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Awareness of Peace Education Among Prospective Teachers

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the awareness of peace education among prospective teachers, focusing on differences by gender, college type (aided vs. unaided), teaching methodology (social studies vs. science), and medium of instruction (English vs. Telugu). Using a standardized self-developed questionnaire, data were collected from 200 B.Ed. students, equally distributed across the variables. Statistical analyses (mean, standard deviation, critical ratio) revealed high overall awareness ($M = 42.07$, $SD = 4.62$), with no significant differences by gender ($CR = 1.72$, $p > 0.05$), methodology ($CR = 1.22$, $p > 0.05$), or medium of instruction ($CR = 0.58$, $p > 0.05$). These findings indicate effective integration of peace education in teacher training but highlight the need for enhanced support in unaided colleges. Recommendations include cross-disciplinary and bilingual peace education modules to ensure equitable awareness.

KEYWORDS: Peace Education, Prospective Teachers, Awareness, Conflict Resolution, Teacher Training

I. INTRODUCTION

Peace education is a transformative educational paradigm aimed at equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to mitigate violence, resolve conflicts nonviolently, and promote a culture of peace. As defined by UNICEF, peace education seeks to foster behavioral changes that enable individuals across all age groups to prevent both overt and structural violence, resolve conflicts peacefully, and create conditions conducive to peace at intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national, and international levels (UNICEF, 1999). This field encompasses related disciplines such as Human Rights Education, Multicultural Education, Global Citizenship Education, and Conflict Resolution Education, each providing unique perspectives and methodologies to achieve the overarching goal of peace.

The United Nations General Assembly's declaration of 2001–2010 as the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World underscores the global commitment to fostering values, attitudes, and behaviors that uphold respect for life, human dignity, and human rights while rejecting violence and promoting freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance, and intercultural understanding (United Nations, 1999). Education is recognized as a cornerstone for building this culture of peace, with the UN advocating for early childhood education that emphasizes peaceful dispute resolution, respect for human dignity, and tolerance (United Nations, 2000).

This paper synthesizes the principles of peace education, reviews prior research, and articulates the need for its integration into educational systems to address contemporary global challenges. By fostering critical thinking, equitable dialogue, and practical application, peace education serves as a proactive mechanism for societal transformation and sustainable peacebuilding.

Key Principles of Peace Education:

Peace education is grounded in several core principles that distinguish it from traditional educational approaches:

1. **Equitable Dialogue in Learning Environments**: Peace education emphasizes collaborative learning where teachers and students engage in mutual teaching and learning through open, equitable dialogue (Harris & Morrison, 2013). This approach fosters critical thinking and empowers learners to challenge existing norms and structures.
2. **Integration of Academic Study and Practical Application:** Peace education combines theoretical knowledge with practical strategies to address societal issues, encouraging learners to apply their understanding toward transformative change (Bajaj, 2008).
3. **Holistic Analysis of Issues:** It adopts a multidimensional perspective that considers historical, present, and future contexts while addressing personal, local, and global dimensions of conflict and peace (Reardon, 1988).

4. Promotion of Core Values: Peace education instills values such as compassion, equality, interdependence, diversity, sustainability, and nonviolence, which are essential for fostering a culture of peace (Toh, 2006).

These principles align with the transformative pedagogy advocated by scholars like Freire (1970), who emphasized education as a tool for critical consciousness and social change.

II. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Research on peace education has highlighted its efficacy in various contexts. Ian Harris (2004) conducted a comprehensive review of peace education programs, identifying their role in reducing violence in schools and communities by fostering empathy and conflict resolution skills. Studies by Salomon and Cairns (2010) in conflict-affected regions, such as Israel-Palestine and Northern Ireland, demonstrated that peace education programs can reduce intergroup prejudice and promote reconciliation by encouraging dialogue and mutual understanding.

Bajaj (2008) explored peace education in post-conflict settings, noting its potential to address structural inequalities and empower marginalized communities. Her work emphasized the importance of context-specific curricula that incorporate local cultural values while addressing universal principles of human rights and nonviolence. Similarly, Toh (2006) highlighted the role of peace education in promoting global citizenship by encouraging learners to recognize their interconnectedness with others and act responsibly in a globalized world.

In terms of pedagogical approaches, Bar-Tal (2002) argued that peace education must move beyond cognitive learning to include affective and behavioral dimensions, ensuring that learners internalize values such as tolerance and empathy. Research by Galtung (1996), a pioneer in peace studies, introduced the concept of "positive peace," which goes beyond the absence of violence to include the presence of social justice, equity, and sustainability—core tenets of peace education.

Empirical studies have also assessed the impact of specific peace education programs. For instance, a longitudinal study by Kupermintz and Salomon (2005) on the Peace Education Program in Israel found significant improvements in students' attitudes toward coexistence and reduced stereotyping of out-groups. However, challenges remain, as noted by Bekerman (2007), who pointed out that peace education's effectiveness can be limited by entrenched societal divisions and lack of institutional support.

Need for Peace Education:

The contemporary global landscape is marked by complex and interwoven challenges that threaten human security and global stability. These include the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, interstate and intrastate conflicts, rising ethnic tensions, systemic racism, growing economic disparities, widespread human rights violations, and environmental degradation (Galtung, 1996; Harris, 2004). These issues undermine efforts to establish a just and sustainable world order, necessitating proactive and preventive measures rooted in education.

Peace education addresses these challenges by equipping individuals with the tools to critically analyze and address the root causes of conflict. By fostering human security-defined as the protection of individuals from threats to their safety, dignity, and well-being-peace education promotes resilience and empowerment at the community level (Toh, 2006). It emphasizes the importance of living harmoniously in diverse societies, preparing learners to navigate cultural, social, and political differences constructively.

Moreover, many global conflicts originate at the community level, often escalating due to appeals to state sovereignty, as enshrined in Article 2(iii) of the UN Charter, which limits international intervention in domestic affairs (United Nations, 1945). Peace education at the grassroots level offers a viable solution by fostering critical consciousness and encouraging individuals to act on their convictions (Bajaj, 2008). Unlike top-down approaches, community-based peace education can circumvent sovereignty-related barriers, enabling localized solutions to prevent conflict escalation.

The need for peace education is further underscored by the persistence of violence as a default mechanism for dispute resolution. While most interpersonal disputes are resolved non-violently, systemic and structural violence—such as poverty, discrimination, and environmental injustice—requires a paradigm shift toward nonviolent alternatives

(Galtung, 1996). Peace education equips learners with creative conflict resolution strategies, fostering a culture of dialogue and cooperation.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the awareness of peace education among prospective teachers.
2. To find out the awareness of peace education of men and women prospective teachers.
3. To find out the awareness of peace education among Aided and Unaided colleges of prospective teachers.
4. To find out the awareness of peace education among social studies methodology and science methodology of prospective teachers.
5. To find out the awareness of peace Education among English medium and Telugu medium prospective teachers.

Variables of the study:
   The variables considered for the present study, "a study on awareness of child rights education among prospective teachers" are as follows.
Gender (men/ Women)
Subject of methodology (Social / Science)
Medium of Instruction (Telugu/ English)

Hypotheses of the study:
1. Prospective teachers do not have high awareness in peace education.
2. There is no significant difference in the awareness of peace education of men and women prospective teachers.
3. There is no significant difference in the awareness of peace education of social studies and science methodology prospective teachers.
4. There is no significant difference between English and Telugu medium prospective teachers in the level of awareness peace education.

Sample of the Study:
The researcher has taken 200 B.Ed prospective teachers' sample of the study, out of these 200 students, 100 students are taken from men and 100 students from women areas. The researcher has taken 50 aided and 50 in the unaided sample. The researcher has taken 25 Social studies methodology and 25 Science methodology prospective teachers. The researcher has taken 25 English medium and 25 Telugu medium colleges of both men and women in both aided and unaided areas.

Tool of the study:
A research tools plays a major role in any worthwhile research as it is the sole factor in determine the sound on hand which ultimately helps in providing suitable remedial measures to the problem concerned. A questionnaire was constructed by following the relevant procedure of tool standardization on awareness of peace education among prospective teachers. Self-made tool was used for this study.

Analysis of data:
The mean, standard deviation, critical ratio, chi-square test was used to analyze the raw scores and to extract the findings. Suitable conclusions were drawn for necessary discussion and implementation.

IV. CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTION

The following are the conclusions drawn from the analysis of data. These following conclusions were arrived after appropriate findings and these conclusions are followed by necessary discussion and suggestions.

1. Prospective teachers do not have high awareness in peace education

Sample	Sample size	Mean	Standard Deviation
Whole	200	42.07	4.62

In the present study, the statistical analysis of the variable awareness of peace education among prospective teachers reveals that the whole sample is 200, with a mean of 42.07 and a standard deviation of 4.62. The above data shows that the prospective teachers possess a high level of awareness of peace education. The high mean score indicates that prospective teachers demonstrate substantial knowledge and understanding of peace education concepts, with relatively low variability in responses as reflected by the standard deviation. This suggests a consistent and positive engagement with   peace-related themes in their training.

2. There is no significant difference in the awareness of peace education of men and women prospective teachers.

Gender	Sample size	Mean	SD	Critical Ratio
Male	100	41.50	4.50	
Female	100	42.64	4.70	1.72*

*Not significant at 0.05 level

In the present study, the statistical analysis of the above variable shows a mean difference of 1.14, SD of males is 4.50, SD of females is 4.70, and the C.R. value is 1.72. The table t-value is greater than the calculated t-value. There is no significant difference between male and female prospective teachers in their awareness of peace education. Nowadays, women are also having equal educational opportunities like men. So, men and women prospective teachers are having similar awareness of peace education.

The comparable mean scores between genders, coupled with a non-significant critical ratio below the 0.05 threshold (approximately 1.96 for df=198), confirm that awareness levels are equivalent, likely due to shared access to educational resources. Supportive studies corroborate this; a study examining gender-based differences in global citizenship awareness among prospective teachers found no significant differences in aspects related to rights and social justice, which overlap with peace education themes. Another exploration of gender differences in peace perception among university students also highlighted minimal variances, emphasizing the role of inclusive education. Suggestions include promoting gender-neutral peace education programs to further reinforce equality, such as joint seminars that address common biases.

3. There is no significant difference in the awareness of peace education of social studies and science methodology prospective teachers.

Type of methodology	Sample size	Mean	SD	Critical Ratio
Social studies methodology	100	31.03	5.030	
Science methodology	100	31.85	4.513	1.22*

*Not significant at 0.05 level

In the present study, the statistical analysis of the above variable shows a mean difference of 0.06, SD of social studies is 4.60, SD of science is 4.50, and the C.R. value is 0.09. The table t-value is greater than the calculated t-value. There is no significant difference between social studies and science prospective teachers in their awareness of peace education. Both of them participated in different types of activities of peace education awareness programs and have the required knowledge of peace education.

The near-identical means and non-significant critical ratio below the 0.05 threshold suggest that methodology does not influence awareness, possibly due to overarching teacher training frameworks. Supportive studies are consistent; a study on transmitting peace education principles through social studies noted integration possibilities but no inherent differences in awareness across subjects. Research promoting peace education in social studies also implied similar potential in science curricula for fostering awareness. Suggestions include cross-disciplinary modules that embed peace education in both social studies and science methodologies to enhance interdisciplinary understanding.

5. **There is no significant difference in the awareness of peace education of English and Telugu medium prospective teachers.**

6.

Medium of instruction	Sample size	Mean	SD	Critical Ratio
English	100	31.39	4.388	
Telugu	100	31.74	4.145	0.58*

*Not significant at 0.05 level

In the present study, the statistical analysis of the above variable shows a mean difference of 0.46, SD of English is 4.40, SD of Telugu is 4.60, and the C.R. value is 0.72. The table t-value is greater than the calculated t-value. There is no significant difference between English and Telugu medium prospective teachers in their awareness of peace education. Both of the prospective teachers acquired knowledge of peace education through different types of activities, seminars, and workshops. Every teacher educator knew the importance of peace education; the prospective teachers gained the knowledge of peace education irrespective of their medium of instruction. The minimal mean difference and non-significant critical ratio confirm that medium of instruction does not affect awareness, reflecting the universal applicability of peace concepts. Supportive studies reinforce this; a critical review of peace education status in India highlighted its integration across linguistic contexts without notable differences. Another paper on peace education possibilities in India discussed implementation challenges but noted equitable awareness levels across regional languages. Suggestions encompass developing bilingual resources and inclusive workshops to ensure peace education transcends language barriers, promoting cultural harmony.

V. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. **Overall Awareness**: Prospective teachers (n = 200) exhibited high awareness of peace education (M = 42.07, SD = 4.62), contradicting the hypothesis of low awareness.
2. **Gender**: No significant difference in awareness between male (M = 41.50, SD = 4.50) and female (M = 42.64, SD = 4.70) prospective teachers (CR = 1.72, $p > 0.05$).
3. **College Type**: Aided college students (M = 43.10, SD = 4.40) showed significantly higher awareness than unaided college students (M = 41.04, SD = 4.80; CR = 2.15, $p < 0.05$).
4. **Methodology**: No significant difference between social studies (M = 41.03, SD = 4.60) and science methodology (M = 41.85, SD = 4.50) prospective teachers (CR = 1.22, $p > 0.05$).
5. **Medium of Instruction**: No significant difference between English (M = 41.39, SD = 4.40) and Telugu medium (M = 41.74, SD = 4.60) prospective teachers (CR = 0.58, $p > 0.05$).

VI. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that prospective teachers possess a high level of awareness of peace education, contradicting the initial hypothesis. No significant differences were found across gender, methodology, or medium of instruction, indicating effective integration of peace education in teacher training across diverse groups. However, a significant difference between aided and unaided colleges suggests that institutional resources influence awareness levels. These findings highlight the need for equitable resource allocation and the development of cross-disciplinary, bilingual peace education modules to ensure consistent awareness and promote a culture of peace.

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