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PEACE EDUCATION

Contexts, Theories, and Methodological Aspects

PEACE EDUCATION AND A CULTURE OF PEACE

Peace education is a complex concept, which may take different forms according to local situations and the needs of involved populations (Harris & Morrison, 2013). Scholars see it variously as a philosophy, a mentality, or a progressive development of competencies that create a predisposition towards nonviolent conflict management and resolution (Sinclair, 2004). This chapter looks at theories of peace education, methodological processes of implementing it, and examples of peace education in various contexts around the world.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), arguably the most important international governmental organization involved with peace education, states as their goal:

To contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science and culture, in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations. (UNESCO, 1945 Constitution, Article 1)

While the preamble to UNESCO's Constitution notes that war is made possible by the negation of the democratic principles of dignity, equality, and reciprocal respect (UNESCO, 1945), more recently, when speaking of peace, the trend is to draw attention away from war, and towards a broader, positive concept of "a culture of peace" (United Nations, 1999). UNESCO now refers to "building peace in the minds of men and women," indicating a change in mentality leading to tolerance and respect for the well-being and rights of all people (<http://en.unesco.org/>).

The concept of a "culture of peace" began to be formulated in 1989, around the time of two pivotal events: the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent end of the Cold War. That same year, the UN ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which proclaims that children should be, "brought up in the...spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity" (Preamble, United Nations, 1989), implying that children must be educated to live in a peaceful world. Despite the terrible events of the 1990s such as the war in the Balkans and genocide in Rwanda, the approach of the new millennium brought about the prospect of change

and the vision of a culture based on universal values. A culture of peace endeavors to prevent conflicts by addressing their underlying causes and proposing solutions in which each party is a *main character*, with equal legitimacy and opportunity for participation in discussion, dialogue, negotiation, and meditation. Only through the guarantee of means of social participation is it possible for an active citizenship to develop a democracy responsible for individual and collective well-being.

The development of a culture of peace necessitates participative communication and free exchange of information and knowledge. This poses the question of how to use sources of information with different perceptions and analyses of relevant issues, and how to create media such as newspapers and radio and television stations that will allow for expression of different perspectives, including those of groups considered enemies in a conflict. These itineraries bring into play reciprocity and acceptance of the mindset of the “other,” creating concrete experiences for the development of the culture of living together (see, for example, the *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture*).

A culture of peace simultaneously addresses the psychological, the pedagogical and the political (Salomon & Cairns, 2010). This necessitates the development and maintenance of social institutions (courts, health care systems, election processes) which promote equality as well as teaching children values of self-transcendence, universalism, and benevolence (Fry & Miklikowska, 2012).

Human Rights Education

A core element in the culture of peace is respect for human rights, because where war and violence rule, human rights are denied – including in wars, which are proclaimed to be defending people’s rights. At the base of any culture of peace are the principles of equality, parity of rights, and social participation for all men and women, including those considered “the enemy.”

Universal democratic participation is integral to achievement and maintenance of peace and security. International discussion on security focuses on guaranteeing individuals, groups, and communities the right to life and human development in local and global contexts in such a way that satisfies their needs. Thus, the concept of human security integrates three dynamics: social, economic, and environmental. Creating democracies capable of addressing existing inequalities in the social, economic, and environmental realms necessitates an understanding of the power structure in the age of globalization, beyond superficial appearances presented in the mass media.

The issue of women’s equality must be given particular note. A culture of peace cannot exist as long as supremacy of men over women continues. The UN found that not a single country in the world has achieved full gender equality. They identified serious gender inequalities issues in 67 countries in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East; in 34 of these countries the situation is considered particularly critical. The UN initiated programs in conjunction with the governments of some countries such

as Chile, Colombia, the Congo, and Liberia to develop preventative strategies to combat violence against women, and to help victims of sexual violence (Francesch et al., 2009).

Human rights education promotes tolerance, allowing for the existence of ideas and positions that diverge from one's own and those of one's reference group. However, tolerance can assume a passive form, carried out in such a way that the "other" is ignored, uninvolved, distanced, and marginalized. To convey tolerance in a positive way means actively supporting, endorsing, and defending the rights of others to express their ideas, including their visions of peace and democracy (Iram, 2006). The concept of tolerance has its origin in the history of religious clashes of the seventeenth century, but today tolerance can be considered in a broader context, as an important instrument for the renewal and launch of pluralistic societies, fostering forms of exchange and reciprocal listening, and research into aspects that diverse humans have in common.

Peace Education in Various Contexts

Peace education and human rights education manifest differently according to the social context. In diverse situations, education can promote a culture of peace through curricula based on the values of the United Nations Charter. UNESCO broadly defines peace education as "a set of values, attitudes, models of behaviors and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations" (Preamble, United Nations, 1998).

A culture of peace can be supported by developing scholastic curricula that promote values of equality, and related attitudes and behaviors. It has been found that people with secondary school education are significantly more likely to support democratic values (UNESCO, 2008). Education can help rectify forms of social exclusion by creating programs that increase access to education among previously excluded groups such as girls, differently-abled children, indigenous communities, and those from the lowest economic strata (INEE, 2010). This includes teaching skills for non-violent conflict resolution, dialogue, and a participatory process of consensus. All of this is linked to the promotion of sustainable economic and social development, reducing poverty, and fostering conditions of social equality, security, and recognition of different people's desires and needs. This may necessitate interventions to assist groups with special needs.

In some educational settings, peace education follows a model of multiculturalism, concerned with issues of coexistence and reciprocal knowledge of different cultures, ethnicities, religions, and social backgrounds. These programs are based on the presumption that only by learning *from* differences and *within* differences is it possible to build the tools necessary for the development of dialogue and active participation. Programs may address topics such as racism, anti-Semitism, gender inequality, and other forms of social discrimination, such as bullying. Moreover,

peace education may be linked to related issues such as ecology, sustainable development, and weapons disarmament. The Associated Schools Project Network, a peace education initiative launched by UNESCO in 1953, now includes almost 8,000 educational institutions in 176 countries, sponsoring activities such as linking schools from different countries or regions, international camps, conferences, and student competitions oriented towards enhancing respect for other cultures and traditions (Page, 2008). Numerous other peace education programs guided by the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights have the goal of reducing stereotypes underlying conflicts (Harris & Morrison, 2013). Examples include international programs through which students learn about ecological issues affecting them, while also learning about their peers in other countries (Tye, 2003); the Compassionate Listening meetings for Jews and Muslims (Harris & Morrison, 2013); and empathy training and anti-bullying campaigns in US public schools (Clayton, Ballif-Spanvill, & Hunsaker, 2002).

It has been found that to be effective, programs teaching multiculturalism or conflict mediation should create a tolerant learning atmosphere by offering students opportunities to interact with students from different backgrounds/cultural groups in cooperative experiences with mutual goals; teach them negotiation and mediation skills; promote pluralism as a value; and impress upon them the long-term importance of tolerance and non-violence to the larger society and community (Clayton, Ballif-Spanvill, & Hunsaker, 2002; Harris, 2010; Johnson & Johnson, 2005). "Education for sustainability" links the fields of peace, human rights, and ecology by focusing on a broad view of human survival on the planet (Harris & Morrison, 2013).

Peace Education in Wars and Emergency Situations

In regions experiencing social conflict (wars, civil wars, independence movements, struggles for political transformation, or extreme poverty) peace education tends to be more focused on basic human rights. There is generally a strong presence of non-governmental organizations involved to support human and economic development, peace movements, and social issues (global and local). Important parts of this process are the development of the education system, curricula, and educational interventions that emphasize providing knowledge and tools for human resource management and use of technologies in socially deprived areas so as to improve people's perceived social opportunities. For the goal of a global culture of peace and understanding to be realized, education is a necessary, fundamental, and central strategy of social engagement, requiring study methods and tools that would allow this to happen.

It should be noted that in some contexts the concept of tolerance may have connotations which were not always positive, based on historical experiences. Societies involved in intractable, decades-long conflicts develop a "culture of conflict" or "ethos of conflict" sustained by anger and fear, and a belief in the superiority of one's own culture. This involves emotional, cognitive, and behavioral

responses towards an external group as well as within the group itself. The education system may reinforce stereotypes and resistance to dialogue. Such cultures of conflict can be seen in the Middle East (Bar-Tal, 2000; Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009), Sri Lanka (Kapferer, 2011), and Rwanda (Hilker, 2011), and among extremist groups in Greece (Halikiopoulou & Vasilopoulou, 2013).

In settings of active armed conflict (and other emergencies such as natural disasters), educational needs are often overshadowed by the pressing needs of health, security, and food. Education – particularly peace education – is not considered a priority. Historically, education has been viewed as a long-term process, rather than a response to an emergency (MacKinnon, 2014). However, planned educational activities in crisis areas can develop learning processes oriented towards the construction of better living conditions. Education can save lives in disaster areas by providing essential support, skills, and knowledge, for example, how to navigate minefields or avoid infectious diseases (Save the Children, 2008). The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (www.ineesite.org) considers instruction an investment to safeguard people's lives, physical well-being, and psychosocial health.

The impact of conflict on education is clear. Low levels of literacy and high levels of gender inequality are prevalent in war zones. Entire school systems may be destroyed. Tens of millions of children do not have their right to formal education guaranteed. Of the world's children who do not attend school, more than 40% live in countries experiencing armed conflicts (UNESCO, 2011). Therefore, it may be argued that interventions to fulfill the right to learn are a basic type of peace education (Anderson & Mendenhall, 2006). UNESCO's Education for All program combats illiteracy by working among the world's most disadvantaged communities to provide universal, free, mandatory, high-quality basic education and promotion of life skills for children and adults, male and female, beginning with early childhood education (UNESCO, 2015).

This is especially critical because many *emergency* situations continue for a long time, denying children not only physical health and safety, but also education and the opportunity to play, to imagine, and to be creative. The absence of education leads to a vicious cycle in which an uneducated, vulnerable, socially marginalized, and traumatized population remains dependent on local and global powers. Quality education that considers social and environmental problems at local and global levels can improve security on several levels by enabling people to be directly and responsibly involved in creating a better future rather than remaining passive and dependent. Violence often leads to submission and inability to see solutions. Education can support social change through review of curricula (since education can perpetuate conflict, as well as reduce it), training teachers, and encouraging involvement of all interested parties in the resolution of social, environmental, political, and economic issues (Davies, 2010). The nature of interventions needs to be holistic and integrated, capable of catalyzing change. They must have the goal of guaranteeing people's safety and well-being while creating conditions for participation that are rarely present in social settings of vulnerability (Sinclair,

2001). Educational interventions among socially vulnerable populations should consciously involve people in a bottom-up way and involve the entire affected community (Mosselson, Wheaton, & Frisoli, 2009).

Examples of peace education programs in regions of conflict include summer camps and bilingual school programs exposing Israeli and Palestinian students to “contesting narratives” of the conflict (Bekerman & Zemblylas, 2011; Biton & Salomon, 2006), and civics education in post-conflict societies such as South Africa, the Balkans, and Cyprus. These programs face numerous challenges, such as ongoing violence in the society; predominance of negative images of the “other” in macro-society and the media; teachers who promote stereotypes even within the peace curricula (*we* want peace/*they* are causing war); and students challenging the values promoted in the program (Clarke-Habibi, 2005; Quaynor, 2013; Zemblylas, 2010). In some cases the peace initiative itself unintentionally reinforces divisions through its “Westernist” discourse, as happened in the Sudan (Breidlid, 2010). The Peace Education Programme, implemented in over a dozen countries, found that to be successful, peace education should target all school children, not only those on one side of a conflict, and if possible involve people who are themselves victims or refugees as educators (Baxter & Ikobwa, 2005).

An extremely critical situation is that of refugee children. The UN Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees acknowledges public education as a primary need to protect the development of these children at the extremes of social marginalization (United Nations, 1951, Article 22). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees supervises, in coordination with local and international partners, educational interventions for children in refugee camps, some of whom have been in this extreme situation from birth (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). For example, a third generation of Somali refugees is being born in camps in Kenya, which house over half a million refugees, including about 180,000 school-aged children. Less than half these children attend primary school and only 5% reach secondary school. Fewer than 10% of the teachers have any training in education (MacKinnon, 2014).

Creating spaces for social interactions and providing structured activities helps children address the traumas they experienced, and may mitigate the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (Dyregrov, 2010). Children in a safe and stimulating learning environment are less at risk of exploitation (sexual, economic or recruitment by criminals or terrorists). Direct educational interventions may address the primary trauma and indirect interventions can safeguard exacerbation of the situation by creating social and political awareness of the need to satisfy children’s education needs. These approaches require sensitivity to how children express their feelings verbally and non-verbally.

Interventions sponsored by international organizations enable refugee children to attend school. The goal is to give them, in addition to basic school competencies, skills and values that will give them a better chance of having a peaceful life. This includes instilling a respect for human rights as well as understanding the roots of conflict which made them refugees. Peace education, in particular, addresses stereotypes

created by the hostilities. Additionally, the issue of cultural maintenance and identity following loss of home must be considered (UNHCR, 2012). Achieving these goals simultaneously is far from simple. A pilot UN-sponsored peace education program in the refugee camps in Kenya focused on communication and conflict resolution skills, self-image, cooperation, critical thinking, and promotion of values of tolerance. The teachers themselves were refugees; they used materials developed by the UN Human Rights Commission. The program faced numerous challenges, such as low attendance (especially by females), ongoing violence within the camps, and negative attitudes towards the concept of “peace,” seeing it as equivalent to submission to the refugees’ aggressors (Sommers, 2001). Similarly, teachers at schools in a refugee camp in Iraq (administered by the Kurdistan Regional Government) tend to link the concept of human rights with the Kurdish nationalist movement, rather than universal human rights (Osler & Yahya, 2013).

Clearly, educational interventions in refugee camps require a commitment to teachers’ and educators’ training, enabling them to address the needs of these children. Currently, the level of training and recruitment of educators for peace and human rights education in areas of conflict is too low to meet the needs of the millions of displaced children around the globe.

THEORIES AND RESEARCH ON PEACE EDUCATION

To be effective, peace education must be grounded in a theory guiding its development and implementation. Modern, academic studies of peace education from a theoretical perspective that considers social changes and international relations were pioneered by Johan Galtung, a Norwegian sociologist and mathematician. He wrote his first book at age 24 while in jail for refusing to do military service. In the decades following the Second World War, Galtung founded the Oslo Peace Research Institute and the *Journal of Peace Research*. Galtung and his disciples examine broad and diverse aspects of the field, including conflict and reconciliation, international relations, human rights, theory of civilization, human needs, ideology, religion, methodology of social sciences, communication, economics, and globalization (Galtung & Fischer, 2013; www.galtung-institut.de). His epistemological approach is transdisciplinary, in that it not only crosses borders between disciplines (as in an interdisciplinary approach), but goes a step further and explicitly examines the links between disciplines with the goal of healing the rifts between them (Nicolescu, 2002). In this way, research on peace can enlighten multiple aspects of interventions, to identify and help achieve the conditions for peaceful coexistence among people and nations.

Galtung divides studies on peace according to three typologies: empirical studies (past), critical studies (present), and studies on the construction of peace (future) (Galtung, 1985). Empirical studies systematically compare between theory and the empiric reality, to see how theories match the emerged data, in order to verify elements of theories – for example, how neoclassical economic doctrine on the

world market reflects the history of different countries' development, and how the resultant division of labor has resulted in structural violence over resource extraction and production (Galtung & Fischer, 2013, pp. 54-55).

Critical studies compare values with current reality, in order to intervene or evaluate policies, programs, and actions – for example, a critique of media coverage of wars, comparing portrayals of war as a “gladiator circus” with analyses that focus on conflict resolution (Galtung & Fischer, 2013).

Finally, the constructive peace studies systematically compare theories and values in order to create new perspectives of reality, such as Galtung's use of health/disease as a metaphor for peace/war, including stages of “diagnosis-prognosis-therapy,” and his proposed “eight-fold path to peace” with “preventative” and “curative” approaches to cultural, economic, military, and political violence (Galtung, 1996).

One of Galtung's key contributions to the field is the differentiation between “negative” and “positive” peace. In the former, peace is explained through a negation: the absence of war defines peace; peace is the lack of something (conflict). Positive peace, in contrast, is a condition of social coexistence; it is not related to war, but is created through social forms of inclusion, democracy, and participation – the introduction, not removal, of something (Webel & Galtung, 2007).

Galtung and his disciples maintain that peace research must be accompanied by a creative analysis of conflict. To know peace we need to understand the social dynamics of the conflict, and how they can be transformed in a creative and constructive way. Therefore, Galtung views peace studies as an implementation of social sciences, with an explicit value-judgment orientation (Baranov & Galtung, 2004; Galtung, 1996). Cultures often legitimize structural and direct violence by perpetuating assumptions of what is normal and natural in human relations through an ongoing socialization process related to language, sciences, art, religion, laws, media, and education. Through symbols such as flags, anthems, parades, and heroes, cultures legitimize their superiority and control of others. Such “cultural violence” leads to both indirect structural violence and direct physical and psychological violence (Galtung, 1967). Structural violence, including various forms of social injustice, creates conditions of suffering, exclusion, marginalization, exploitation, and dependency. Direct violence is more tangible: killings, mutilations, expulsion, detention and repression. Power is expressed in the four realms of culture, military power, politics, and economy (Galtung, 1967; Galtung & Fischer, 2013).

Stages of Creative Conflict Resolution

According to Galtung, this cycle of violence can only be halted through a dynamic of reconciliation with the past, mediation in the present, and creative planning for transformation of the situation in the future. Each of these stages involves strategies of intervention.

The first phase after parties agree to negotiate is reconciliation with the past. Parties involved in a conflict begin by mutually recognizing each other and their motivations, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions experienced. Mediators help interpret

the conflict, leading the different parties to understand how all the participants have a different vision of the problem, depending on how the conflict delineates their living conditions (Fisher, 1990; Kriesberg & Northrup, 1989). Being open to listening and understanding differences is the beginning of the creative work necessary to transform the situation. Reconciliation should include the obvious but often-ignored fact that many conflicts emerge within a social reality of coexistence, in which people disagree about conditions affecting their lives at the individual and collective level. Reconciliation continues through the subsequent phase of mediation.

In the second phase, mediation, a facilitator helps the involved parties identify modalities and strategies to be used to research solutions and formulate mutually acceptable agreements. Transformative mediation concentrates on identification of possible solutions through direct and active participation and research of the people involved in the conflict and responsible for its resolution (Horowitz, 2007). While some scholars claim that successful negotiation indicates a possible resolution (Salomon & Nevo, 2002), a first positive result does *not* guarantee durable success. As is well known by those involved in intractable conflicts such as in the Middle East, Sri Lanka, and Somalia, who have experienced repeated unsuccessful attempts at mediation, relations between the parties can degenerate, returning to violent behaviors and negative attitudes (Bar-Tal, 2000; Nadler, Mallow, & Fisher, 2008). To overcome this, reconciliation must address the “ethos of conflict,” including social and cultural models of adversity which have been passed from generation to generation, and the prejudices rooted in the collective knowledge of involved groups.

After agreements are reached, parties must renegotiate the terms of coexistence. This involves constructive investment to transform and shape new social relations. This is a slow but drastic social change. Trusting relations between the involved parts need to be gradually established, both at the horizontal level (individual people) and the vertical (formal groups and political and institutional delegations). The matrix of creative mediation is the “three Cs”: conditions, consequences, and context (Horowitz, 2007). The work of reconciliation must take place within each group, as well as between groups; inter- and intra-group social relations need to be reformulated for the reconstruction of a peace ethos. If either or both parties cling to their feelings of victimization, reconciliation runs the risk of increasing distrust and being damaging, rather than healing. Horowitz (2007) posits that creative mediation must transcend contradictions and enter into new perspectives and visions of problem resolution. Participants, therefore, must be flexible, capable of listening in an active and empathetic way, to what the involved parties propose. The creative aspect is the fundamental prerequisite for the launch of every planning for transformation and change.

The final stage of the process is planning for transformation of the situation to bring about resolution of the conflict (Webel & Galtung, 2007). There must be a commitment to cooperation to implement operative and concrete aspects necessary for peaceful coexistence and the respective needs for all sides’ security and survival.

Participants must take responsibility for the process of realizing accepted solutions. This process includes emotional, communicative, and hypothetical aspects in order to use the experience as a transformative moment of personal and relational growth (Arielli & Scotto, 2003). Creativity gives flavor to the realization of the change and transformation, allowing parties to go beyond archaic models of peacemaking (Savir, 2008). For example, many people involved in the peacemaking process are ex-warriors, with a past of violence, both endured and enacted. This has a bearing on their perceptions of peace, its goals and strategies to reach it.

Each social process (economics, politics, military, culture) can be considered an element of peace building, because only by starting from meeting people's needs for wellbeing on multiple levels is it possible to work towards peaceful coexistence. There are many aspects of society that can be managed in cooperation for the wellbeing of people, but, first of all, people's deepest knowledge needs to be engaged. As long as the quest for immediate knowledge continues to be considered superior to awareness of the benefits that planning towards the future can give to present and future generations, every action of peace building will remain limited and sterile. It is in this complexity of positions and roles that human rights, values, respect for one another, human dignity, gender equality, and safeguarding the planet become cardinal points of the path for peace culture development. All of this must be integrated in the perspective of sustainability that can be pursued, by the awareness of what we want to leave to our grandchildren and future generations.

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