

The Awareness Level of Teachers and Students about Peace Education in Pakistan

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Abstract

Peace is a fundamental need of humanity. Hence, its need is felt in every walk of life. The very establishment of United Nations is evidence in this respect. The UN has asked all its member states to educate their respective citizens for peaceful co-existence. Peace education is the formal way to do this job. In this perspective, among all educational institutions, universities are the high seats of learning where from leadership emerge. This paper explores the awareness level of respondents (both teachers and students) in the universities of Pakistan. The research questions were: i, what is the awareness level of university teachers and students about peace education; ii, what is the comparative level of awareness of male and female respondents about peace education; iii, what is the comparative level of awareness of teachers and students about peace education? Two questionnaires covering the aspect of Awareness level of the respondents were prepared to collect data from the respondents. The tools' validity and reliability concerns were duly addressed. In this respect Cronbach's Alpha was also administered which was .94. The research tool was administered to 770 respondents. The data analysis was carried out through SPSS (version 16). after analysis and interpretation, the findings were drawn which revealed that majority of the respondents stood at a higher awareness level regarding peace education. However, male respondents were relatively more aware as compared to their female counterparts. Furthermore, teachers stood at a relatively high level in comparison to students. From this study the following recommendations flow such as carrying out awareness campaigns about peace and peace education in Pakistan for curriculum developers, educationists, those sitting in the policy making corridors, and researchers.

Keywords: *peace, Peace Education, awareness level, co-existence, global citizenship*

Introduction

As a fundamental need of humanity, peace has been an essential message of nearly all religions of the world, especially Islam which means

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peace. Pakistan is a country where majority of the people profess Islam as a religion. However, the Pakistani society is far from being a peaceful one. There can be a number of reasons for that, however, one significant aspect is the role of education system that is supposed to generate a peace-loving individual. In any society the nature and structure of education system counts for promoting certain traits that are universally approved. Inside any educational pyramid, university education is of integral importance where teachers are supposed to shape the mindset of the students for cultural diversity and global citizenship through teaching peace. As a discipline, today, Peace education is taught in many countries of the world except Pakistan where this field of study has not been started in the educative process. Hence, the researcher decided to study the awareness level of university teachers and students regarding peace education.

Statement of the problem

Pakistan is a country that is prone to a variety of terrorist incidents and events for the remedy of which all possible means may be utilized to curb it. Though, peace may have a number of sources to be established through; however, one significant way of it is the academic approach through which peace can be promoted. In any country, university education is the level where from leadership is provided in all walks of life. Due to the importance of this stage, it is imperative to know about the awareness level of respondents (both teachers and students) towards peace education. Hence, the researcher decided to focus on, 'an appraisal of the awareness level of respondents (both teachers and students) about peace education in Pakistan'.

Objectives

1. to study the awareness level of teachers and students at university level about peace education;
2. to compare the awareness level about peace education of male and female respondents;
3. to compare teachers with students with reference to awareness level

Research Questions

- i. What is the level of awareness of teachers and students about peace education at university level?
- ii. What is the comparative level of awareness of male and female respondents about peace education?
- iii. What is the comparative position (regarding awareness about peace education) of teachers and students?

Significance of the Study

Awareness about any social concern is the key to be started from; therefore, understanding awareness level of university teachers and students is a key determinant for the growth of peace promoting overtures. This study is significant as it deals with a burning issue in the research arena, that is, Peace and peace education. As teachers are the central figures in the teaching-learning process, hence their own knowledge, skills, attitudes, and general disposition play a tremendous role in shaping the behaviors of the learners. Hence, this paper explores the state of the teachers with reference to awareness about peace education. Similarly, it explores the awareness level of students as well so as to ascertain whether teachers or students need any improvement. The researcher believes that this study will prove useful for peace researchers generally and particularly for Pakistani researchers where peace is most needed than ever before. In the study some practicable suggestions have also been recommended for implementation in Pakistan. Some practicable recommendations were put forth for implementation purposes. The findings of the study are significant for curriculum planners, policy makers, teacher educators and educational administrators.

Literature Review*What is Peace*

Having a Latin origin the word, 'peace' is from 'pax' meaning a pact, contract, an agreement to end the war or dispute between two people, two nations or two antagonistic groups of people (Khemananda,1996). In the words of Oxford Learner's Dictionary, 7th Ed. it is, "A situation or a period of time in which there is no war or violence in a country or an area. Dhakal, (n.d) thinks of peace as a situation of harmony where there is no hostility; non-violence; the cessation of conflict; securing tranquility; absence of emotional turmoil, serene atmosphere of silence. Many scholars think that peace as the attitude and exhibited behavior which strengthens cordial relationships among the interacting peoples. Peace is a behavior that curbs violent actions ranging from hurting, destroying or harming someone, Thersea and Gwendolyn, (1995) cited by UNESCO (2001).

Peace Education

Peace education is an emerging discipline. There is no precise limit of this field of study. About this Reardon (1988) contends that, there are no precise limits or standard for demarcating peace education. However, peace education necessarily consists of three integral

components that is knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These three aspects of peace are very rare in today's human society. The world is replete with instances of conflicts both structural and overt. However, Seitz (2004) presents an encouraging view as he opines that peace education remained supportive in bringing about reconciliation, conflict resolution and peace building.

Peace Education in historical perspective

In the formal sense, its history starts with the name of Montessori (1870-1952) and especially her innovative schooling system of '*Casa dei Bambini*', that put aside traditional schooling and laid the foundation education on Peace. She believed in a flexible curriculum for students. Her vision is beautifully summarized by Harris (2002) who says about her that she talked about such education which will free the learner's spirit together with promoting love for others, and that necessarily abolishes the academic climate of restrictions. In his writings Read (1949) presented a blend of art and peace education. He also stressed to develop creativity among students so as to enable them to think rationally and to protect the human family from the destructions of war.

According to Harris (2002) the first ever academic program on peace was started in 1948 at Manchester College Indiana, USA. In this connection Galtung (1969) developed peace education as an academic field of study. He expounded the idea of positive and negative peace. With Galtung, peace education became an academic area of study. Another towering intellectual in this arena was Paulo Freire (1972) a Brazilian educationist who wrote '*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*', that contributed to establish peace education as a discipline. His ideas are society-based, as he pleads the welfare of the lower peasant class.

The relatively latest contribution of the three outstanding peace educators, namely: Brocke-Utne (1985) who wrote '*Education for Peace*', Reardon's (1988) '*Comprehensive peace education*', and Harris' (2002) '*Peace education*' was meant to bring about awareness pertaining to the threat of a nuclear war. They exerted enormous influence on peace studies. Last but not the least, is Harris (2002) who put forth ten goals of peace education, coupled with a specific peace-promoting pedagogy.

Awareness

According to 'The Free Online Dictionary' the term awareness is akin to cognizance, consciousness, sensibility, being awake, and vigilance. Furthermore, "Awareness" means "to have knowledge of something". Nearly the same idea is expounded by Collins Thesaurus of English Language (2002), "Awareness" is, to have 'knowledge of' ...

‘consciousness of’, ‘acquaintance with’ ... ‘sensibility to’, ‘realization of’, ‘and familiarity with’ ...” etc. in view of this awareness about something is the fundamental question. Awareness is a gateway to any attitude formation. Hence university teachers are the real agents of social change. If they are aware of the concept and practice of peace, ultimately the same will be reflected among the students. This is pertinent to mention here that there is little work on peace education related awareness among the researchers especially with reference to university teachers and students. It can be concluded that awareness is of great significance especially in case of those who are concerned with the attitude formation of the young generation of any country. Again, university education is the arena where leadership is provided to the nation, hence, the need of focusing on this stage so as to prepare the young generation to cope with the challenges that are usually faced in establishing everlasting peace at national and at international level. The UN has also made it imperative for all member-states to promote a culture of peace in their respective jurisdictions.

Enhancing Awareness Through Teacher Training

One important aspect of this study is that there is little work on awareness related studies around the world. Peace education is a new discipline therefore; little work has been carried out on the awareness aspect of peace education. However, there are evaluation studies in the field which primarily addresses the impact of certain training programs on the attitude formation of the participants. This is pertinent to mention here that the concept of teacher training for peace education is gaining momentum. This is due to the fact that the existing teacher training programs are often marred by the tendency of inculcating mere authoritarian formalities rather than addressing the genuine concern of preparing the teachers for peace education. This aspect is highlighted by Stewart (1998) who thinks that the impact of the prevalent teacher education programs on the attitudes of teachers towards students is that they lay more emphasis on disciplinary matters in place of resolving conflicts in a practical manner. This is due to the fact that the teacher has to play a very lasting impact on the learner in the teaching-learning process. About this Reardon (2003) is so apt when she considers teacher as the most influencing figure in the teaching-learning process. The importance of teacher training is so highlighted by Harris and Morrison (2003) as they think of teacher training as a significant part of peace education so as to endow the teachers with related knowledge and requisite skills for peace building, conflict resolution, together with a sort of awareness about how to prepare young peacemakers. Bgerstdt (1994) and Harris and Morrison, (2003) are of the view that there is little place in

teacher training programs to equip the trainee teachers for peace education at school level. In short there is little work with reference to preparing teachers for peace education in the prevalent teacher training programs around the world. Hence this aspect needs to be addressed on emergency basis as teachers are the integral components of any education system.

Peace Education in Pakistan

As a subject or discipline peace education has not been started in the education system in Pakistan. Very few educational institutions have taken steps in this direction. In this connection, the Grammar School System (Rawalpindi, The Punjab) is worth-mentioning. This institution is also working on curriculum related matters such as preparing text books, and other related teaching materials meant for school level. Such institutions are very rare in Pakistan despite the fact that Pakistan has performed appreciable performance in the war against terrorism. Hence, for the establishment of a peaceful and just society Pakistan will have to pay heed to the inculcation of peaceful attitudes among her inhabitants at least within the academic circles. In this respects the existing teacher training program needs proper attention so as to restructure it on the philosophy of peace.

Srinivasan (2009) contends that peace education initiatives have been started in Pakistan but these are interested in curriculum development and teacher-training related matters. Furthermore, Srinivasan (2009) believes in Pakistan democracy and citizenship education is emphasized, rather than explicitly peace education. Therefore, it is the opportune time to raise the awareness level of the inhabitants of this country through the proper incorporation of peace education in the system.

Summary

Based on the above discussion it is concluded that peace is the fundamental need of humanity. Peace refers to: calmness, absence of conflicts and wars. It covers personal, group, national and international levels. Scholars such as: Montessori, I. Kant, Galtung, J.A. Comenius, Freire, Brocke-Utne, Reardon and Harris have contributed to the discipline of peace education. Peace education is the answer to the problems of conflicts and violence emerging in society. It is multidisciplinary in nature that covers a large array of specific fields of study. It may include human rights education which in turn leads to the establishment of peace-promoting behaviors. Similarly, environmental education is another area that brings about awareness about the sanctity of life in general. International education is another significant area of peace education as it promotes international understanding among the learners. More peculiar

and specific is conflict-resolution education which is directly related to the settlement of pressing and overt conflicts. Last but not the least is development education which is meant for the general uplift of the masses. The fundamental concern of peace education is to promote global citizenship that ensures open-mindedness and international understanding, respect for life, and develops love for the blue planet. It strives to mold the biased way of thinking into that of unbiased and impartial thinking in issues of personal, national and international concerns. This way peace education strives to resolve the existing problems of war and conflict that are going around the globe. For the development of such cherished values, education is the best catalyzer. In this connection all the three modes of education may be applied. Formal education addresses the three significant aspects of human personality, that is: knowledge, skills, and attitudes hence the need of peace education. Peace education needs to be wisely designed, in terms of curriculum, the related methodology and above all the establishment of a peaceful learning environment. Pakistan is yet to incorporate peace education in the system which is the dire need of the time as Pakistan is passing through a very critical stage in the era of current terrorist activities. Until now Pakistan has performed tremendous role in strengthening the cause of peace for global peace and joined hands with international community for the said cause. Therefore, it is pertinent to explore the status of university education as to how much the teachers and the taught are aware of the concept of peace education.

Research Methodology

The research methodology detail is given below.

Population

For this study a total of 113 universities constituted the abode of the respondents (teachers and students) from public and private sector institutions in Pakistan.

Sampling

For sampling purpose data was collected from respondents located in the universities in the Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Federal Area, Islamabad, and Gilgit Baltistan. The respondents, both male and female were from 11 universities. In total 719 respondents (210 teachers, and 509 students) were the respondents. In this study the awareness level of the respondents about peace was explored through questionnaires. These questionnaires were validated through judgmental procedure and then Pilot- tested. In each university 70 respondents with a further breakup of

20 teachers having 10 male and 10 female respondents together with 50 students with 25 each boy and girls constituted the sample.

Research Tools

The researcher prepared two questionnaires one for the teachers and the other for the students where each questionnaire covered the concepts related to awareness were duly pilot-tested on a small number of population (n=20). The tool was validated and thenceforth used for data collection purpose. The validity as well as the reliability of the research tools was established. Also, Cronbach's Alpha was used for reliability which gave .94 accuracy level. The questionnaire consisted of 04 sub-factors: perceptions; content; methodology; and practicing peace) for which 21 statements were placed. For awareness towards peace education CAM (Choice Awareness Measurement) awareness Scale with pertinent modification was used. During analysis frequency scores, mean score, standard deviation, t-test for comparison, ANOVA (for measuring variance) and post-Hoc tests (for cross comparisons) were used.

Ethical considerations

Prior to administering the questionnaire for data collection, informed consent was sought from the respondents. The respondents were ensured that the information collected from them will be kept under strict confidentiality and the same will be used just for research purposes. Their identity will be kept confidential.

Data Analysis

Data analysis and interpretation is given in the following tables.

Table no.1: *Comparison of respondents (teachers and students) in total awareness regarding peace education*

Respondents	n	Mean	Sd	t	p
Teachers	210	170.51	24.77	5.106	.000*
Students	509	159.38	30.58		

* 0.05 is the level of significance for Mean.

The above table (no.1) reveals a comparative level of awareness regarding peace education of the respondents (teachers and students). The mean scores 170.51 and 159.38; standard deviations 24.77 and 30.58 for teachers and students respectively with t-value as 5.106 reveal that all of the respondents possessed a high level of awareness. The statistical figures further tell that teachers are relatively more aware than students about

peace concepts. Also, the value of p is less than 0.05, which shows a significant difference in the responses of the responding groups.

Table no.2: *Male and female respondents' comparison in awareness regarding peace education*

Respondents	n	Mean	sd	t	p
Male	361	167.55	25.23	4.561	.000*
Female	358	157.66	32.41		

* 0.05 is the level of significance for Mean.

Table no.2 reveals a comparative position of awareness level of male and female respondents about peace education. The statistics: mean scores 167.55 and 157.66; with standard deviations being 25.23 and 32.41 for male and female respectively with a t -value of 4.561 reveal that both types of respondents possess high level of awareness. Furthermore, male respondents were relatively more aware as compared to females about peace-related concepts. As the p value is less than 0.05 hence, it shows a significant difference between the comparison groups.

Table no.3: *ANOVA, comparing mean score of male and female respondents about awareness*

Respondents' type	Sum of squares	Df	Mean sq	f	P
Between Group	43177.832	3	14392.611	17.785	.000*
Within Group	578624.018	715	809.264		
Total	621801.850	718			

* Mean is significant at 0.05 level.

The above table (no. 3) shows comparative significance pertaining to Awareness level. It shows that there is a significant difference in the responses between the groups and within the groups of teachers vs. students; and male vs. female respondents. Furthermore, the statistical values: $f = 17.785$ and $p = .000$ show that there is a significant difference in the mean score of the responses of the compared groups. Group comparison is shown in post-Hoc table that follows.

Table no. 4: *Post-Hoc test of comparison for multiple groups (male, female, teachers and students)*

Dependent Variable	(I) Comparison Group	(J) Comparison Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	P
Awareness	Male Teachers	Teachers (F)	.15238	3.92614	1.000
		Students (M)	4.238579	3.29674	.639
		Students (F)	18.22684	3.30242	.000*
	Female Teachers	Teachers (M)	-.15238	3.92614	1.000
		Students (M)	4.13341	3.29674	.666
		Students (F)	18.07446	3.30242	.000*
	Male Students	Teachers (M)	-4.28579	3.29674	.639
		Teachers (F)	-4.13341	3.29674	.666
		Students (F)	13.94105	2.52188	.000*
	Female Students	Teachers (M)	-18.22684	3.30242	.000*
		Teachers (F)	-18.07446	3.30242	.000*
		Students (M)	-13.94105	2.52188	.000*

* 0.05 is the level of significance for Mean. M and F stand for male and female respectively

Table no.4 compares multiple groups in which a significant difference was observed in the mean awareness level score especially in case of male teachers and female students, female teachers and female students, male students and female students is shown as in each case $p < 0.05$. For the rest of comparisons, no significant difference was observed as $p > 0.05$.

Findings

- On the whole all respondents stand on high level of awareness.
- Teachers have relatively more awareness than students about peace-related concepts.
- In comparison to female respondents, male respondents are relatively more aware.
- Significant difference was found between mean score for male teachers and female students; female teachers and female students; male students and female students.
- However, no significant difference was observed for the respondent-groups of male teachers and female teachers; male teachers and male students; female teachers and male students.

Discussion

As per the analysis of data the majority of respondents stood at a high level of awareness regarding peace education. This is pertinent to mention that as compared to students, teachers had better awareness about peace education. Furthermore, male respondents had more high level of awareness as compared to their female counterparts. Similarly, a significant difference in mean awareness level score was observed for the rest of comparison groups (male teachers and female students, female teachers and female students, male students and female students). Male respondents (teachers) possessed highest level of awareness as compared to female respondents (students). The thrilling finding was that female respondents (students) were at the lowest level in other comparison-groups. Such phenomenon is alone of its kind as there is little research on comparative analysis of awareness level of university teachers and students.

Recommendations

The following recommendations flow from the findings and conclusions of this study.

- i. Education system in Pakistan may be restructured on the basis of peace-promoting philosophy.
- ii. A series of awareness campaigns about peace and peace education may be launched for enhancing the awareness level in educational circles in Pakistan.
- iii. At least, peace education may be started as a subject and or as a discipline in the education system.
- iv. Trainings and awareness sessions for teachers and students may be launched so as to enhance peace-promoting skills.
- v. Teacher training programs may be restructured on the foundation of peace.
- vi. Print and electronic media may be utilized for raising the awareness level of teachers and students.

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