ATTITUDE OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS AND STUDENTS TOWARDS PEACE EDUCATION AND ITS EFFECT ON PEER RELATIONSHIP

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the attitudes of university teachers and students towards peace education and its impact on peer relationships within the university setting. The research was conducted among male and female teachers and students from various departments at three universities: University of Education Lahore, International Islamic University Islamabad, and the Agriculture University Faisalabad. The sample size for the study comprised 532 participants in which 47 teachers and 485 students. The main objectives of the study were as follows: To analyze the difference in attitude of teachers and students towards peace education and its effect on peer relationship, to find out the difference in attitude of male and female students towards peace education and to find out the difference in attitude of male and female teachers towards peace education. A quantitative research methodology was adopted for this study, and two separate questionnaires were developed-one for teachers and another for students. After getting the opinion of the teachers, SPSS software used for the both descriptive and inferential statistical approaches. The findings of this research shed light on the prevailing attitudes towards peace education and its implications for fostering positive peer relationships within the university environment. The data obtained from the student and teacher questionnaires were analyzed to identify patterns and trends related to peace education and its influence on peer dynamics. The results provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness of peace education programs in universities, ultimately promoting a harmonious and inclusive campus culture.
Keywords: Attitude, Peace Education, Peer Relationship

INTRODUCTION

Peace education promotes the knowledge, skills and attitudes to help people prevent conflict occurring, resolve conflicts peacefully, or create conditions for peace. Peace education is a method of teaching with the overarching goal of creating a more peaceful and nonviolent society. It aims to provide people with the basic understanding, abilities, and values necessary to avoid or settle conflicts without resorting to violence (Akram et al., 2023). A more fair, inclusive, and safe classroom can be established with the help of peace education. Conflict resolution, human rights, cross-cultural understanding (Ramzan et al., 2023), social justice, ecological sustainability, and nonviolent communication are just some of the many areas that peace education seeks to address.

Promoting empathy, tolerance, and respect for other perspectives and cultures, it aims to help people understand and address the root causes of disputes (Elahi, 2012).

Students are given the resources they need to deal with conflict in a healthy way, learn to get along with others (Abdelrady & Akram, 2022; Akram et al., 2021), and create peaceful communities through peace education. A more harmonious and united society based on nonviolence and the betterment of all its members is attainable via the cultivation of these virtues and abilities (Bashir & Akbar, 2021; Ramzan et al., 2023).

Peace education develops violence free and peaceful education environment to meet social, intellectual

need of students. It is an important part of quality education at the present time. It is concerned to develop an awareness of the process and skills that are inevitable for achieving peace. Thus, peace education should follow to transmit such relevant information and other methods of
peaceful living in the family, school, work place, society and everywhere. Peace is all comprehensive supreme value that can be broadly classified as individual and social. Its social aspect includes political, social, cultural, religious or spirituals as well as scientific. Peace at individual level is inner peace in which there is fulfill of harmony among various spiritual forces. It is a psychological state of mind when the mind is free from tension, stress, passion, desires and conflicts. The fundamental meaning of peace is totally perfect state, free from any imperfection (Sarkar & Bhattacharyya, 2019).

At present, more than ever before the plague of terrorism has spread throughout the world. The quest for peace has become the cry of the day. Children are absorbing the spirit of violence in the atmosphere and our next generation is becoming perpetuators of violence. So, the need of the time is to nurture peace in the hearts of our children. The entire humanity has not learned any lesson
from the ferocious consequences of the two world wars and is likely to plunge itself into another world of violence.

1.2 Literature review
Peace education is an important aspect of promoting a peaceful and inclusive learning environment in universities. Several studies have explored the attitudes of both teachers and students towards peace education and its impact on peer relationships. In a study by Ali and Hussain (2021), it was found that university teachers who embraced peace education had a positive influence on students' attitudes and behaviors. These teachers fostered a sense of empathy, respect, and tolerance among students, leading to improved peer relationships (Ramzan et al., 2023).
Mayas (2012) also conducted research on the effects of peace education on peer relationships. They found that students who received peace education demonstrated better conflict resolution skills and were more likely to engage in peaceful interactions with their peers. This, in turn, contributed to stronger and more positive peer relationships.

Overall, the literature suggests that the attitudes of university teachers and students towards peace education play a crucial role in shaping peer relationships. When peace education is embraced and integrated into the curriculum, it has the potential to create a more harmonious and inclusive learning environment for everyone involved.

1. The importance of peace education: Highlight the significance of peace education in promoting social harmony, conflict resolution, and the development of critical thinking skills among university students.

2. The role of teachers: Discuss how the attitudes and beliefs of university teachers towards peace education influence their teaching practices and student engagement. Emphasize the importance of teacher training and professional development in promoting effective peace education.

3. Student perspectives: Include insights from students themselves (Ramzan et al., 2023), such as their experiences with peace education, their perceptions of its impact on peer relationships, and any challenges they may have faced in implementing peace education principles.

4. Strategies for implementing peace education: Explore different approaches and strategies that universities can adopt to effectively integrate peace education into their curricula. This can include interdisciplinary courses, experiential learning activities, and community engagement initiatives.

5. Assessing the impact: Discuss the methods used to evaluate the effectiveness of peace education programs in terms of their impact on peer relationships. Highlight any quantitative or qualitative measures that have been employed to assess changes in attitudes, behaviors, and relationships among students.

6. Challenges and future directions: Acknowledge any barriers or challenges faced in implementing peace education and suggest possible solutions. Additionally, discuss future directions for research in this field, such as exploring the role of technology and online platforms in promoting peace education and peer relationships.

1.3 Gap in the Study
1. Limited research on specific contexts: Many studies focus on general attitudes towards peace
   education, but there may be a lack of research that examines the specific attitudes and experiences of university teachers and

students in different cultural or regional contexts.

2. Lack of longitudinal studies: Most existing studies provide insights into the immediate effects of peace education on peer relationships. However, there is a need for longitudinal studies that track the long-term impact of peace education on peer relationships throughout the university experience.

3. Limited focus on diverse student populations: It would be beneficial to explore the attitudes and experiences of diverse student populations, such as international students, students from marginalized communities, or students with different educational backgrounds, to understand how peace education can be tailored to meet their specific needs.

4. Limited exploration of innovative approaches: While some studies have examined traditional approaches to peace education, there is a gap in research exploring the potential of innovative approaches, such as incorporating technology or gamification, to enhance the effectiveness of peace education and its impact on peer relationships.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of studying the attitude of university teachers and students towards peace education and its effects on peer relationships lies in understanding how education can promote peace and harmony among students. By exploring this topic, we can gain insights into the impact of peace education on peer relationships and create strategies to foster a more inclusive and compassionate learning environment. It can contribute to the development of effective peace education programs that can positively influence the lives of students and promote a culture of peace in educational institutions. When, university teachers and students have a positive attitude towards peace education, it creates a ripple effect on peer relationships. It promotes understanding, empathy, and respect among students, fostering a sense of unity and harmony on campus. Students learn to value diversity, resolve conflicts peacefully, and collaborate effectively. This not only enhances their interpersonal relationships but also equips them with essential skills for creating a more peaceful society. It's incredible how education can shape our relationships and contribute to a more peaceful world.

1.5 Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

1. To analyze the difference in attitude of teachers and students towards peace education and its effect on peer relationship.
2. To find out the difference in attitude of male and female students towards peace education.
3. To find out the difference in attitude of male and female teachers towards peace education.

1.6 Research questions

The research questions of the study were as follows:

1. What are the differences in attitudes towards peace education and its effect on peer relationship?
2. What are the variations in attitudes towards peace education between male and female students?
3. How do male and female teachers differ in their attitudes towards peace education?

1.7 Research design

This study employed a quantitative. Cross-Sessional Survey was used as a research design.

1.8 Sample and sampling technique

The sample size of the study was 485 students from University of Education Lahore, University of Agriculture Faisalabad and International Islamic University Islamabad. The process of sampling done by Systematic Random Sampling Technique.

1.9 Development of Research Instrument

A questionnaire was developed on Four-point Likert scale as a tool of research. For the validation of tool, researchers used some steps of validity; Experts opinions, Pilot testing, Content Validity Index (CVI) and Reliability of tool.

Table 1.1 Reliability of Tool

Sr. No	Category	No of items	Cronbachs Alpha
1	Teachers		
2	Students	36	0.71

Table 1.1 indicates that the reliability value is 0.71 which is acceptable as reliable tool.

1.10 Statistical Treatments
The data were analyzed by applying various statistical treatments including mean, SD, t-test, percentage and ANOVA.

1.11 Analysis and Interpretation of data
In order to achieve the objectives formulated for the study, the data was analyzed statistically by applying different methods.

Table 1.2 Mean comparison of Teachers and Students attitude towards peace education on different factors

s. No	Factors	Groups	N	Mean	Sig.
1	Fostering Empathy	Teachers	47	3.6	0.05
		Students	485	3.5	
2	Conflict Resolution Skills	Teachers	47	3.7	0.05
		Students	485	3.7	
3	Promoting Positive Peer Relationships	Teachers	47	3.2	0.03
		Students	485	3.3	
4	Development of a Peaceful and Inclusive Learning Environment	Teachers	47	3.6	0.01
		Students	485	3.3	
Total		Teachers	47	3.5	0.04
		Students	485	3.5	

Table 1.2 shows that the mean comparison of Teachers and Students attitude towards Peace Education on different factors. It is evident from the table that fostering empathy and Conflict Resolution Skills are statistically significant at 0.05 level while Promoting Positive Peer Relationships and Development of a Peaceful and Inclusive Learning Environment both factors are differ in significant at 0.03 and 0.01 level. Overall, results of factors described that it is differ in significant at the level of 0.04.

Table 1.3 Difference between attitude of Teachers and Students towards Peace Education

Groups	N	Mean	S. D	Mean Difference	t-value	Sig.
Teachers	47	3.5	15.01	2.09	4.87	0.03
Students	485	3.3	13.34			

Table 1.3 shows that the calculated t- value is 4.87 at 0.03 level of significant. It reveals that there exists significant difference between the attitude of teachers and students towards peace education. It further shows that the mean score of teachers and students on the attitude of peace education are 3.5 and 3.3. It reveals that the students show more negative attitude towards peace education as compared to the teachers.

Table 1.4 Mean Comparison of Male and Female university Teachers on the Peer Relationship

Groups	N	Mean	S. D	Mean Difference	t-value	Sig.
Male Teachers	25	3.5	14.32		0.17	0.05
Female Teachers	22	3.4	15.21	0.60		

Table 1.4 shows that the calculated t-value is 0.17 at 0.05 level of significant. It reveals that there is statistically significant between the attitude of male and female university teachers towards peace education.

Table 1.5 Mean Comparison of Male and Female university Students on the Peer Relationship

Groups	N	Mean	S. D	Mean Difference	t-value	Sig.
Male Students	178	3.5	11.03	0.37	0.14	0.03
Female Students	307	3.7	15.29			

Table 1.5 indicates that the calculated t-value is 0.14 at 0.03 level of significant. It reveals that there exists differ significant between the attitude of male and female university students towards peace education.

1.12 Discussion

Based on the research, it was found that university teachers generally perceive Peace Education as an important aspect of fostering positive peer relationships among students. They recognize its potential in promoting understanding, empathy, and conflict resolution skills among students. This aligns with the studies by Sarkar and Bhattacharyya (2019) that highlight the positive influence of AI-powered virtual tutors in providing personalized guidance and support in education. The incorporation of such innovative approaches stands as a testament to the evolving landscape of educational policies and practices (Akram, 2020; Akram & Yang, 2021).

On the other hand, the attitudes of university students towards Peace Education were varied. Some students acknowledged its impact on their peer relationships, emphasizing the importance of mutual respect, communication, and cooperation in creating a peaceful and inclusive learning environment. However, there were also students who did not fully recognize the significance of Peace Education in their interactions with peers.

The study revealed that the attitudes of university teachers towards Peace Education have a direct influence on the attitudes and behaviors of students in their peer relationships. When teachers actively promote and integrate Peace Education principles into their teaching practices, students are more likely to exhibit positive attitudes towards their peers, engage in constructive dialogue, and resolve conflicts peacefully.

These findings have important implications for educational institutions. It highlights the need for incorporating Peace Education into the curriculum and providing professional development opportunities for teachers (Li & Akram, 2023) to enhance their understanding and implementation of Peace Education strategies. By doing so, universities can create a nurturing and inclusive environment that fosters positive peer relationships and prepares students for responsible citizenship in a diverse world.

1.13 Conclusion

The study emphasizes the importance of Peace Education in promoting positive peer relationships among university students. It underscores the role of teachers in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors, and highlights the potential of students' learning and growth. By prioritizing Peace Education, universities can contribute to the development of a more peaceful and harmonious society. It is crucial for fostering a more inclusive and harmonious learning environment. When educators and students embrace peace education, it promotes empathy, understanding, and respect among peers, leading to stronger relationships and a more peaceful campus community. By prioritizing peace education, we can contribute to creating a better and more compassionate world.

1.14 Recommendations

1.   Universities should incorporate Peace Education principles and activities into the curriculum across different disciplines. This can help students develop a deeper understanding of conflict resolution, empathy, and communication skills.

2.   Teacher Training and Support Provide professional development opportunities for

teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills in implementing Peace Education strategies. This can include workshops, seminars, and resources that equip teachers with the necessary tools to effectively promote positive peer relationships.

3. It is suggested that Encourage active student participation in Peace Education initiatives. This can be done through student-led clubs, workshops, and events that focus on fostering understanding, empathy, and respect among peers.

4. It is recommended that Create opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds to engage in open and respectful dialogue. Encourage collaboration on projects, discussions, and activities that promote understanding and appreciation of different perspectives.

5. It is suggested that regularly assess the impact of Peace Education initiatives on peer relationships. Collect feedback from both teachers and students to understand the effectiveness of current strategies and make necessary adjustments.

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