

Implications of Peace Education Strategies on Development of Conflict Resolutions Skills among Adolescents

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Abstract: *All men in the world want to live a peaceful life. Peace as we know is the hue and cry of the modern time. Going through the literature we find that Fear of violence has become one of the greatest concerns for many in the arena of education. Adolescence is the stage of great stress and strain. Conflict with a student or between students can occur anywhere; in the halls, the classroom, or the cafeteria. Unless handled appropriately and effectively, a routine conflict can easily escalate into a serious situation, requiring some form of administrative intervention. As promoted by UNICEF and UNESCO and as established through various studies peace education has been found to be very effective in developing peaceful value system among the school going students. The study here has tried to investigate the effect of certain peace integrated intervention, termed as peace education strategies (PES) towards development of conflict resolution skills among adolescent students. The experimental study has been conducted on 143 students using multiple group time series design. The findings revealed that there is significant effect of Peace intervention (PES) on developing conflict resolutions skills among adolescents.*

Keywords: Peace, Peace Education Strategies, Peace Curriculum, Conflict Resolution, Adolescent Education

1. Conceptual Background of the Investigation

All men in the world want to live a peaceful life. Peace as we know is the hue and cry of the modern time. Thus the challenge has always been a part of the possibilities for the establishment of a peaceful world in which men can live without tensions, burdens and worries and has health, wealth and happiness and his potentialities are fully developed. His relationship with fellow human beings are good and love based and his divine natures has fully blossomed and contribution of education to this peace buildings process. Keeping this in view UN and UNESCO has tried to start peace education programs and activities throughout the world.

Adolescent are treated as those group of individual who are passing through the difficult phase of stress and strain. The teenage years are full of conflicting situations. The ongoing physical, emotional and hormonal changes get reflected in them through their certain abnormal behaviour. These behaviours have to be understood and should be respected as sometimes improper address of adolescent problems may lead the adolescents towards wrong path. We have found that peace education as its content and objectives suggest seems to understand the youth problems and thus can address their issues and concern more efficiently.

Going through the literature we find that Fear of violence has become one of the greatest concerns for many in the arena of education (Kadel & Follman, 1993). The 28th Annual Gallup Poll identified fighting, violence and gangs, and a lack of discipline to be second only to drug abuse as the most serious problem facing today's schools (Elam, Rose, and Gallup, 1996). The Public Agenda Foundation reported that school safety and order were top priorities of parents responding to a survey (1994). Rarely can a newspaper be read without finding an article on the topic of

youth violence. Students have often been witnesses or victims of conflict and violence in their community, school and home. The United States Department of Justice reported in 1994 that the rate of crimes committed against juveniles rose 24 percent between 1988 and 1992. The United States Department of Justice reported in 1993 that nearly three million crimes occur each year on or near school grounds (as cited in Goldstein & Conoley, 1997). Schools are mirrors of society; the violence occurring within the schools across the nation is considered to be a reflection of the world today's (Goldstein & Conoley, 1997).

Conflict with a student or between students can occur anywhere; in the halls, the classroom, or the cafeteria. Unless handled appropriately and effectively, a routine conflict can easily escalate into a serious situation, requiring some form of administrative intervention. Traditionally, the school curriculum addresses conflict as it has occurred in history and literature, not as it occurs in the everyday life of a student. Many families do not instruct students on appropriate methods of handling conflict. (Johnson & Johnson, 1995). Often students know only two ways of settling disputes, fighting or giving up, neither of which provide a satisfactory resolution (Morse & Andrea, 1994). School personnel recognize that students must be taught not only that their actions have logical consequences, but also that instruction must be provided in acceptable alternatives to violence (Virginia Association of School Superintendents, 1992). Since the early 1980's, public schools have shown an increasing interest in providing instruction in conflict mediation skills (National Association for Mediation in Education, 1994) Schools have implemented a variety of programs based on the belief that training in conflict mediation would equip students with alternatives to violence.

UNICEF has argued that Peace education promotes development of values as the basis for behavioural change, and views behaviour as an indicator of an individual's or

group values. The effectiveness of peace education is increased when strategies are used to address the learners' needs how to sustain peace and also to deal with the life conflicts successfully.

The process of changing behaviour proceeds through a sequence of stages (adapted from Fishbein, 1992; and HealthCom, 1995) in which an individual:

- 1) Becomes aware of the issue (peace and conflict);
- 2) Becomes concerned about the issue;
- 3) Acquires knowledge and skills pertaining to the issue;
- 4) Becomes motivated, based on new attitudes and values;
- 5) Intends to act;
- 6) Tries out a new behaviour (for example, peaceful conflict resolution);
- 7) Evaluates the trial; and
- 8) Practices the recommended behaviour.

These stages may vary in order, or take place simultaneously, depending on the social and cultural context in which the behavioural change is taking place. A comprehensive approach to peace education should address all of these stages. The eight-step process of behaviour change with respect to peace and conflict issues might look like this: a young person may 1) become aware that most conflicts between people of her/his age are dealt with through fighting; 2) become concerned about the damage that is being caused by physical and emotional violence; 3) learn about alternative ways of handling conflict and realize that there are non-violent alternatives in conflict situations; 4) become motivated to try out these skills in a real situation; 5) make a decision to try skills of non-violence the next time she/he is involved in a conflict; 6) try out new behaviour such as negotiating in a cooperative manner in a conflict with a peer; 7) reflect on the experience and realize that the outcome was less physically or emotionally harmful than the behaviours used in previous conflict situations; and 8) make a commitment to continuing to use and learn about non-violent methods of handling conflict.

UNICEF has taken up various initiatives in different countries to deal with the problems of adolescent problems through different peace education initiatives. For example providing life skills education (In Zimbabwe) enables children and young people to translate knowledge, attitudes and values into action. It promotes the development of a wider range of skills that help children and young people cope effectively with the challenges of everyday life, enabling them to become socially and psychologically competent. Life skills can include cooperation, negotiation, communication, decision-making, problem-solving, coping with emotions, self-awareness, empathy, critical and creative thinking, dealing with peer pressure, awareness of risk, assertiveness, and preparation for the world of work (Baldo and Furniss, 1998).

Many life skills are 'generic', in that they can be applied to a number of specific contexts. For example, negotiation skills may be used in resolving a conflict between peers; they may also be used in discussing wages or working conditions during a job interview. Decision-making skills can be used in arriving at a mutually agreeable solution to a dispute between two people, or in making health-related choices

such as deciding whether to smoke or engage in a sexual relationship.

The emphasis of life skills education on developing attitudes and values, and translating those changes into observable behaviours, is an important perspective to incorporate into peace education programmes.

The UNESCO Handbook on Peace Education offers a thematic model of peace education which consists of ten different themes. These themes are built upon different peace values and are consisting of different illustrative activities. These ten core peace values can be achieved in a number of ways. The brief description of these themes is as follows:

- *Think Positive*: develops positive self concept and also attitude of accepting others with respect, and appreciating them.
- *Be Compassionate and Do no Harm*: develops qualities like love, kindness, sympathy and so on.
- *Discover Inner Peace*: develops ability to control anger and build soothingness within.
- *Learning to Live Together*: builds ability of sharing, mutual help, trust building and accepting group responsibility, including leading and following.
- *Respect Human Dignity*: develops respects for human rights, duties and justice; 'do unto others what you expect others do unto you'.
- *Be Your True Self*: develops strength of character to be honest in expression of one's feelings and thoughts without letting down others.
- *Developing Critical Thinking*: develops the essential skill for problem solving involving analysis and synthesis, looking at the issue from alternative standpoints.
- *Resolve Conflict Non-Violently*: develops skills of conflict analysis, negotiation, active listening, mediation, creative problem solving and seeking alternative solution.
- *Build Peace in Community*: develops understanding of social realities and people's problem and skills and attitudes to work with them.
- *Caring for the Planet*: develops understanding of the immediate environment, the national and global environment, and need for protection of the mother (planet) earth.

The composition of each theme has activities in the form of story-telling, role-play, drama, brainstorming sessions etc. which can be integrated in the classroom subjects or can be taught independent of other subjects. The essence of these activities is that they try to develop the life skills which are essential for successful living and prepare the adolescents to address their problem peacefully. The concept of self-awareness, positive thinking, collaborative living etc, makes the students to develop values in them which can help them in their coming future. Thus it seems that applying peace education strategies based upon the themes of UNESCO, Thematic model of Peace seems to help the adolescents in developing conflict resolution skills.

It has been found that no other study except one small project study undertaken by Rajyalakshmi, 1990 which

examined the needs, concerns, perceptions and responses of the young minds of secondary school students (of Delhi region only) to the contemporary situations, the general awareness among school children and the impact of peace programmes run by the schools during International Year of Peace, 1986 and a study of Sahoo (2002) on adolescents' conception of peace, violence and strategies to attain peace in relation to some psycho-social variables and academic achievement. No other study has been undertaken in India. Hence the present investigation has been done to study the effect of peace education strategies on development of conflict resolution skills among adolescent students.

Objectives of the study

- 1) To develop peace education strategies (PES) for development conflict resolution skills among adolescent students.
- 2) To study the effect of peace education strategies (PES) on development of conflict resolution skills (CRS) among adolescent students.

2. Methodology

The present study has been conducted using Multiple Group Time Series Design, which is a sub-type of Quasi Experimental Design. The design and process of experimentation has been summarized below in table 1.

Table 1: Experimental Design

Purposively assigned Groups	Pre-Tests (T) / Dependent Variables (DV)			Manipulation of Independent Variable (IV)	Post-Tests (T) / Dependent Variables (DV)		
Experimental Group (EG)	T _{EG1}	T _{EG2}	T _{EG3}	Intervention of PES in regular class	T _{EG4}	T _{EG5}	T _{EG6}
Control Group (CG)	T _{CG1}	T _{CG2}	T _{CG3}	No-intervention of PES in regular class	T _{CG4}	T _{CG5}	T _{CG6}

Sample

The sample of the present study were 143 school going students. The details of them are as below.

Experimental group: Seventy three students from two classes (37 students from IX-A and 36 students from XII-Science) of Areyee DAV Public School constituted the experimental group.

Control group: Seventy students from two classes (38 students from IX-B and 32 students from XII-Commerce) of Areyee DAV Public School constituted the control group.

Development of Peace Education Strategies

For the conduction of the experiment researcher has developed certain activities called as Peace Education Strategies (PES). Peace education strategies were guided by the thematic model of Peace Education as shown in Fig 1.



Figure 1: Thematic Model of Peace Education

In total 68 PES were developed which consists of activities based on team-work, storytelling, role-play, brainstorming sessions etc. The objectives of these activities were to

develop effective skills of conflict resolution among adolescents. The names of this PES has been listed below in Table 2.

Table 2: List of Peace Education Strategies (PES)

1	Knowing a Conflict	2	What to do?	3	The rescue team
4	Understanding a conflict and managing it	5	Conflict Management in Practice	6	My Subject, My Career, My Choice!
7	Whose problem?	8	Dispute Lines	9	Supporting each other
10	Which Story?	11	Mediating exercises	12	I Am a Critical Thinker
13	Submissiveness leads to self-defeat	14	Being Non-Violent in a Conflict Situation	15	Facing challenges of life positively
16	Responding to conflict	17	I Understand What You Say	18	I know Mediation
19	What if?	20	Forgiveness	21	Telephone conversations
22	Force field analysis	23	Effective communication	24	Learning assertive responses

25	What am I?	26	I am O. K. You are O. K.	27	Character building
28	Working together	29	I Really Mean It	30	Let's Talk
31	Why we decide on what we decide?	32	Managing-Conflicting situations	33	The Problem Solving Approach!
34	Decision Making	35	People Around me	36	Demonstrating affection
37	Choosing the best alternative	38	I Like in You	39	Dealing with Emotions!
40	My Resolution Diary	41	OK/ Not OK	42	Stepwise problem solving
43	Conflict Management	44	Count Squares	45	Decision making ability
46	How to deal with an angry person	47	Helping Friends "I Can Help You"	48	Constructive conflict resolution
49	The story of the two donkeys	50	Mirroring	51	Resolution Mountain
52	Conflict over an orange	53	Exploring stereotypes	54	Whose mango tree is it?
55	Knowing Stress	56	Coping with Stress	57	Just chill out!
58	How to manage Anger?	59	To compete or to co-operate?	60	Controlling anger
61	Cause-Effect Analysis	62	My life problem	63	Power struggle
64	Quick Decisions	65	Self-Assessment	66	Looking for Pros and Cons
67	Mediation	68	Assertiveness Exercise		

Tools and the Process of Investigation

At the start of the study and after the assignment of the students in experimental and control group pre-tests (repeated pre-tests) on conflict resolution skills among adolescents were measured. For assessing their conflict resolution skills a five point Likert scale was used named as CONFLICT RESOLUTION SCALE FOR ADOLESCENTS (CRSA). In the scale the questions were asked on their usual response to conflicting situations. After this the experimental group students were taught with Peace Education Strategies (PES) developed by the researchers. The aims of these classes were to make the students acquainted with the skills of resolving any conflict constructively. The control group students were going through their regular classes. The researcher tried to keep all the other setting equal for both the group except the experimental treatment to the experimental groups without disturbing the regular functioning of the classes and school. The experiment was continued for six months. After the treatment period too repeated post-test on assessing their conflict resolution skills was used.

3. Findings on Data Analysis

Testing of Hypothesis

There exists an effect of peace education strategies (PES), i.e., the post test scores of the experimental group differ significantly from the post test scores of the control group in respect of achieving overall conflict resolution skills (CRS) among adolescent students.

To test the above hypothesis ANOVA has been applied between the experimental and control group for all the pre-tests and post-tests for both the experimental and control group, i.e. pre-test1, pre-test2, pre-test3, post-test1, post-test2 and post-test3 for both the groups and analysed whether the experimental group differ in their behaviour prior and after the treatment given through PES. The control group served for the cross validation of results. The ANOVA findings are shown in Table 3.

Table 3-Analysis of variance results showing pre-test and post-test analysis of both the groups in their scores on conflict resolution skills (CRSA)

Analysis of Variance of Pre-tests scores and Post-tests scores taken separately on CRSA						
Dependent Variable	Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Pre-test-1 result on CRSA	Between Groups	71.971	1	71.971	.157	#
	Within Groups	64463.693	141	457.189		
	Total	64535.664	142			
Pre-test-2 result on CRSA	Between Groups	210.352	1	210.352	.438	#
	Within Groups	67742.124	141	480.441		
	Total	67952.476	142			
Pre-test-3 result on CRSA	Between Groups	31.046	1	31.046	.064	#
	Within Groups	68052.493	141	482.642		
	Total	68083.538	142			
Post-test-1 result on CRSA	Between Groups	184667.865	1	184667.865	537.384	**
	Within Groups	48453.520	141	343.642		
	Total	233121.385	142			
Post -test-2 result on CRSA	Between Groups	185619.208	1	185619.208	557.191	**
	Within Groups	46971.883	141	333.134		
	Total	232591.091	142			
Post -test-3 result on CRSA	Between Groups	206660.557	1	206660.557	621.881	**
	Within Groups	46856.436	141	332.315		
	Total	253516.993	142			

- Not Significant ** - Significant at 0.01 level

Table 3 depicts the results of this analysis. The results revealed that both the control and the experimental group are having no significant difference in their pre-test results. The calculated value of F between the experimental and the

control group for the first pre-test score is 0.157 which is not significant at 0.05 level of confidence. Similarly the calculated value of F for second pre-test is 0.438 and third pre-test is 0.064 is also not found to be significant at 0.05

level of confidence. Thus, it can be concluded that before starting the treatment the experimental group mean at pre-test1 (200.78), pre-test2 (204.05) and pre-test3 (204.92) were not significantly different from the control group mean at pre-test1 (202.2), pre-test2 (201.63) and pre-test3 (203.98) respectively as found from data analysis. Further in the experimental design is concerned repeated post-test has been performed so as to see the time series analysis of the changes taken during the experiment. In the experimental

design there has been three consecutive post-test taken on experimental and control group. As it is seen in table 3 the analysis of variance results for all the post-tests i.e. post-test1, post-test2 and post-test3 gives the result 537.38, 557.191 and 621.89 which are highly significant at 0.01 level of confidence interval. Further a graphical representation of the scores of the pre-tests and post-tests in control and experimental group is shown in figure 2.

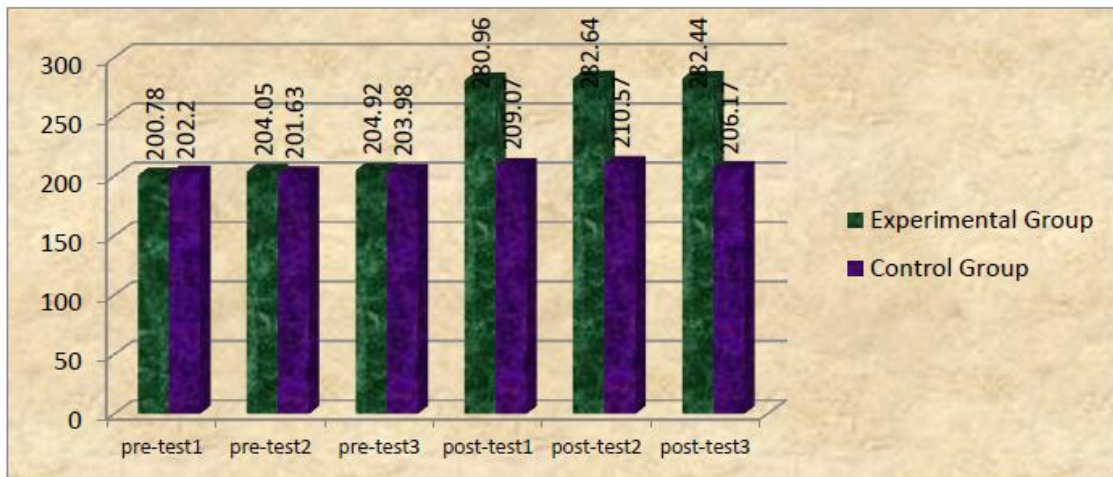


Figure 2: Mean Score comparison of experimental and control group on three pre-test and three post tests

It is also a fact that as both the groups were chosen separately and were not matched or equated before the experiment it cannot be emphasized that the difference occurring in the experimental group is due the implementation of PES and not due to sampling error or due to other intervening variables or factors. To justify the acceptance of the hypothesis, ANCOVA has been applied by taking post test1 results as dependent variable and pre-tests

results as covariates. As there are three pre-tests administered before the actual treatment classes, the three pre-tests can be taken as the covariates. The findings are summarized in the following Table 4. Analysis of Covariance technique is followed to adjust or correlate final (post-test1) scores with the pre-test (pre-test1, pre-test2 and pre-test3) scores.

Table 4: Covariance results showing the effect of PES over conflict resolution skills among adolescents taking pre-tests as covariates

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	P
Corrected Model	222840.961	4	55710.240	747.830	<0.001
Intercept	13947.610	1	13947.610	187.227	<0.001
PRE_TEST1	161.960	1	161.960	2.174	0.143
PRE_TEST2	80.809	1	80.809	1.085	0.299
PRE_TEST3	1368.044	1	1368.044	18.364	<0.001
TREATMENT_EFFECT_GROUPS	146683.898	1	146683.898	1969.022	<0.001
Residual	10280.424	138	74.496		
Total	8870681.000	143			
Corrected Total	233121.385	142			

The F-value (or $F_{y, x}$) 1969.022, was found to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence interval referring to the 4/138 df. So the adjusted post-test3 scores shows that the final mean scores of the control group (Mean=209.96) and the experimental group mean (Mean=280.96) differ in themselves significantly after they have been adjusted with the initial differences. The performance of the experimental group was much better than the control group from the pre-

test level to the post-test level. Therefore, it can safely be concluded that PES has definitely helped the adolescents in developing conflict resolution skills among them. As far as the design of the study is concerned the data simply can be analysed through the graphical trend in both the groups during the tests. It is visible in the fig 3 that the graph for the experimental group has an abrupt rise after the experimental treatment given to the students through PES.

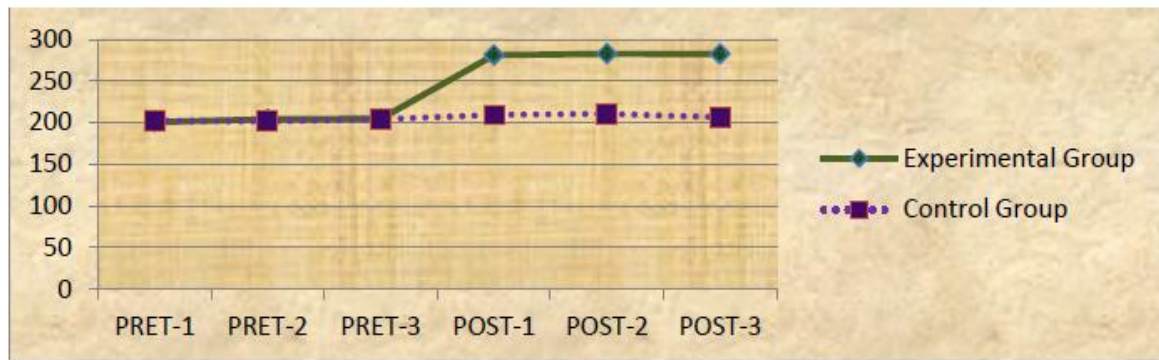


Figure 3: Graph showing change in both experimental and control group during the entire experimental period in regard to development of CRS

The above analysis of data reveals that the hypothesis –‘Due to the effect of peace education strategies (PES), the post tests scores of the group differ significantly from the pre tests scores in respect of achieving overall conflict resolution skills (CRS) among adolescent students’ is accepted and it can be concluded that PES is effective in developing CRS among adolescents.

4. Conclusion

The present study basically tries to develop Peace Education Strategies (PES) guided by the thematic model of Peace Education and further to study its effect on development of conflict resolution skills among the adolescents. The findings of the study indicate that the developed PES has helped in enhancing adolescent’s conflict resolving skills. Different commission in India and the National Curriculum Framework (2005) of NCERT has underlined that education must develop sensitivity in individuals to their social environment. The concern for equality, social justice, poverty, violation of human rights and developing non-violent social system are the hallmarks of peace education. The approach to peace education is not prescriptive suggesting of dos and don’ts; rather it involves transforming the environment to imbue it with tolerance, compassion, cooperation, justice, equality etc. so that these qualities, essential for peace building are nurtured among students. The study is a milestone in addressing the youth issues and developing in them the skills so that they can face the challenges of life in a positive manner and resolve the teenage conflicts constructively.

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