Peace Education as a tool for establishing long term peace:

secondary school teachers 'Attitudes and perceptions

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Abstract

Among the three integral components of peace education, that is, knowledge, skills, and attitudes, the last one is of practical significance for peaceful co existence at any level whether personal, interpersonal, intergroup, or at national or international. This aspect is extensively studied by researchers around the world. Hence, the researchers have tried to investigate the same phenomenon in the Pakistani context. In this study the attitudes and perceptions of secondary school teachers were explored. The data was collected from 300 secondary school teachers as respondents in 03 districts in Khyber Pakhtun Khwa, though multi stage random sampling technique. Duly pilot tested, together with ensuring the reliability of the tool through Cronbach alpha which was. 92. The analysis of data revealed that majority of the teachers possess high level attitude towards peace. It was explored there was no significant difference between the responses of male and female respondents. Furthermore, it was found that there was no difference between the responses of urban and rural respondents, and both possess high attitude towards peace. On the basis of findings of the study specific recommendations were presented.

Key Word: Peace Education as a tool for establishing long term peace: secondary school teachers 'Attitudes and perceptions

5

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Introduction

The negative impact of war is evident in every society that has experienced it. Pakistan especially is confronted with extremely adverse circumstances due to terrorism. Terrorism is considered the biggest security threat for Pakistan since 2001. More specifically the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is suffering due to terrorism besides other problems such as religious extremism, drug trafficking, smuggling of all forms, and sectarianism. Such state of affairs hinders the establishment of a peaceful society in Pakistan. Rajagopalan (2009) expounds such picture of Pakistani society, that this society is a victim of a tripartite tug of war between the Taliban, Pakistani government and the US war on terror.

Today, almost every part of the world is affected by violence, so there is a need for a worldwide approach to find out solution to such problems. A common method is that nations tried to stop violence by applying military power but it is not an effective measure as violence breads violence. So it is pertinent that nations of the world may shift their priorities, gather their political and military power and build a sound and strong base for peace education. In short peace-promoting education system is necessary for the security and stability of a nation. A culture of peace can be achieved by encouraging peace in the mind of every individual, and by creating basic life skills (respect, justice, tolerance and equality) in every individual of the society (UNESCO, mainstreaming the culture of peace, November 2002). Pakistan is an Islamic country, and most of the people follow Islam as their religion. Being a religion of peace, Islam emphasizes the establishment of a peaceful society. The root word of Islam, "slim" refers to: making peace, being in mutually peaceful environment, greetings, rescue, safety, being secure, finding peace, reaching salvation and well-being, far from wrong" (Hyseyin, 2009). Ideal society, according to the Quran is Dar-as-Salam, literally, "The house of peace" of which it intones

"And ALLAH invites to the everlasting peace and guides whom He pleases into the right path" (Quran Barnard, 2001, chapter 4).

Statement of the Problem

The problem under investigation was, "Peace education as a tool for establishing long term peace: secondary school teachers' attitudes and perceptions".

Research Questions

1. At what level secondary school teachers stand regarding their attitude towards peace?

2. Is there any difference between the attitude of male and female teachers towards peace at secondary level?

3. Is there any difference between the attitude of urban and rural teachers towards peace at secondary level?

4. What suggestions the secondary school teachers put forward for the establishment of long-term peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?

Significance of the Study

Establishment of peace at all levels in everyday life is considered true peace, "Peace researchers believe that peace is the behavior that promotes harmony in the peoples' talking, listening and in the process of their interaction; such behavior discourages violent actions e.g. to hurt, destroy or harm one another" (Theresa and Gwendolyn, 1995, Cited by UNESCO, 2001).

The study is significant in the sense that it deals with one of the most important problems, faced by the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. There is strong need to develop a peaceful culture in Pakistani institutions and community. To build the students minds with a

commitment to nonviolence and peaceful alternatives, and to prepare the youth to become peace-loving individuals. This study can also help to reduce incidence of intolerance for people and to support acceptance. Attitude of teachers can provide an opportunity for positive dialogue and communication and develop resiliency in young people, thus education for peace means also teaching about that which connects humans across cultural borders, shared humanity while there are those who are dismissive of the more transcendent vision of humanness. It is hard to see how humans can live with some version of that profound quality that connects and unites human beings. The main purpose of peace exploration is to promote and see peace in positive form that contributes to cooperation, trust and means of cooperation in a global society, and an effort that can contribute and create better citizens in this world.

Review of the Related Literature

Since the very inception of the human civilization, war is considered a constant threat for the mankind. These threats range from everyday violence to small scale civil conflicts. The negative repercussions of war are resulting in the destruction of native population and their properties, causing their migration from their own states and preventing them from achieving and spreading peaceful life. This is because of man undaunted struggle for achieving supremacy over others through arm-race. In the opinion of Montessori (1930), "Those who want war, prepare young people for war; but those who want peace, have neglected young children and adolescents so that they are unable to organize them for peace. So it's the call of the day to increase awareness among society members, and to develop an understanding among them, which may prevent violence and

war. An effective way to avoid those conditions is to resort to dialogue and negotiations, and to inculcate among individuals the skills of conflictresolution through an active program like peace education. In the views of Harris and Morrison (2003) peace "implies human beings working together to resolve conflicts, respect standards of justice, satisfy basic needs, and human rights", (p.12). Harris (2002) considered peace education as the process of teaching people about the threats of violence and strategies for peace.

Srinivasan (2009) believes that peace education is such a process through which people learn about the dangers of violence, develop their capacities to counter violence and build sustainable peace in their communities. According to Dhakal, "Peace Education can be defined as an educational response to the problem of human violence", (Dhakal,n.d, p.6). In fact, Purpel (1989) declares that schooling should celebrate democracy by helping students cultivate "outrage and responsibility in the face of injustice and oppression" (p. 118). Murithi (2009) believes that "if we want a peaceful world and peaceful society in future, then it will totally depend on our ability how to reject violence and militaristic approaches in order to solve such problems. Reardon (1988) concluded, that "peace is the absence of violence in all forms, physical, social, psychological and structural" (p.16).

Nodding (1993) argues, that "our main educational aim should be to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving and lovable people" (p.336). Hence, this research paper is intended to explore secondary school teachers' attitudes and perceptions related to peace education.**3.**

Methodology

The study was quantitative in approach. A questionnaire (containing 28 items) was administered to find out secondary school teachers' attitude towards peace in Khyber Pakhunkhwa. It was survey type research. Survey research is often used to assess thoughts, opinions, and feelings. Survey research can be specific and limited, or it can have more global, widespread goals (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Survey_research, Access on 5th March 2014).

Population of the Study

Population of the study consisted of male and female teachers of government secondary schools in urban and rural areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Sample

There are 25 districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, from which three districts were selected for research. Multi stage random sampling technique was used, 300 teachers were selected from different government schools located in different areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. From each district 10 schools were selected randomly, and from each school 10 respondents were selected for data collection.

Data Collection Tool

Data was collected through questionnaire which was earlier put to the panel of experts for their expert opinion. The tool was pre-tested in the form of pilot study to address the validity and reliability concern of proposed research instrument and then after fine-tuning of the same, it was administered to the sample.

Validity and Reliability Concerns

The tool was presented to the panel of experts for purification, then validity/ reliability concern of the research tool instrument was ensured through Cronbach's Alpha, which gave an accuracy level of **.92**. After ensuring validity

and reliability of the instrument, pilot study was conducted for further framing and then administered to the sample.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained through questionnaire was arranged under four main headings, including CTM (Classroom Teaching Methodology), RCS (Response in Conflict Situation), CSL (Curriculum at Secondary Level), PP (Practicing Peace). Five Point Likert scale was used for determining the attitude of secondary school teachers. Compressed form of quantitative data was expressed in the form of tables, modern statistical tools such as standard deviation, and arithmetic mean, one-way ANOVA and t-test were used for data analysis. The data is presenting in the following tables.

Table No 1   Gender   difference   in   CTM   (Classroom   Teaching Methodology)

Gender	N	Mean	Std. deviation	T	P
Female	125	31.4000	3.21288	-.739	.460
Male	140	31.6786	2.88202		

* The Mean difference is significant at 0.05 level.

Table No.1 is about attitude comparison of male and female respondents. The number of male respondents included in the whole research study were140 and that of female were 125. Statistical value of mean obtained in case of male respondents was 31.40 and in case of females it was 31.67, while standard deviation in case of female respondents was 3.21 and in case of male respondents it was 2.88, value of t=0.739 and p=0.460 which clarified that there was no significant difference between the responses of male and female respondents, as the value of p is greater than 0.05, which means that all the respondents possess high level of attitude.

Table 2   ANOVA comparison between mean score of male and female respondents in RCS

Table No.2 provides a brief description about Mean score of male and female respondents regarding RCS (Response in Conflict Situation). The analysis revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean score of male and female respondents. It is clear from the Statistical values (p = .197, f= 1.633) that there is no significant difference in the responses of male and female respondents. Means both type of respondents possess positive attitude towards peace.

Table 3 Comparison of responses of teachers in urban and rural areas in CSL

Respondent Type	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean sq	F
Between Group	36.590	2	18.295	1.633
Within Group	2934.632	262	11.201	
Total	2971.223	264		

Gender	N	Mean	Std. deviation	T	P
Urban	157	30.8280	3.40659	-.246	.806
Rural	108	30.9444	4.02291		

* The Mean difference is significant at 0.05 level.

Table No.3 is about comparison of responses of teachers in urban and rural areas in CSL (Curriculum at Secondary Level). There were 157 respondents from urban areas and 108 from rural area. Statistical values of Mean score and Standard deviation obtained in case of urban respondents were 30.8280 and 3.40659 while in case of rural respondents the value of mean was 30.9444 and value of Standard deviation was 4.02291.The value of t was .246 and value of p was .806 greater then 0.05, showing that there was no significant difference between the responses of respondents in urban and rural areas.

Discussion

The study was about "peace education as a tool for establishing long-term peace: secondary school teachers' attitude and perceptions". The first research question was: "At what level secondary school teachers stand regarding their attitude towards peace? It was found that all of the respondents possess high level of attitude towards peace, because most of the respondents fall on 4 and 5 on the scale showing the highest degree of attitude. Question No.2 was "Is there any difference between the attitude of male and female teachers towards peace at secondary level? It was found that both types of respondents possess high level of attitude and there was no significant difference between the responses of male and female respondents. Question No.3 was, "Is there any difference between the attitude of urban and rural teachers towards peace at secondary level? Findings of the study show that there was no difference between the responses of urban and rural respondents, and both possess high attitude towards peace. Most of the replies of the respondents fall on 4 and 5 on the scale.

Findings and Conclusion

Conclusion was drawn on the basis of findings obtained from this study. Research questions were answered in the following conclusion accordingly:

1. All secondary school teachers possess high level of attitude towards peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

2. Both urban and rural respondents possess equal level of attitude towards peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

3. Both male and female respondents shows high level of attitude towards peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

4. Most of the respondents suggested that education is a powerful weapon for establishing peace in society.

Recommendations

1. Government may take steps towards the betterment of educational environment and provide basic needs in institutions mainly at secondary level in rural areas.
2. Different activities for promotion of peace may be encouraged at secondary level.
3. Different NGOs and GOs may take their part in promotion of peace education in society.

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