PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM: A CASE FOR INTEGRATING PEACE EDUCATION INTO TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to analyze the existing content pertaining to Peace Education in the core courses of B.Ed. (Hons.) Curriculum. Identified courses were thoroughly scrutinized against set criteria i.e. generating evidences about the presence or absence of explicit or implicit themes connected with Peace Education. This analysis informed integration of Peace Education into Pre-service Teacher Development Programs with special reference to B.Ed. (Hons.) Subsequently, Peace Education Training Module for In-service Secondary Schools Teachers has been developed Employing Case Study Research Design, Peace Education Training Model has been proposed based on deliberations with the administration and teaching workforce of the sampled Secondary Schools of Public and Private Sector across Karachi city. Peace Education is proactive approach to prevent extremism at Secondary Schools Level. Integration of Peace Education is expected to reduce growing rate of extremism at Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) as Post-Secondary Education is not standalone phenomenon. Through Peace Education, it is possible to intervene and prevent vulnerable working age population (above 15 year and below 65 year) drifting to extremism and subsequently terrorism It will help achieving sustainable Development Goals as envisaged in HEC vision2025 as peace and socioeconomic development are interdependent

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INTRODUCTION

Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in Pakistan have witnessed many incidents of on-campus violent extremism. As reported in the Dawn and revealed by the Sindh Chief Minister that three "well-educated" students have been arrested for being involved in planning and executing recent terrorist attacks in Karachi. The Dawn reported third-year student at Bahawalpur's Government Sadiq Egerton College stabbed a professor to death over vaguely described "anti-Islam" remarks. The Dawn also reported 23-year-old student of Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan was killed and another seriously injured by an on-campus wild mob for allegedly "publishing blasphemous content". Cursor of Education and Development in Pakistan (CODE-2019, p.3) research report pertaining to countering violent extremism on campuses denotes that in spite of witnessing on-campus pervasive existence of violent extremism at HEIs in Pakistan, the national framework or policy discourse in line with international practices and commitments is non-existent. Countering violent extremism at HEIs is not standalone phenomenon.

National Education Policy-2017 {Draft} specifies that Secondary Education Secondary Education is one of the most important parts of education system. It is important for multiple reasons: such as it denotes progression from the primary to higher level of education; preparation to the world of work; adoption of profession and most importantly the conceptual clearance of basic life skills. Therefore, secondary education is a crossroad, opening avenues of higher education for graduates on one hand and providing skilled manpower for job market on other hand. But educational indicators in terms of access, quality, gender disparities and educational expenditure pose a dismal picture of secondary education landscape and may contribute unrest in youth and thus breeding ground for violent extremism. Marina (2013) is of the view as to how the curriculum is determined; educational sequences are scheduled, school and classroom life is organized, and how the construction of positive personal relations is overseen has a lot to do with peace education.

This study derives insights from Beyond Bali; a transformative education approach for developing community resilience to violent extremism. It covers a range of topics and activities, including social science studies and ethical dilemma learning, are suitable for Years 8 and 9 students studying the Australian Curriculum Integration of peace education in teacher

education curricula will enable secondary school teacher to address the challenges of highly diversified complex classrooms. It is most likely to reduce growing tendency of extremism at working age level youth. Higher education is not standalone phenomenon as post-secondary education is dependent upon the intake of secondary education. This research aims to restore harmony and peace in the society by breeding peace in the minds of secondary schools students through secondary school teacher training wherein Peace Education is focal area. The training will yield in improved practices in terms of their knowledge, dispositions and skills. The research is progressive in nature. Identifying gaps as a result of content analysis informed designing teacher training module and its implementation.

Effectiveness of Education System is dependent upon teacher education. National Education Policy (2009-2015) specifies the Planning Commission's Vision-2030' focusing on change of mind-set which demonstrate commitment to a new set of societal goals. This policy also advocates the commitments of Government of Pakistan towards Education for All and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) coupled with Inclusive and Child friendly education that will provide platform for materializing Sustainable Development Goads (SDGs). Peace is pre-requisite for development. For this purpose, teacher quality and leadership at school play an essential role. National Education Policy (2009-2015) also advocates that reform is required in all areas: pre-service training and standardization of qualifications aligned with curriculum reform.

This research aims to provide a way forward for re-thinking teacher education in Pakistan in current scenario of growing extremism and violence. HEC vision 2025 also highlights planning and development as a national challenge and puts it on high priority agenda during 2016-2025. B.Ed. (Hons.) curriculum was designed in 2012. It is ripe time to initiate review and reform process for its sustainability. The focal areas of reformation include curriculum evaluation resulting in quality teacher workforce with pre-requisite knowledge, disposition and skills needed to impart 21st century skills. The research will provide a way forward for integrating peace education into teacher education curriculum after thorough evaluation of 08 Core Subjects i.e. School Community and Teacher, Classroom Management, Comparative Education, Foundations of Education, Curriculum Development, ICTs in Education, Contemporary Trends and Issues in Education and Research Project.

This research proposes integration of Peace Education into B.Ed. (Hons.) Curriculum after thorough scrutiny of the existing curriculum of 4-Year Pre-service Teacher Education Program. Curriculum Evaluation and In-service Secondary School Teachers and School Leader input has helped in identifying focal area of In-service Secondary School Teachers Training in order to develop their pre-requisite knowledge, attitude and skills required for sustainable and mindful peace-building on campus and society.

The main objectives of study include evaluation of selected courses of B.Ed. (Hons.) Curriculum and resultantly proposing integration of peace education into teacher education curriculum.

LITERATURE REVIEW

National Education Policy (2009-2015) takes into account emerging trends and concepts such as School Health, Life Skills Based Education, Environmental Education, Population and Development Education, Human Rights Education, School Safety and Disaster and Risk Management, Peace Education and Inter-faith harmony, detection and prevention of child abuse, etc. Sindh Education Sector Plan (2014-2018) specifies goal to provide education in a manner that it leads to social cohesion and aims to" promote peace education and disaster risk reduction as a 'life skill'. HEC Vision-2025 also highlights Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and sustainability of Higher Education itself. Thus combating extremism through peace education is instrumental in the current scenario. Thinking critically, solving problems, collaborating for managing risks and uncertainty are core competencies and employability skills that are critical for employment in a green economy and living together peacefully in a sustainable society. National Education Policy (2009-2015) specifies that there are five- six basic pillars that have the major contribution in education sector. These are curriculum, textbooks, assessments, teachers, the learning environment in an institution and relevance of education to practical life. The most significant action is required in improving the teaching resources and the pedagogical approaches teachers employ. The reform of teaching quality is of the highest priority. Integration UNESCO- Guidelines for Peace & Human Rights Education specify that most of teachers do not go into teaching aligned with the values of peace education. Mishra (2011) highlights certain approaches for promotion of peace education i.e. creating Peace Education Discipline/Specialization, Peace Education embedded in

Philosophy of Education Core Course, development of an Elective Course on Peace Education and integrating Peace Education into Teacher Education Curriculum.

Cremin, EchavarrÍa, & Kester (2018) advocates transactional Peacebuiding to reduce epidemic violence to undo the three major crises hampering Peace education progression; nationalism, continued cultural imposition and dominant reliance on rational forms of learning. The role of teacher education designed through these lenses is instrumental in sustainable peacebuilding.

Secondary School Teachers equipped with knowledge, skills and disposition in terms of managing diversity in classrooms, democratic conflict resolution, gender equity and such allied concepts will transform the leaners to materialize the goal of national integration and national cohesion. As a success story, Singapore is witnessed as a commercial hub due to increased investment in human capital. Integrating Peace Education into Teacher Education Curriculum is an investment in Human Resource Development with has compliance with rate of return as well as social demand approach of educational planning. Role of Education is instrumental for socioeconomic development. The Proposed research is directly connected with Goal 16 i.e. "Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development".

Abbasi (2014) investigated on finding the ways out from radical tendencies and disengaging the youth from the terrorist outfit and a program for societies for de-radicalization through balance and unique educational system in Pakistan. Abbasi (2014) argued that at present the system of education in Pakistan was far from the satisfaction to achieve the vision of balance education to prepare youth against the violent extremism as human resource. The stratification in educational system was also responsible for the absence of government policy and strategies to engage youth in community developmental process in order to dis-engage them from terrorist outfit. Basit (2015, pp.45-46) evaluated the counter de-radicalized initiatives in the context of Pakistan. This research bring forth a narrative that anything offered in religious guise has immediate appeal and amidst lack of mindfulness people end up supporting even violent agenda in the name of religious affiliation. The problem has been further aggravated by flawed and ambivalent perception of treating home-grown extremism as something external. Weak governance, lack of

inclusivity and the intellectually stagnant madrassa and public education system have further deteriorated the prevailing situation. Qadri (2015) investigated a theoretical underpinning about how current educational system could be used for countering violent extremism.

Federal Public Service Commission Annual Report 2017 reflects a dismal picture of critical thinking; a core competency for peace education and community engagement. According to this report the candidates having studied in private schooling system performed better and claimed 46% share in total allocation as compared. Even the candidates graduating from Garrison schools have been successful in getting 13% share in allocation. It is deplorable the candidates graduating from Government Schools could get only 9% share in allocation. Most of the students having studied at public sector schooling system join public sector universities with their academic attainment backlog. The report further elaborates that ideas presented were random. There was no argument building, logical sequence and coherence. The examiners were of the view to imperatively communicate HEIs in Pakistan for taking appropriate measures in order to develop critical thinking, creative writing and other allied employability skills. It will help undoing pull factors as denoted in recruitment patterns of Violent Extremism Organizations.

Wait (2016) through NUS- GuildHE has put forward six pillars of active citizenship designed for higher education institutions and students' unions keen to carry forward agenda of active citizenship education through integrating it in formal curriculum. Otherwise, the increased marketizations of higher education can side-line the agenda of peace education. Peace education is instrumental being beneficial for students, institutions and society. Taking insights this report, an indigenous model for peace education to develop youth resilience for countering violent extremism needs to be developed and institutionalized accordingly.

The United State Institute for Peace (USIP) has developed 'The Peacebuilding Toolkit for Educators. It is designed to support the work of educators in bringing peacebuiding themes and skills into the classroom. Given the current situation of on-campus violent extremism in Pakistan, such toolkit for In-service Teachers is required. This study attempts to propose integration of Peace education into pre service teacher education curriculum and designing peace education training for in-service teachers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population

The population of this study comprises of In-service Secondary School Teachers in Public & Private Sectors based in Karachi city of Sindh province.

Sample

The sample of this study consisted of 200 in- service Secondary School Teachers teaching core curriculum and 40 Principals/ Head teachers serving at 40 Secondary Level Schools. The sample comprises of equal number of Schools from Public and Private Sector from District East & Central, Karachi.

Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected through semi structured interviews from In Service Secondary school Teachers. Additionally documents pertaining to policy and practices of peace education and integrating peace education content into teacher education programs were analyzed.

Data Analysis

The research employed qualitative Research Design. Data was analyzed as per thematic analysis techniques used in Qualitative Research Approach.

Ethical Considerations

This research involves multiple sources of data, it is essential to allow only voluntary participation in this activity. The subjects were granted full liberty to decide whether or not to become part of this study. The interviews and Focus Group Discussion were conducted with prior intimation and appointment. Respondents were advised on using their right to omit any item if they feel it may interfere with their privacy or are offending to them. The participants were assured that no identifiable reference can be part of the questionnaire and in no way their identity appear in any form in the raw data or reported format.

The research team kept in mind the confidentiality of the information gathered by reporting the data anonymously. Furthermore, assured that the informed consent is sought. All the ethical protocols of education research were strictly followed as set by esteemed educational research organizations and HEC as well.

RESULTS

Thematic Areas of Peace Education for Proposed Integration

On the basis of International and National Policy and Practices and rigorous Literature Review the thematic areas identified include Fundamentals of Peace and Peace Education, Spirituality, Social Justice & Structural Violence, Strengthening Human Rights Role of Critical Pedagogy in Peace & Co-existence Education, Sustainable Development for Ecological Footprints & Recourse Exploitation, Approaches to Peace Education, Collaboration & Partnership for Peace Education through Effective use of ICTs , Behavior Management & Conflict Resolution, Sensitivity to challenge Prejudice, Stereotyping and Discrimination, Historical Perspectives on Peace Education/Protagonists of Peace & Peace Education, Curriculum Development , Early Identification, Intervention & Rehabilitation of vulnerable youth recruitment of Violent Extremist Organization.

B.Ed. (Hons.) Program Structure and Identified courses for Content Analysis leading to Peace education Content Integration.

B.Ed. (Hons.) is Post-Secondary 04 Year Degree Program comprising of 19 Credit Hour (CH) Compulsory Courses, 51 CH Professional Courses, 24 CH Foundation Courses , 26CH Content Courses and 15 CH Teaching Practice Courses amounting to 135 Credit Hours.

From among 135 CH Program structure, 33 CH courses have been identified. The identified courses include Method of Teaching, Classroom Management, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Education, School, Community & Teacher, Curriculum Development, Educational Psychology, Comparative Education, School Management, Contemporary Issues and Trends in Education, Introduction to Guidance and Counseling and Research Project.

Content Analysis of selected courses from B.Ed. Hons Curriculum

The courses were analyzed concerning their alignment with themes such as peace, harmony, citizenship education, conflict resolution, empathy, understanding self, problem-solving, decision making, social justice, harmony, empowerment, liberation, critical consciousness, and democracy. The proposed content area is based on the data of contemporary peace education approaches and also the inputs of In-service Secondary Schools Teachers captured through on-site Focus Group

Discussions in terms of their challenges and prospects of imparting Peace Education at Secondary Schools. Analysis of each identified course includes course composition and potential rationale for the course. The analysis also considered the aspect whether peace Education is explicitly or implicitly embedded and thus analysis informed integration of Peace Education Related themes has been proposed.

Course Title: Methods of Teaching – Semester - I

The course comprises of Seven Units This course introduces prospective teachers with the knowledge, dispositions and skills required to impart 21st century skills and operating as reflective practitioner. As per detailed scrutiny of the course, Peace Education Content is not explicitly embedded. Detailed scrutiny of the course suggested that Peace Education Content seems to be implicitly embedded. Topics like Cooperative Learning, Identifying Diversity and addressing it through effective classroom teaching and planning of physical and psychological setting are the inputs relevant to Peace Education and teaching Respect for All. Unit Seven deals with Self-Regulated Learning. It is connected with critical thinking and can help the phenomenon of epistemic violence through self-regulation, mindfulness. Thematic areas like Role of Critical Pedagogy in Peace & Co-existence Education, Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and role of teacher in Peacebuiding through developing community resilience are required to be installed in this course.

Course Title: Classroom Management – Semester-II

This course comprises of six units and introduces prospective teachers with the knowledge, dispositions and skills required to manage 21st Century Learners through reflective practice. As per detailed scrutiny of the course, Peace Education Content is not explicitly embedded. However in depth analysis of the course reflected that peace education is implicitly embedded. Units like managing diverse classrooms and Creating Shared Values and Community have linkages with Peace Education &Preventing & Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE). The course is deficient in having content like managing disruptive and challenging behavior may be instrumental in developing pre-requisite knowledge, skills and disposition to apply preventive and proactive classroom management.

Course Title: Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) in Education – Semester-III

This course introduces prospective teachers with the knowledge,

dispositions and skills required to manage 21st Century classroom in the age of Digital Divide by using ICTs in Education. The scrutiny of the course content informed that Peace Education Content is not explicitly and implicitly embedded. It is proposed that the content pertaining to Peace Promotion Campaigns through mindful use of ICTs/Social Media In order to counter the recruitment drives of Extremisms Violent Organization through social media; the prospective teachers are required to be equipped with skills for fighting Info-medic in the contemporary era and differentiating fake news from authentic Information.

Course Title: School, Community & Teachers – Semester -1V

This course comprises of eight units and introduces prospective teachers with the knowledge, dispositions and skills required to manage linkages among key stakeholders of educational process. As per detailed scrutiny of the course, Peace Education Content is neither explicitly nor implicitly embedded. The content pertaining to Community resilience to countering extremism needs to be embedded. The culmination of this course is community building supervised project. Teacher educators are required to assign projects pertaining to peacebuilding through school- community- family nexus.

Course Title: Curriculum Development – Semester -V

The representative syllabi comprises of five units and introduces prospective teachers with the knowledge, dispositions and skills required to manage curriculum for 21st Century Learners through reflective practices. As per detailed scrutiny of the course, Peace Education Content is neither explicitly nor implicitly embedded. The content pertaining to critical peace pedagogy needs to be integrated for inclusive education. UNESCO Peace Education Framework for Teacher Education and Text Book Analysis on the basis of this framework needs to be explicitly written in order to enhance prospective teachers' role as curriculum developers.

Course Title: Contemporary Issues & trends in Education – Semester -VI

In its 2010 document, Curriculum of Education: B.Ed. (Hons.) 4-Year Degree Program, the HEC added Contemporary Issues and Trends in Education as a professional three-credit course. This initiative supports the belief that broad-based knowledge approach to contemporary issues and trends in education is crucial for teacher preparation. The course orients pressing issues of today's global community to the prospective teachers. This is the only course wherein Peace education and its pedagogy are explicitly written.

Course Title: Comparative Education – Semester -VII

In the HEC 2010 document, Curriculum of Education: B.Ed. (Hons.) 4-year Degree Program Comparative education course was added as a professional course. This course is aimed at preparing prospective teachers for change agents by analyzing national and international landscape of education. At the outset the course discusses some misconception about comparative Education to avoid superficial' cherry-pick' decisions while reforming education system. It is proposed that International Policy and Practices for Peace building be included in the course.

Course Title: School Management – Semester -VIII

In the HEC 2010 document, Curriculum of Education: B.Ed. (Hons.) 4-year Degree Program, School Management was added as a professional course. This course is aimed at preparing teachers cum school leaders by developing their knowledge, disposition and skills in educational management and school improvement and effectiveness. It is proposed that role of Principal/head teacher in terms of safe campus and conducive teaching learning climate be included for promoting peacebuilding and countering violent extremism.

A WAY FORWARD & CONCLUSION

The study recommends Integration of Peace Education related content into Pre Service Teacher Education Program and focal areas pertaining to peace education, peace- building, Non-violent action, Critical thinking and reflection of In-service secondary School Teachers. On the pattern of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) Peace Teacher Training Program, the Continuous Professional Development Programs for In Service Secondary School teachers are needed to be design and implemented. One of the standards among National Professional Standards for Teacher Education in Pakistan is required to be explicitly added to highlight the role of teachers as Peace-makers and the knowledge, disposition and skills required in this context. Furthermore, NACTE Academic Evaluators Training is made pertinent to peace and evaluating campus climate as well. While introducing Teacher licensing regime, Peace Education delivery be made one of the core skills. Pre-service & In-service Teacher Education Programs needs to be bridged. In-service teachers having PTC and CT and B.Ed. (1 Year) qualification need opportunities for continuous professional development through offering In-service Associate Degree in Education after enrichment of Teacher Education Curriculum and proposed integration of Peace Education into existing curriculum.

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