 'Ecological Concern' ($f=31$), 'Respect for others' ($f=23$) and 'Global Concern' ($f=21$) have been considered at a 'Moderate' level in the textbooks. The subject-wise analysis of data shows that the textbooks of English maintain relatively maximum content on peace values ($f=84+71=155$) while the least content on peace is found in Urdu for 10th grade ($f=11$).

Discussion

Focus of the study was to analyse secondary school textbooks of compulsory subjects for grade 9 and 10 with respect to the representation of peace values in them. Although content on all of the peace values was found to be incorporated in textbooks however it was found that the peace value 'Self-respect' was highly focused in the textbooks (Tehseem, 2014). Content on 'Self-respect' was predominantly incorporated with respect to developing 'sense of pride in their social and cultural background'. Major emphasis was placed on promoting and strengthening the sense of worth of Islamic cultural background by dignifying the Islamic traditions, monuments, prominent incidents in the history of Indian Muslims, and the Muslim heroes. On the other hand, the least amount of content was witnessed on 'Openness and Tolerance' ($f=12$). This peace value is very crucial and has been promulgated by United Nations Organization over an extended period of time (GOP, 2017; Vira & Cordesman, 2011). This peace value perpetuates the sense of "openness to the processes of change as well as willingness to approach and receive other people's ideas, beliefs and experiences with a critical but open mind; respecting the rich diversity of our world's spiritual traditions, cultures and forms of expressions" (Navarro-Castro & Nario-Galace, 2010). It is also evident that as a whole, maximum consideration was given to the peace values of 'Self-respect', 'Compassion', 'Justice' and 'Positive Vision'. However, the peace values

'Respect for Life/Nonviolence', 'Gender Equality', 'Cooperation' and 'Openness and Tolerance' had been severely ignored. It indicates a massive gap between the policy and the practice and points to the fact that the government has not apprehended the severity of the situation or she is not serious in transforming present generation into a peace loving generation. The situation, to some extent, corresponds with the findings of Baltork, Mansoori, and Azad (2015) who analysed primary school textbooks in Iran. They found that the maximum attention was given to 'Sense of Solidarity' and 'Loving others' (Compassion in the present study); while, least recognition had been given to 'Rejection of ethnic, racist and religious discrimination'.

These findings partially contradict with (Tehseem, 2014) who concludes that the textbooks (specifically Social Studies textbooks) are just meant to disseminate the state governed ideology and discrimination against 'others' than Muslims. The evident maximum content on peace values 'Self-respect' and 'Compassion' discredits this claim. At the same time, these findings, to a degree, support (Tehseem, 2014) in a way that the textbooks lack in holding content on 'Gender Equality', 'Global Concern' 'Openness and Tolerance'. Findings of the study, to some extent, coincide with Afzal (2015) and Vira and Cordesman (2011) who concludes that the present curriculum, specifically, that of Pakistan Studies does not support tolerance and suggested that "*Pakistan needs curriculum reform to follow an international level curriculum that incorporates rigorous analysis and critical thinking and to create tolerant and analytical global citizens.*" Findings of the study strongly contradict (Tehseem, 2014) regarding the claim that the "*textbooks have failed so far in making minds of young generation...that Pakistani textbooks disseminate state governed ideology and this study has found that orthodox ideology is creating negative impact on the minds of students.*" This evident disinterest towards peace values regarding their representation in the textbooks might be the result of the lack of coordination between policy makers and the curriculum developers. The National Education Policy of Pakistan 2009 includes all of these peace values individually. Similarly, National Education Policy 2017 focuses on "*Character building on the basis of universal Islamic values integrated with ethical values relevant to all human beings*" (p-10) (GOP, 2017); while the same are found considerably missing in the textbooks under review. It might be due to the influence of certain religio-political pressure groups which commonly resist any change in the curriculum. The culture of developing curriculum without having made a need analysis might be another possible cause for the present situation.

Conclusion

Content analysis of the textbooks revealed that all the peace values had their representation in textbooks of compulsory subjects (English, Islamic Studies, Pakistan Studies and Urdu) for 9th and 10th grade. However, these peace values were not given equal representation in the textbooks. It was concluded that relatively a low level representation was given to the values of 'Respect for Life/Nonviolence', 'Gender Equality', 'Cooperation' and 'Openness and Tolerance' despite the fact that these peace values are highly acknowledged at global level by UNESCO (UNESCO, 1998, 2014) and envisioned in the objectives of the National Education Policy 2009, 2017 and Vision 2025.

The study recommended that the 'Curriculum Wing of Ministry of Education and Professional Training' may ensure the representation of all the peace values in the textbooks with a special focus on 'Cooperation', 'Respect for Life/Nonviolence', 'Gender Equality' and 'Openness and Tolerance'. The incarnation of these peace values may help our students enjoy a peaceful co-existence with others and promote global civic character in them.

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