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### BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PEACE: UNDERSTANDING THE GAPS BETWEEN PEACE TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL IN PAKISTAN

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

The question of building peaceful for sustainable development is an academic discussion in almost every society of the world since the world history. Although major gaps exist in peace teachings and practices but this is need of the day to explore these gaps to achieve the goals of building peace in the society. Exploring the gaps between peace teaching and practices in youth is not a one sided but the agenda of almost all countries for establishing a more peaceful world. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to develop a better understanding of gaps teaching linkages with the practices of students of secondary school students in Pakistan. Participants of the study will include faculty members of two federal universities of Pakistan. Content of social studies concerning peace teachings at secondary school level has been analyzed through thematic content analysis. Unstructured interview has been used as a tool of research. The findings of the study have highlighted the existing gaps and needs for strengthening the linkages between peace teaching and practices at secondary school level in Pakistan. The study has been significant in policy development to reduce the challenges and gaps in promoting conceptual understanding peace in school youth.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Peace has not been considered a desirable need of every society of the world. The societies where there is war in the history have been observed to prepare new generation for war. (Wistrand, 1992). Thoughts and practices to build peace is not a particular focus of every society of the world. (Banta, 1993).

Harris (2008) briefed that “One of the first Europeans who used the written word to espouse peace education was Comenius (1642/1697), the Czech educator who in the seventeenth century saw that universally shared knowledge could provide a road to peace. Bertha von Suttner, an Austrian who helped convince Alfred Nobel to establish a peace prize, wrote novels against war and organized international peace congresses” (Hamann, 1996).

If we think that peace is an urgent need of the day and all societies of world should focus on peace teachings, then school educators need to be trained in teaching peace and conflict resolution skills. Peace should be focused in the schools to promote the vision of peace and culture of peace in the new generation (Khokhar, 2016).

UNESCO (2008) further states, “Peace education equips individuals with knowledge and skills needed to actively promote and establish a culture of peace and non-violence” (p. 3). McLeod (2014) argues that human rights education inculcates knowledge and skills in individuals that enable them to act peacefully in their contexts. Diaz-Soto (2005) critical perspective to peace education integrates varied angles that facilitate understanding of the complex issue. Stopping of peace education courses is unfortunately related to the problem that most higher education institutions are becoming more and more profit oriented and sometimes politically geared. Johan Galtung, regarded as the father of modern peace studies, describes the field as an applied social science that is critical, empirical and constructive, and consequently is dedicated to the promotion of peace, where peace is defined as “the absence/reduction of violence of all kinds; peace is nonviolent and creative conflict transformation” (1996, p.9).

The process of peacebuilding is accomplished with long time that may take decades and sometimes from generation to generation (Paffenholz, 2010).

“Peacebuilding” as word was first published by David Military in 1966 (Holt, 2011). This word is mostly used by John Galtung in his studies. He has divided notion of peacebuilding into negative peace that reflects end of violence and positive peace that determines peaceful society at all level. (Nikolov, 2009).

“Peacebuilding involves a process comprising various functions and roles. It frequently involves a wide range of sequential activities, proceeding from cease-fire & refugee resettlement to the establishment of a new government and economic reconstruction” (Jeong, 2006: Cited in Role of Youth in Peacebuilding.). “Post-conflict peacebuilding as strategies design to promote a secure and stable lasting peace in which the basic human needs of the

population are met and violent conflict does not happen again” (Lambourne, 2000).

Two perspectives of peacebuilding include peacebuilding is a post-conflict process and UN perspective (Paul, 2016). Two notions of peacebuilding include preventing huge level of violence or recurrence of violence immediately after wars or armed conflicts and a range of activities and outcomes (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006).

Young people can play vital role in the process of peacebuilding (Subedi, 2012). Education system plays vital role in contributing and overcoming violent conflict. The system of education plays significant role in peacebuilding (Pugh, 2005).

Harris and Sass (2001) concluded the effects of teacher training on the value of teacher and found that the nature and characteristics of teacher training were positively linked with productivity. The result further exposed that experience of the teachers in their profession is more effective in promoting the vision of peace to the school students and in this sense, comprehensive results have been found in promoting the peace education at school level. In-service training is also more significant in schools in terms of skills and knowledge for peacebuilding in the school students. Kazmi et al. (2011) concluded that in-service teacher training is more effective in systematic and logical way of conveying knowledge. Duckworth (2006 “Averting war is the work of politicians; establishing peace is the work of education”. Montessori said “We must gather together all the elements of the world and organize them into a science of peace.” Kreitner & Kinicki (2007) highlighted three components of attitudes including affective, cognitive and behavioral. These three components have been found to be effective in teaching the peace. Baldo & Fumiss (1998) found that skills of peace and conflict resolution are more effective in promoting the vision of peace in school students. This is the responsibility of the teachers to foster their positive social interactions with their students and community members for the wellbeing and sustainable development of the society (ACEI, 1997).

Youth within the school climate have a desire to learn about the peace and conflict resolution skills (Davies, Harber & Yamashita, 2005). Particularly, family and community also play a vital role in reforming the conceptual understanding of peace and conflict among the school youth (Bell, Hansson & McCaffery, 2010).

Formal education is significant in promoting the understanding of peace and conflict among the school adolescents (Davies, 2010). Levy (2014) recommended that “where the environment is not conducive to the development of mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence, can we reasonably expect the school to be an isolated enclave in which education for peace is promoted, and thus contribute to the changing of the non-peaceful reality?”

### ***Purpose of the Study***

The main purpose of the study will be to analyze the perceptions of federal universities faculty members towards the linkages of peace teachings and practices at universities in Pakistan. To achieve this purpose, teaching peace content of social sciences departments of universities will also be analyzed.

### ***Research Questions***

The main research question will be:

To what extent does teachings of social sciences at universities is promoting the conceptual understanding of peace in the university's students.

Sub-question will be to investigate participants' conceptions towards the gaps and needs of peace teachings and practices in the university's students.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Participants Selection***

The technique used to identify and select participants for this research will be purposive sampling. Qualitative researchers often use purposive sampling to extend knowledge through seeking participants who are known to provide rich sources of qualitative data (Roberts, 1997; Ryan, 2006). Purposive sampling allowed me to decide in advance the specific criteria for participants for the study and made it easier to target and locate participants. The criteria for the selection of participants will be including the senior faculty members at social sciences departments of public sector universities in Islamabad/Rawalpindi (International Islamic University and Arid Agriculture University) for the interviews. The present study will be a qualitative inquiry approach, in particular, grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2014, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) will adopt because this qualitative approach allows the process of generating theory rather than testing a particular content (Patton, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This study will follow the constructivist epistemological paradigm and interpretivism theoretical perspective. Interpretivists believe people create and associate their own meanings through the interactions with objects around them, that is, the meaning is constructed, not discovered. This study will adopt an interpretive position to its methods, in which meaning is constructed, not discovered, and participants construct their own meaning in different ways. The constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014, 2006).

### ***Research Design***

The present study is qualitative inquiry approach, in particular, grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2014, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) will adopt because this qualitative approach allows the process of generating theory rather than testing a particular content (Patton, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This study was followed by the constructivist epistemological paradigm and interpretivist theoretical perspective. Interpretivists believe people create

and associate their own meanings through the interactions with objects around them, that is, the meaning is constructed, not discovered. This study has adopted an interpretive position to its methods, in which meaning is constructed, not discovered, and participants construct their own meaning in different ways. The constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014, 2006).

### ***Data Analysis***

The collected data was analyzed on the basis of thematic content analysis. Similar and different themes regarding peace teachings and practices were analyzed keeping in view objectives of the study. Following themes were considered in the textbooks of the social studies.

#### **Thematic Analysis: Deductive Coding of Teaching Peace Content**

<b>S. No</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Associated Concepts</b>
1.	Religious Norms	Truthfulness, Sympathy, Love, Forgiveness, Helping Others, Be Responsible, Unity, Discipline, Faith, Justice, Equity
2.	Cultural Norms	Patriotism, Adoptability, Honor, Faith, Generosity, Integrity, Sympathy, Unity, Nationalism, Justice, Equity.

#### **Thematic Analysis: Deductive Coding of Peace Practices**

<b>S. No</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Associated Concepts</b>
1.	Within School	Helping Others, Be Responsible, Unity, Discipline, Faith
2.	Outside School	Respect, Faith, Generosity, Integrity, Sympathy, Unit

#### **Thematic Analysis: Gaps between Peace Teachings & Peace Practices**

<b>S. No</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Associated Concepts</b>
1.	Within School	Less Peace Teachings & Peace Activities
2.	Outside School	Lack of Peace Tasks to Students in Society

Although the conceptual teachings of Truthfulness, Sympathy, Love, Forgiveness, Helping Others, Be Responsible, Unity, Discipline, Faith, Justice, and Equity are included in the school curriculum but activity-based teaching of these concepts need to be included in the school teachings. For example, the “Truthfulness” has been taught with examples and references but meaning, nature and characteristics need to be clarified in the school teachings. Danesh (2008) defines the concept of worldview as “the framework within which we understand the nature of reality, human nature, the purpose of life and laws governing human relationships,” (p. 158). Brantmeier (2010) determines curriculum of critical peace education as explicit and implicit.

Explicit peace education is concerned with teaching peace theory and peace education while implicit peace education is related with curriculum choices. Similarly, the concept, “helping others” is included in the school textbooks but is partially learned by the students by examining their practical life in the society. Similarly, school teachings in teaching components of peace and peacebuilding are successful to some extent. Snauwaert (2011) highlighted that critical approach to peace education is “posits a pedagogy that is process-oriented, inquiry-based, reflective, experiential, dialogical, value-based, imaginative, critical, liberating, and empowering”. Kalin (2005) determined four principles in Islamic approach to peace education including the metaphysical-spiritual principle, the political-legal, the philosophical-theological, and the socio-cultural. In the Islamic approach to peace education, the primary principle is the Oneness and Supremacy of Allah and the objectives of life is to strive for peace with Allah’s Oneness and Supremacy. Therefore, teaching practically about the components of peace are responsible for the peacebuilding and sustainable development in the society.

### **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The participants of the study were agreed that the curriculum was insufficient for peace teachings to secondary schools’ students. The participants were agreed that professional development of the teachers need peacebuilding training to enhance the vision of peace in secondary school students. The participants of the study were agreed that school climate should be created with peace activities to promote peaceful thinking in the students. Majority of the teachers were in opinion that in-service training for the teachers for peacebuilding should be strengthen for the sustainable development in the society. Similarly, majority of the teachers were in view that the concept of peacebuilding should be practical and activity based in the school teachings for the peaceful society. Majority of the teachers were in opinion that school teachings should particularly focus on peace teachings as a subject to reduce the violent activities among the new generation.

### **CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY**

The study concluded that major gaps exist in peace teachings and practices with respect to insufficient teaching material at school level and in teacher training programs. Peace promoting activities are needed in school climate to enhance the vision of peace in the students.

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