Peace Education in Afghanistan:
A Comparative Study of Conflict and Post-Conflict School Textbooks

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Abstract

Afghanistan has experienced numerous educational curricula supporting its different governments' policies regarding the establishment of formal education. Afghanistan's school textbooks were published in support of alternate ideological regimes or governments during the years 1979 to 2002. From 2003 to 2014, the Afghanistan Islamic Republic government, with support from international donor agencies, worked to change the direction of education towards peace, free from political intervention and favouritism. The purpose of this research is to evaluate three different approaches to education in Afghanistan by examining a range of school textbooks, from three distinct political and cultural regimes, from a peace education perspective. It focuses in particular on the extent to which the objectives of peace education appear in Afghanistan's newly developed school textbooks between the years 2004 and 2014. School textbooks from the Communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), the Islamic State of Afghanistan (ISAG), and the current Afghanistan Islamic Republic Government (AIRG) were analysed

using directive qualitative content analysis. Using components of the Standish analytical framework utilised in the Peace Education Curricular Analysis Project (2016), three objectives of peace education are surveyed in the Afghanistan data: 1. recognizing violence, 2. resolving conflict non-violently, and 3. fostering an environment of positive peace.

Key Terms: Education, Peace, Peace Education

Background to the study

> "Education is one of the most important tools for human development and the means by which successive generations develop the values, knowledge and skills for their personal health and safety as well as for future political, economic, social and cultural development. This is one of the reasons for the global emphasis on achieving universal, free and compulsory primary education" (UNICEF 2011, 17).

The effectiveness of education for the growth of individuals and society depends on how the education system in a country develops and how it directs students' growth towards progress both within and beyond the country (UNICEF 2011). It is generally accepted that education's function is positive and essential for transmitting knowledge and skills from generation to generation (Durkheim1956; UNESCO 1996; Bajaj and Chiu 2009; Cardozo 2008), but scholars also argue that education can play a negative role as well, particularly in conflict areas[1] (Davies 2010; Jeaniene 2005; UNICEF 2011). Scholars have begun discussing the role of education in creating or sustaining conflict (LeThanh 1999; Davies 2010; Jones 2008; Jones 2009; Jeaniene 2005; UNICEF 2011; Cardozo 2008). Davies discusses education's different functions in conflict situations: supporting political interests towards conflict or maintaining peace with no messages of harm. He argues that conflict can be maintained through education reproducing the status quo, but also that attention to the school curriculum can help towards peace (Davies 2010).

In a conflict zone, political groups try to utilize the education system and train students to speak or act against opposition ideologies. Jeaniene argues "Once an ideology has been instilled in the minds of the youth, it cannot be simply 'switched off' when the war ends" (Jeaniene 2005, 204). Afghanistan has a long history of conflict and manipulation of its education system by internal and external powers for political purposes (Jeaniene 2005). Afghanistan as a country with a

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[1] Countries or states where clashes and struggles occur between opposing forces.

history of conflict has been experiencing education's dual roles (negative and positive). Since 1979, Afghanistan has experienced several different power regimes, each of which has dominated the country's education system, particularly the school curriculum, to reflect its preferred political ideology, and school textbooks have been used to provide preferred information for students (Husham 2015). Between 1979 and 1992, Afghanistan was under the control of two main opposition parties: 1 - the government of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA)[2] that had more control in cities, and 2 - the Islamic Jihadi[3] Groups (Jihadi Groups) as opposition groups which were active at the provincial level (Husham 2015). These groups comprise the Mujahedeen. The Afghanistan Ministry of Education under the PDPA, with the support of the Soviet Union's experts, integrated Communist ideology into the education curriculum, school textbooks and teacher education programs. They believed that a fundamental change in education was important in the process of a democratic revolution in the country, and so students received large amounts of information about communist beliefs and principles (Baiza 2015). Similarly, the Jihadi groups, as the resistance groups, used the school and education institutions as propaganda, encouraging people to join Islamic Jihadi Groups. The Jihadi groups, with the support of the United States of America, developed school textbooks disseminating violent messages against the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan government and the Soviet Union. The school textbooks in areas under the control of Jihadi groups were all about being Mujahed[4] and the use of weapons, firearms, and killing (Baiza 2015; Jones 2009; Kamgar 2002). For instance, "Maths textbooks included questions such as: if three mujahedeen need 3000 bullets, 2 needs 2000 bullets, how many bullets do 9 mujahedeen need?" (Interim Curriculum 1987, grade 8. cited Jones 2009, 115). From 1978 to 1992, Afghanistan experienced two contradictory education streams.

Following the Jihadi Groups or Mujahedeen regime, the Taliban,[5] the extremist group, took over Kabul and control of the country from 1997 to 2002.

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[2] The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan PDPA was supported by the Soviet Union and believed in Communist ideology, and was thus known as the Communist regime in Afghanistan. I used Communist Regime for PDPA government in this research as well.

[3] Islamic Jihadi groups (Jihadi groups) or Mujahedeen groups were the groups of Afghan people who came together and fought against the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan for the purpose of protecting Islam during years 1979 to 1992. The Jihadi Groups were supported by many countries, particularly by the United States of America.

[4] Mujahed is singular and mujahedeen is the plural form of the name.

[5] Taliban is the fundamentalist political and extremist belief movement in Afghanistan.

During this period, the education sector in Afghanistan almost collapsed and schools were closed for girls (Jones 2009).

After the Taliban was defeated in 2001, the Afghanistan Ministry of Education and the international community have made an effort to reform the education system with a peace education objective (Jones 2009; Jeaniene 2005). Work between 2004 and 2014 particularly, and still in progress, has been undertaken on the school curriculum and on the development of new school textbooks (Jeaniene 2005; Husham 2015). However, at the time of this research there had been no evaluation or review had taken place to see whether the joint efforts of the international community and the Afghan Government had changed the direction of education towards peace. This research has undertaken a comparative study of the Afghanistan School Curriculum through the analysis of Dari Language and Algebra subject textbooks under three governments, in order to feature changes and improvements in the current school curriculum. This study examines peace education core objectives (1-3) to investigate and observe to what extent these appear in the textbooks.

This study is a comparative one and evaluates the textbooks that have been used in school in the three different regimes of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), the Mujahedeen regime, and the Afghanistan Islamic Republic Government from 1979 to 2014. The study will answer the following two specific questions:

- Do Afghanistan's newly developed school textbooks (2004 – 2014) meet peace education objectives in comparison to the previous school textbooks, which were in use from 1980 to 2002?
- How is peace education reflected in the school textbooks in Afghanistan?

Literature review

Peacebuilding and peace education
Peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding are the three facets of peace that address violence (Cremin and Bevington 2017). Peacekeeping aims to respond to violence immediately and stop it from escalating. At the macro level, military forces control violence by acting as peacekeepers, and at the micro level, for example, school security guards break up fighting and work as peacekeepers in the community. Peacekeeping suppresses the conflict, but does not address the cause of conflict, nor does it establish long-term peace among disputants (Johnson W and Johnson T 2010; Cook 2008: Cremin and Bevington 2017). The second approach,

peacemaking, aims to resolve conflicts without the use of force and involves communication, persuasion and dialogue, mediation, empathy and reconciliation. (Johnson W and Johnson T 2005; Cook 2008; Cremin and Bevington 2017).

Peacebuilding, aims for long-term peace. Peacebuilding strategies are used to create cultures of peace and do not depend upon the use of violence, but rather promote nonviolence and a sustainable world as a way to avoid the horror of war. Peacebuilding addresses the root causes of violence and works at the structural level to create conditions for positive peace (Johnson W and Johnson T 2010; Harris and Morrison 2013; Johnson and Johnson 2005; Cremin and Bevington 2017). An important form of peacebuilding is peace education. Peace education is a transformative approach that transmits knowledge and skills that have relevance for keeping, making and building peace (Salomon 2004; Johnson W and Johnson T 2005).

Peace Education

Education is a means by which knowledge, cultural values and behaviour are transmitted from generation to generation with the purpose of initiating children into the adult world of meanings (UNICEF 2011; Bajaj and Chiu 2009; Burns and Aspeslagh 1996).

Peace education claims to empower students with a knowledge of conflict resolution, an understanding of conflict dynamics, and communication skills to manage peaceful relationships (Harris 2004; Johnson W and Johnson T 2010; UNESCO 2008). Students learn to take a social perspective, involving decision-making, solving social problems, peer negotiation, conflict management, valuing diversity, and social resistance skills and effective communication (Harris 2004). Peace education is broadly defined as the educational policy, planning, pedagogy and practice that develop awareness, skills, and values towards positive peace (Bajaj and Chiu 2009).

The transformative role of peace education

UNESCO discusses the role of peace education at different level; individual, school or community, national and global level. Individual needs to have and knowledge and skills like positive thinking, empathetic listening and communication, assertive behaviour, decision-making and critical thinking etc. At school, students need to learn these skills in order to be peaceful individuals in the society. A peaceful environment or culture in school helps to develop attitudes and behaviour of appreciation, co-operation, belongingness, trust and spirit of learning. By way of developing a mutually respectful teachers and students' relationship, school

introduce a living system of peace values, norms and practices into the individual daily life. At the national level, peace education is entrusted to produce good and productive citizens to the nation. Focusing on learning and understanding the current socio-political and economic problems and issues and teach student accordingly as future citizens to develop realistic perspectives to view problems in the society and globally. School can generate discussions and debates on world issues to raise the global awareness in the students (UNESCO 2005).

The key focus of peace education is capacity building: the development of knowledge and skills of conflict resolution and of personal attitudes and respect for human rights, and a positive culture of valuing peace. However, content and formulation of peace education continues to be debated (Burns and Aspeslagh 1996; Page 2008; Cremin and Bevington 2017). The development of peace education curricula, contents and the methodology of peace education are seen as progressive, promoting an egalitarian learning environment that is proactive and centred on learner participation (Kester 2010; Ardizzone 2001).

Divergence on peace education content

One of the curious aspects of peace education is the wide variety of content. Peace education programs have been implemented worldwide, but they differ considerably in terms of objectives, content, focus, and curriculum (Cardozo 2008; Robiolle-Moul 2016). There is no absolute formulation and definitive content of what constitutes peace education (Page 2008; Harber and Sakade 2009; Cardozo 2008; Burns and Aspeslagh 1996; Hicks 2004; Ben Porath 2003). Furthermore, peace education programs carry different names and merge with other education models, including education for human rights, education for conflict resolution, education for international understanding, global education, environmental education, and life skills education (Cardozo 2008; Cook 2008; Hicks 2004).

Cardozo argues that "there needs to be some consensus on what peace education is or should be in a certain context" (Cardozo 2008, 21). She says that, while there is a general agreement on the suitable peace education teaching and learning methods that stimulate reflective and critical dialogue in the class, a firm consensus on a clear conceptualization of peace education is missing in the literature (Cardozo 2008).

Peace education and political challenges

Peace education is concerned with positive peace and addresses all three forms of violence, direct, structural, and cultural violence (Galtung 1990; Kester 2010;

Reardon1988; Harris 2009; Harris and Morrison 2013; Harber and Sakade 2009; Standish 2016).

However, according to some scholars it is problematic for peace education to address all three forms of violence at once, particularly structural violence (Ben Porath 2003; Cardozo 2008; Rosen and Bar-Tal 2009). Cardozo mentions in her article that one of the challenges for peace education programs is in addressing power structures and political issues and having feasible alternatives to counteract violence in all its forms (Cardozo 2008, 31; Ben Porath 2003). She says it is a major challenge for peace education to address structural inequalities and power relations particularly in conflict regions. According to her, peace education cannot succeed on its own and needs to be incorporated into a multilevel process of peacebuilding that can address structural inequalities and the root causes of conflict (Cardozo 2008).

Theoretical framework

UNESCO described peace education objectives to be included across the school curriculum and subjects as following:

- To create in the learner the awareness, knowledge and sensitivity regarding issues that deal with war and peace; power and justice, gender and race; ecology and environment; conflict, etc.
- To develop skill in critical thinking and problem solving/conflict resolution, empathy, assertiveness, sharing and cooperation.
- To instil in the learner the attitude of self-respect and self-esteem, respect for others, open-mindedness and vision, environment concern, commitment to justice, etc.
- To develop pro-peace attitudes, skill and competences in the learner (UNESCO 2005,16).

Building on this framework, Standish (2016) identifies the elements that need to be incorporated into a school curriculum in order for peace education values and skills to be implemented. Standish categorises these elements into three distinct areas: recognizing violence, resolving conflict non-violently and creating environments for positive peace (Standish 2016, 20). For her, it is important, firstly, that violence is recognised and defined. She sees violence is as an intentional human act causing harm or the threat of harm. Violence is a barrier to creating positive peace. Secondly, resolving conflict non-violently means that instead of resolving conflict through violent means, for example, using weapons, it is more effective to achieve the desired result by understanding the root cause of

conflict, resolving conflict through communication, and building commitment for long-lasting peace, together with maintaining mutually beneficial, harmonious relationships (Standish 2016; Cook 2008). Thirdly, creating environments for positive peace requires a focus on peace that she describes as including: peace zone, peace bond, social justice, ecological mind, link mind, gender mind, resilience, wellbeing and prevention (Standish 2016).

Using the peace education framework that she developed, Standish has created the Peace Education Curricular Analysis or PECA project, an analysis of the school curricula of different countries related to the peace education content in the curriculum. Some of the studies that have been published include investigation of the National Curricula of Australia, England, Scotland, Sweden, Saudi Arabia, Mexico and New Zealand, looking for peace education elements within the curriculum (Standish 2015; Standish and Kertyzia 2015; Standish and Joyce 2016; Standish 2016; Standish and Talahma 2016; Standish and Nygren 2018; Kertyzia and Standish 2019). These studies so far published demonstrate some interesting findings and provide initial information that could be used to evaluate peace education programs that are being operated globally without "being subjected to any act of empirical validation" (Harris and Morrison 2013, 219).

Standish's PECA framework has been chosen as the basis for analysis in this study. It is considered as useful and relevant for the study of textbooks that form the basis of the school curriculum in the Afghanistan context. The PECA framework identifies peace education elements, values and context that are consistent with the literature on peace education. While Afghanistan is not a Western nation, many of the donor agencies providing support and advice for Afghanistan's peacebuilding and education make recommendations consistent with Western values (Husham 2015; Jeaniene 2005). Therefore, Standish's theoretical framework can be used to look at the extent to which the new Afghanistan school curriculum and textbooks developed with the help of international education experts addresses peace education concerns. The use of PECA for looking at the curricula of different regimes is a new application of the Standish model, that allows for a comparative analysis of different eras of education.

Definitions of the concepts

The three main areas of peace education content according to the PECA analysis are: recognizing violence, resolving conflict non-violently and creating environments for positive peace.

Recognizing violence

Galtung identified three forms of violence: Direct violence such as abuse, gun violence, physical fighting. Structural violence refers to systematic inequities and unjust structures embedded in society as part of the social process. Cultural violence refers to the way in which a society legitimizes and accepts direct and structural violence as part of its worldview (Galtung 1990; Standish 2016; Cremin and Bevington 2017).

The theoretical argument is that in order for violence to be resolved, it first needs to be recognized and identified. Peace education includes drawing attention to acts or conditions of violence, defining these and being aware of the consequences of different forms of violence.

Non-violent conflict resolution

Nonviolence means that instead of resolving conflict through violent means, the nonviolent way is more effective for achieving the desired result (Standish 2016; Salomon 2004; Kester 2010; Cook 2008; UNESCO 2008). In other words, non-violent is communication process with aim of peace that guides us to reframe how we express ourselves and hear others by focusing our consciousness on what we are observing, feeling, needing, and requesting (UNESCO. 2002; King and Christopher 2006). Dialogue, collaboration and conflict resolution skills are the tools for nonviolent conflict transformation. Dialogue refers to the capacity to discuss and negotiate rules, rights and fairness and the ability to express opinions assertively towards peace. Collaboration is the technique of building social capacity to work collaboratively with others and to learn to appreciate different ideas, perspectives and insights from others. Conflict resolution refers to skills and techniques used as intervention to settle disputes (Standish 2016; King and Christopher 2006).

Positive peace

Peace education emphasises creating positive peace or long-lasting peace free from the three forms of violence: direct, structural and cultural violence (Harber and Sakade 2009). Positive peace aims at long-term resolution and responds to towards accomplishment of equity and social justice (Galtung 1990; Grewal 2003; Bajaj and Chiu 2009; Kester 2010; Reardon1988; Burns and Aspeslagh 1996).

Positive peace is a condition in which individual have the fullest possible opportunity to meet their potential unrestricted by political, social and economic inequality (Burns and Aspeslagh 1996: Cremin and Bevington 2017).

In the PECA project there are 9 facets of positive peace; peace zone, peace bond, social justice, eco mind, link mind, gender mind, resilience, wellbeing and prevention (Standish 2016), in this study five of the nine facets of positive peace which are relevant in the Afghanistan context have been selected. Peace zone, link mind and resilience are not relevant to Afghanistan's context, and I changed eco mind to ecological responsibility. Eco mind defined as "harmonious living between humanity and nature" (Standish and Kertyzia 2019, 54), while ecological responsibility has been defined for this study as positive interaction and connection of humans with natural resources and the environment. So, the following five facets of positive peace from PECA plus ecological responsibility has been selected for this study:

1. Peace bond (positive relationships characterized by kindness and empathy)
2. Wellbeing (individual wellbeing, and feeling responsible for one's own and others' health)
3. Social justice (presence of equality and human rights)
4. Gender mind (awareness of gender or that humans comprise men and women with equal rights and equal roles)
5. Prevention (skills and techniques to resolve conflict non-violently or before violence starts).
6. Ecological responsibility (positive interaction and connection of humans with natural resources and the environment).

Research design

The PECA project framework serve as a model for this research design using content analysis method. Content analysis is a valid research method for studying communication material and to systematically analyse text (Krippendorf 1989). Krippendorf defines content analysis as a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (Krippendorf 2004). Content analysis method is particularly appropriate for analysing secondary sources of data such as books, documents, newspapers and diaries (Krippendorf 2004; Harris 2001).

This present study intends to investigate and analyse the content of school textbooks in order to understand their meaning from a peace education perspective. The main purpose of this study is to explore to what extent peace education is integrated in Afghanistan school textbooks. It is a comparative study and evaluation of textbooks which have been used in schools in three different governments of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, the Islamic State of Afghanistan, and the current Afghanistan Islamic Republic from1980 to 2002. For this reason, it is significantly relevant to use content analysis as the research method for this particular

study analysing school textbooks as items of cultural value. The directive qualitative content analysis (Krippendorf 2004) has been used. Illustrative statistics derived from summative or quantitative content analysis (Neuendorf 2002) have also been used as the methodology for this research. The research data comprised six textbooks in total, two from each government period. Analyse two textbooks from each regime, for the same class level (Class 4) in two main school subjects – Dari Language and Algebra - that would provide the opportunity for a legitimate comparative analysis.

The Dari[6] language has been one of the main subjects in schools from class 1 elementary school to class 12 of high school in Afghanistan for the three regimes. The teaching of the Dari language reflects the culture and social values of the nation and contains texts related to the importance of social and moral behaviour. As an example, the importance of family respect, respect for others in the community such as neighbours, respect for elders as a cultural value, good social behaviour, and honesty, integrity and trust as social and cultural values are some lesson titles included in this subject. Therefore, this subject is appropriate for investigating how peace education is integrated in the textbooks.

The Algebra is also one of the main subjects in school from class 1in elementary school to class 12 of high school in Afghanistan. Algebra deals with numeration and counting formula, but the short text of this book is used to support a particular ideology. For instance, during the Mujahedeen rule, textbooks included questions such as, "If three mujahedeen need 3000 bullets, 2 need 2000 bullets, how many bullets do 9 mujahedeen need?" (Interim Curriculum 1987, grade 8. cited Jones 2009. 115). It is worth seeing how this subject content has been transformed to content free of ideology in the new Algebra textbook under new reform of current government (AIRG).

I wanted to investigate and reflect on the information that Afghan children are provided with near the beginning of their schooling at age 9 or 10. Dari language teaching is integral to local culture and social values, and there is a need to assess whether there is any reflection of peace in the teaching of these values. Classes 1 to 3 are a little too early to concentrate on content, so Class 4 was selected for this subject.

Finding

This research finding presents the data analysis process covering the school textbooks of three regimes in three main sections. The first section presents the findings from the Afghanistan Islamic Republic Government (AIRG) school

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6 Dari is the first language subject of school according to the new curriculum.

textbooks for the subjects of Dari Language and Algebra (the current curriculum). The second section discusses the findings of school textbooks under the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan Government PDPA (the communist regime) and the third section is on the findings of the school textbooks from the Islamic State of Afghanistan Government ISAG (the Mujahedeen regime).

Section 1: Findings of School Textbooks under the Afghanistan Islamic Republic Government (AIRG), 2001-2014

Findings of Dari Language Textbook

The analysis of the Dari language textbook of AIRG Government for Class 4, dated 2011, involves a comprehensive and detailed examination of 154 pages, which contain 77 lessons.

Element one: recognition of violence
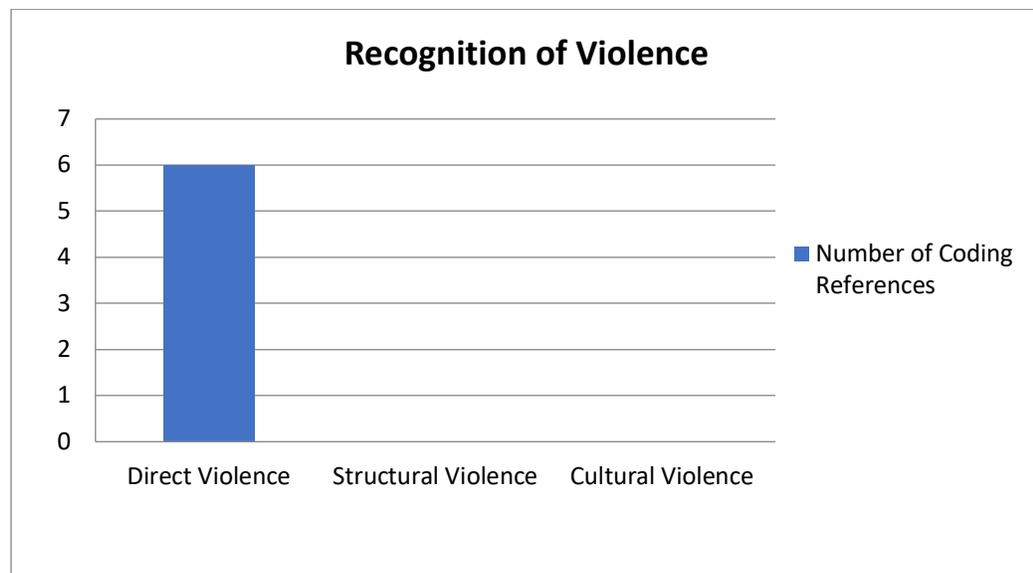
Recognition of Violence in Dari Language under AIRG

The Dari language textbook of AIRG contains no reference to recognition of cultural or structural violence, but one lesson is devoted to direct violence (100, 101) and includes six (N=6) specific references to direct violence. The passages give students information about direct violence and how to keep themselves safe from violence.

Element two: nonviolent conflict transformation
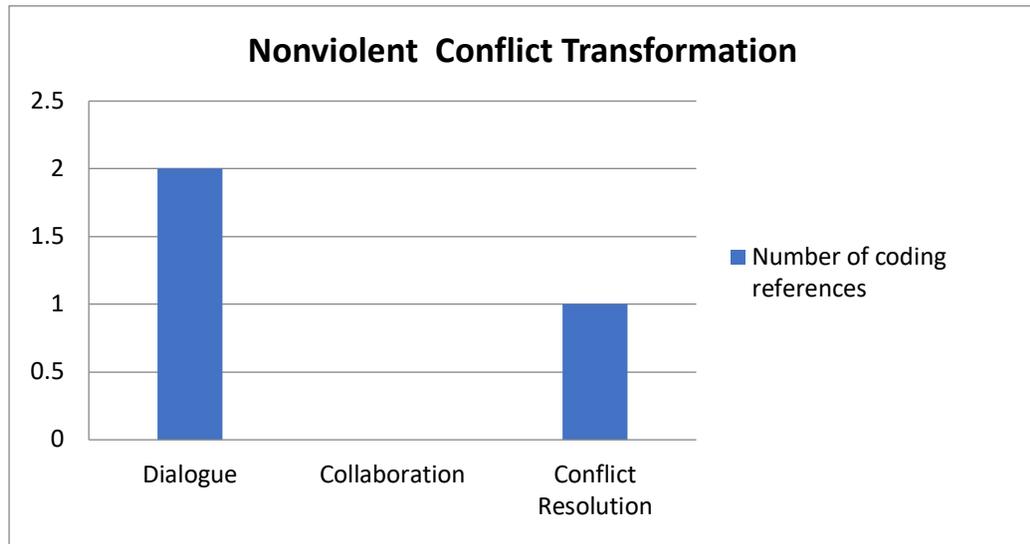
Nonviolent Conflict Transformation in Dari Language under AIRG

The Dari language textbook of AIRG contains three references (N=3) to nonviolence (1, 115, 146). These references concern dialogue (N=2), and one reference relevant to conflict resolution (N=1), but no references relevant to collaboration (N=0).

Element three: positive peace
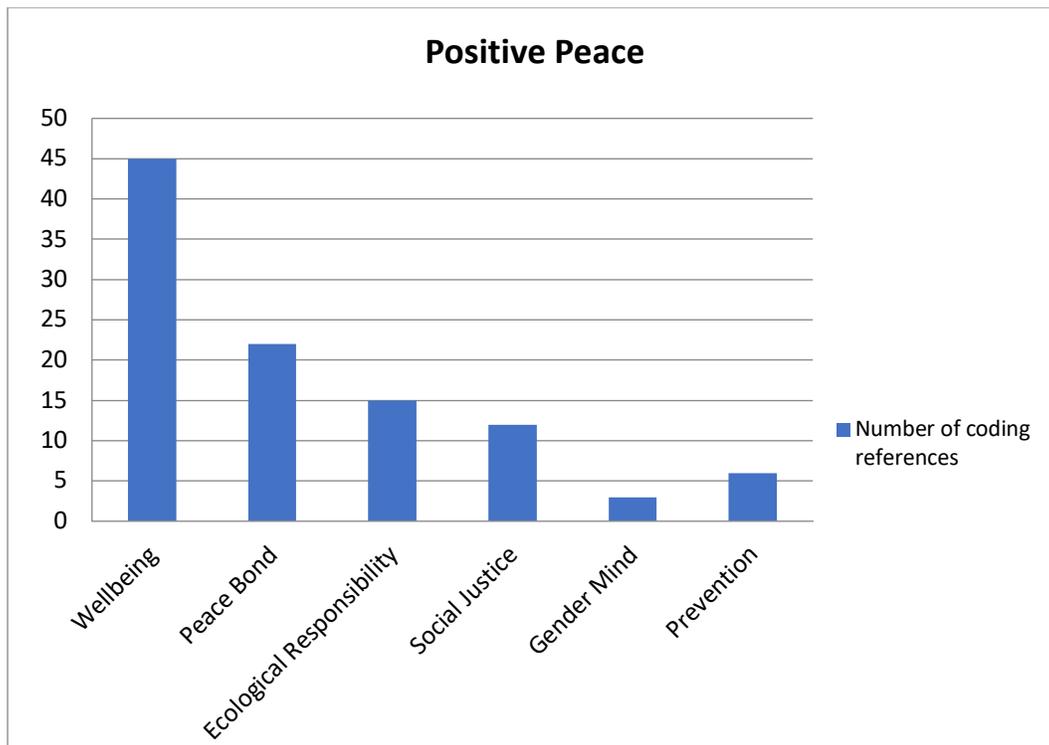
Positive Peace

Positive Peace in Dari Langauge under AIRG

The Dari Language textbook of AIRG presents narrative content relevant to positive peace. There is information in this textbook that is relevant to all six elements of positive peace. Most of the references are to wellbeing (N=45), peace bond (N=22) and ecological responsibility (N=15), social justice (N=12), prevention of violence (N=6), with gender mind having the least coverage (N=3).

Findings of the algebra subject textbook

The analysis of the Algebra textbook of the AIRG for Class 4, dated 2011, involves a comprehensive and detailed examination of 104 pages, which contains 39 lessons.

This textbook consists of main calculation lessons with follow up practices, evaluation questions and homework questions. These homework questions are phrasal questions (questions in the form of narrative). The content of these questions addresses different topics. For example, the first question on page 9 of the Algebra textbook is about a pilgrimage (Hajj),[7] and the third question on the

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[7] Hajj is the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca at Saudi Arabia that takes place once every year.

same page is about the immunization of children. Following are the questions, and these type of phrasal question in form of text can be use for peace education content.

First question: *In the year 1383 (2004), 18540 people and in year 1384(2005), 21250 people from the country went to Mecca for Hajj. How many people from our country went to Mecca for Hajj in the two years of 1383 and 1384? (9)*

Third question: *A group of vaccinators immunize 25980 children in the first week and 28645 in second week. Please calculate how many children have been immunized in two weeks? (9)*

However, Algebra textbook of the AIRG class 4 contains no references (N=0) related to recognition of violence and nonviolent conflict transformation.
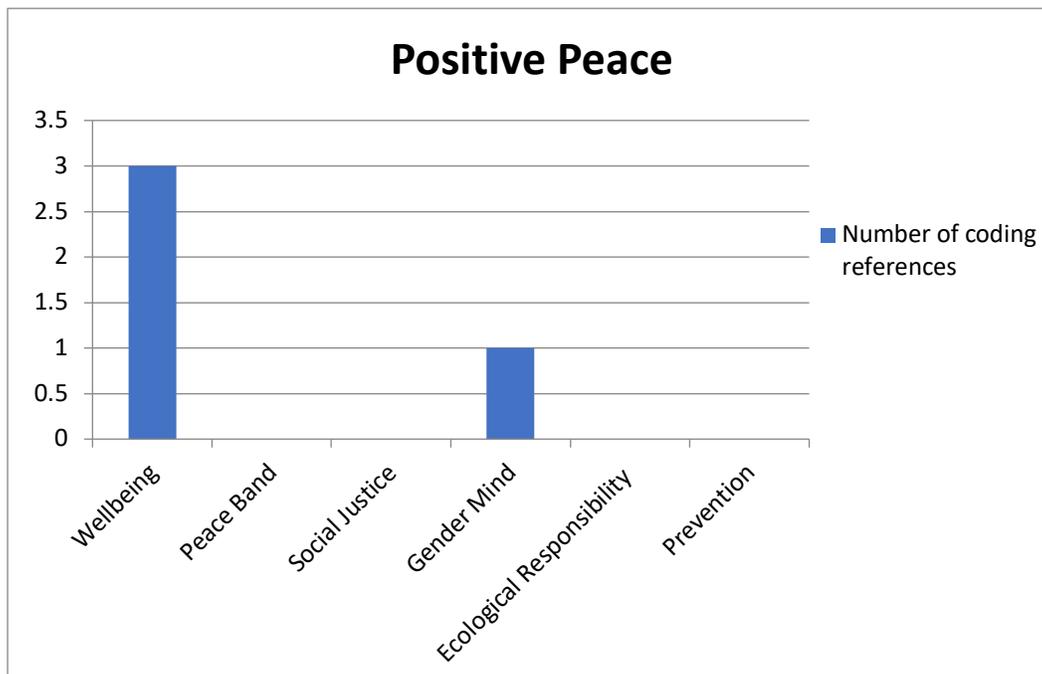
Element three: positive peace

Figure 1: Positive Peace in Algebra under AIRG

The Algebra textbook of AIRG does present four references (N=4) to positive peace. There are 3 reference (N=3) that are relevant to wellbeing (9, 12,

15), and one reference (N=1) to gender mind (12). This textbook has no references to the other four elements of positive peace: ecological responsibility, prevention, social justice and peace bond.

The references to wellbeing include the importance of health (9, 12, and 15). References to the importance of health are the questions that provide information on child immunization.

Gender Mind

The Algebra textbook of the AIRG has one question related to gender mind (12). A question on page 12 of this book deals with boys' and girls' admission to school:

> *4340 students received admission in a primary school. If 1350 of them are boys, how many of them are girls?*

Besides the calculation, this question narrates the integration of boys and girls in schooling, providing students with the idea that education is important for both girls and boys.

Discussion of Dari Language and Algebra Textbooks of AIRG

The content of the Dari language textbook of the AIRG as part of the current school curriculum for Class 4 has references related to all eight elements of peace education that have been defined in the theoretical framework of this research. Some of the text content demonstrates more thorough coverage of certain elements of peace education. For example, there is an entire lesson on ecological responsibility, and three lessons[8] on wellbeing, which shows consideration of these aspects of peace education in the curriculum.

However, the element of positive peace that receives the least coverage in the text in comparison to the other five elements of positive peace (peace bond, wellbeing, social justice, ecological responsibility and prevention) is that of gender mind, or equality for girls and boys, women and men. While some of the images show girls and boys, there is very little reference in the text. This means that the notion of gender and education for girls and boys has been considered but not operationalized well into the book's content. So, while there is some reference to women's and girls' rights, there is little else that indicates that females are

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2 A lesson of this textbook covers two pages of text including discussion questions.

considered throughout the rest of the textbook. The content on wellbeing in the Dari textbook of AIRG is primarily narratives but provides practical information for students in Class 4th of school in Afghanistan. For example, the textbook contains good narratives on wellbeing which includes importance of health, importance of clean environment and being mindful of nutrition. Similar content related to prevention of harm, nonviolence, peace bond, social justice and ecological responsibility are presented in basic stories but are targeted at the relatively young children of Class 4. For instance, a girl in Class 4 learns to be responsible for a clean environment or to be mindful of nutrition. This can be a practice in the family with her siblings or with her illiterate mother which contribute to whole family wellbeing. Similarly, if a boy learns good things about keeping natural resources at school, he can practice it in his house. While these can be seen as gender specific lessons, it is also necessary learning for students in Afghanistan. As Harris claims, peace education content needs to be flexible in order to address concerns of peace at the national or international levels (Harris 2009). These lessons even with basic narratives are appropriate for students and can contribute to positive peace in long-term in Afghanistan.

The Algebra textbook of the AIRG contains questions for students' practice.

These question narratives are an opportunity to integrate aspects of peace education into the content of the textbook, but this textbook has only three brief references related to wellbeing as one element of positive peace. There is one brief reference to boys' and girls' education that reflects the gender mind value.

This analysis demonstrates that peace education is integrated into the Dari Language textbook used for the current Afghanistan school curriculum, and all eight elements of peace education are covered to some extent. However, the textbook for the subject of Algebra has very limited reference to topics that relate to peace education. So, while there has been an attempt by the Afghanistan Islamic Republic Government (AIRG) to incorporate peace education related content into the school curriculum, this is not reflected in all subjects, and there is certainly room for improvement. The content of questions narratives could quite easily have texts related to the importance of fruits for health which is relevant to wellbeing value. For example, "there are 10 apples on the table for 5 children, if we divide the 10 apples to the 5 children, please calculate how many apples are there per child?" This is an example and this question can be elaborated more in follow up question, like why is it important for children to have an apple almost every day etc. Another example for environmental responsibility could be to question narratives on the importance of trees and forests, and there could be more text related to gender that would be helpful for children's learning about positive peace.

Section 2: Findings of School Textbooks under People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan Government (PDPA) 1978 - 1992

Findings of Dari language subject textbook of the pdpa government

The analysis of the Dari language textbook dated 1984, used as part of the school curriculum of PDPA government, involved a comprehensive and detailed examination of 147 pages, containing 40 lessons. Each lesson of this textbook starts with a grammar lesson on the Dari language, followed by practice of the lesson by reading and writing of sentences relevant to the grammar lesson.

Element one: recognition of violence
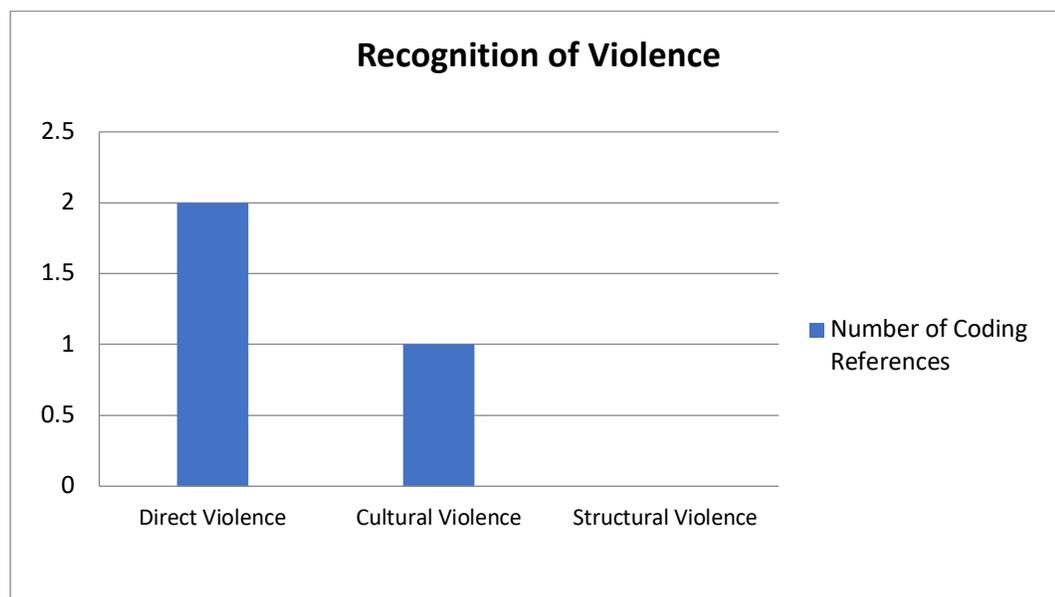
**Recognition of Violence in Dari Language under PDPA**

The Dari language textbook of the PDPA contains no references relevant to recognition of structural violence, but there is a short paragraph that refers to direct violence in the passage on page (56), and also a sentence as an example of cultural violence on page (101), that informs students about oppression and truth. In total, there are three (N=3) references to recognition of violence, with two references relevant to direct violence (N=2) and one relevant to cultural violence (N=1).

Salma's mother beat Salma and said, why did you beat your sister? Your sister is younger then you, and you should not beat

her. Salma was crying and said to her mother, I am younger than you. Why you are beating me?(56)

*Mazdak disliked oppression and was courageous in teaching about the truth (101).*

Element two: nonviolent conflict transformation
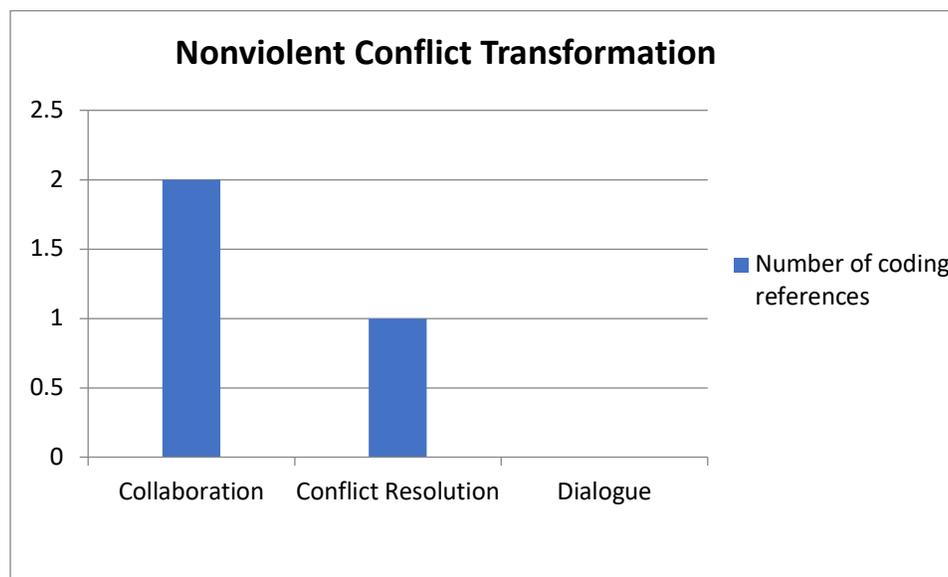
Nonviolence Conflict Transformation in Dari Language under PDPA

The Dari language textbook of the PDPA contains three references (N=3) related to nonviolent conflict transformation (1, 93, 132). These references are in a general passage that encourages nonviolence, as in collaboration (N=2) and conflict resolution (N=1).

Element three: positive peace
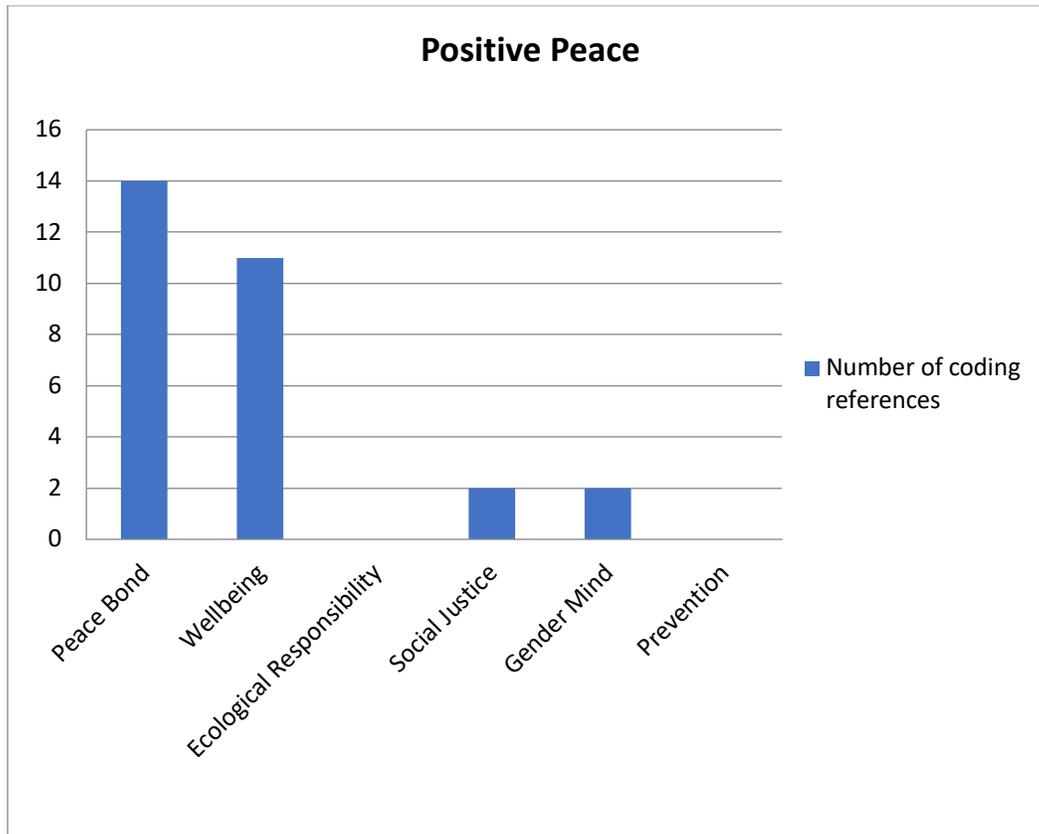
Positive Peace

Positive Peace in Dari Language under PDPA

The Dari Language textbook of the PDPA presents narrative content relevant to positive peace, with a total of thirty references (N=30). The narratives contain references relevant to four elements of positive peace. Most of these references are related to peace bond (N=14), followed by wellbeing (N=12), with only two (N=2) references for each of social justice and gender mind. There are no references (N=0) to prevention or ecological responsibility.

The references relevant to peace bond are more than any other element of positive peace, in the Dari language textbook of PDPA. These references include texts that encourage students to be kind and helpful to others. The narratives teach students how important it is to take care of parents, relatives, neighbours and people in the community.

The references (N=12) relevant to wellbeing include content on taking responsibility for oneself and others' health (N=1), the importance of health (N=4), caring and helping others (N=6) and one reference to physical exercise (N=1).

The references are only two (N=2) relevant to social justice that include text on respecting equality and justice, equal rights for all humans, and are against oppression.

There are two references relevant to gender mind in the whole book (N=2). The references refer to a short story and one sentence concerning women's rights and roles. Although the two references to gender mind are not adequate for an entire book, they present a meaningful understanding of women's rights and equal rights for men and women.

On page (13) there is a sentence on the role of men and women in work. It is one short sentence, but the meaning of this short text is the recognition that women can work, like men. *Our sisters are working besides their brothers.*

 Page (103) contains a passage on equal rights of men and women. This is a very clear and strong statement on women's rights. In a male-dominated society like Afghanistan, addressing woman's rights with a clear and strong message is significant.

> *Mazdak was saying: Women and men have equal rights. So, women should not be men's servant, and men should not consider women as their servant. Mazdak's words stirred up farmers, woman and youth, and they spoke with one voice.*

Findings of the algebra subject school textbook of PDPA Government

The analysis of the Algebra textbook dated 1982 for the school curriculum of PDPA government involves a comprehensive and detailed examination of 216 pages, which contain 173 lessons. This textbook contains no references (N=0) recognition of violence, nonviolent conflict transformation and positive peace.

Discussion on Dari language textbook of PDPA Government

The Dari language textbook for class 4 of school under the PDPA government touches on six of the eight elements of peace education that have been defined in the theoretical framework for this study; recognition of violence nonviolence, peace bond, wellbeing, social justice, and gender mind, and no references to ecological responsibility and prevention. However, in addition to the peace education elements there was texts that provided explicit political messages and ideological instruction

to the students, which is contrary to peace education. There were eleven (N=11) references throughout the book that are statements in favor of the PDPA government. The People's Democratic Political Party, supported by the Soviet Union, took over power in 1978 through a military coup, and Noor Mahammad Taraky, the leader of People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) became the president of Afghanistan (Baiza 2015; Tanin 2005). This power change was called the "Saur Revolution" by the PDPA government, and there are many statements in the Dari language textbook regarding this revolution. These statements do not seem to have any particular relevance to the content but seem to be imposed or inserted into the textbooks. The sentences on pages 17, 52, 105, 50, 54, and 138 of the Dari textbook provided students with statements pertaining to the Saur Revolution.

- *All revolutionary youth are together in strength.*
- *This year we celebrate the revolution's anniversary.*
- *Long live the revolution!*
- *Revolutionary youth keep your ranks tight.*
- *A new stage of development of the Sour Revolution started on Jadi 6th 1358(1980).*
- *The second stage of the Saur Revolution started on Jadi 6th 1357 (1979).*
- *We do not forget the memory of Jadi 6th of 1358 (1980).* (Memory of Jadi 6 means the Saur Revolution).

On pages (106, and 109) are references to the memorial of martyrs of the Saur Revolution.

- *Eternal Glory to the brave martyrs of the homeland who in the fight against the enemy of Saur Revolution sacrificed their lives.*
- *Long live the memory of martyrs of the revolution.*

On page (106) women are encouraged to contribute to the Saur Revolution.
- *Brave homeland women, participate in social, political and economic affairs in the country and solidify the achievement of the Saur Revolution.*

So, although there are references that can be counted as peace education in the Dari textbook under PDAP government, these 11 very explicit political references demonstrate that PDPA used the textbooks also for political propaganda, to encourage students to support the PDA regime and its ideological teachings.

Section 3: Findings of school textbooks under the Islamic State of Afghanistan Government ISAG 1992-1996

The analysis of the Dari language textbook dated 1370 (1991) for the school curriculum for Class 4 under the Islamic State of Afghanistan Government (ISAG) involves a comprehensive and detailed examination of 143 pages, which contain 46 lessons. The Dari language textbook of ISAG contains no references (N=0) to recognition of violence and nonviolent conflict transformation, but there is references to positive peace.

Element three: positive peace
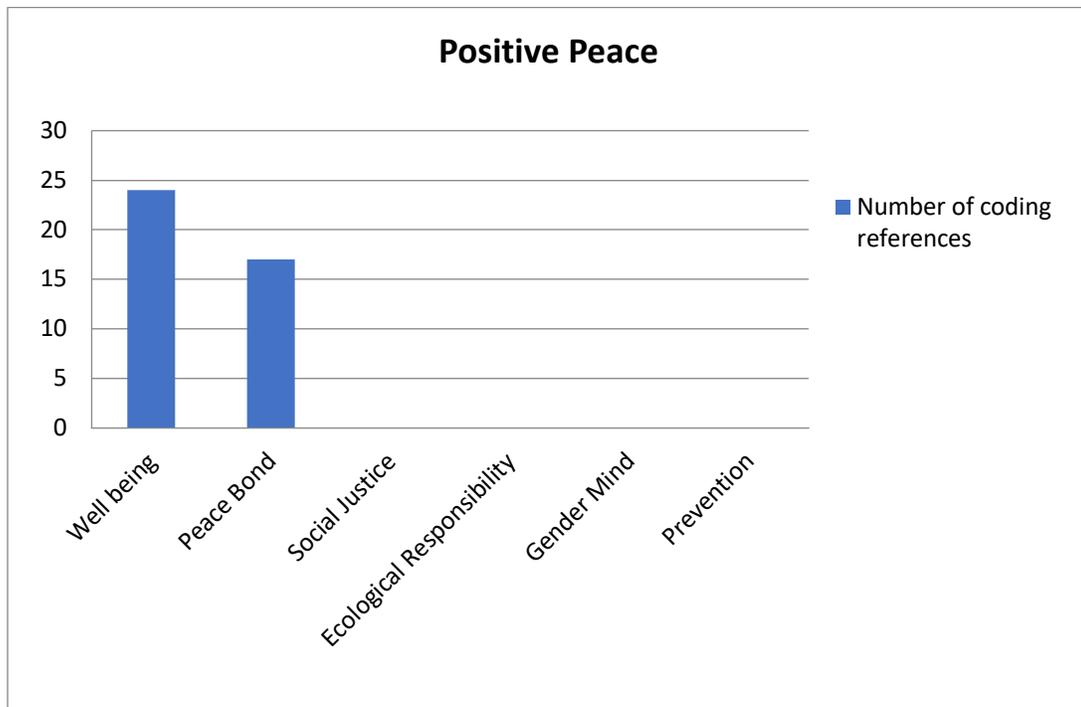
Positive Peace in Dari Language under ISAG

The Dari Language textbook of the ISAG does present narrative content related to positive peace. There are forty-one (N=41) references to positive peace, covering only two of its elements, wellbeing (N=24) and peace bond (N=17) and contains no references (N=0) relevant to social justice, gender mind, ecological responsibility and prevention.

The references relevant to wellbeing include information on taking responsibility for one's own and others' health (N=12), and the importance of

health (N=11), but there is only one reference to caring for and helping others with health issue (N=1).

The references (N=17) relevant to peace bond discuss parents' rights and taking good care of them and discusses neighbour's rights and aims to convince students to respect their neighbour's rights. It encourages students to be empathetic towards their neighbor and help them when required.

Findings of the algebra subject textbook of ISAG

The analysis of the Algebra textbook for class 4 of school under ISAG government involved a comprehensive and detailed examination of 183 pages, comprising 18 lessons. The content of these questions covers different topics, most of them related to the Mujahedeen fighting with Russian forces and internal PDPA government forces. This book has no references relevant to peace education elements. The entire textbook does not have a single element that could be seen as reflecting peace education elements as they have been defined in this study's theoretical framework. However, there are fourteen (N=14) narrative questions in this textbook that promote violence. More details on this presented in the following discussion.

Discussion of Dari language and algebra textbooks

The Dari language textbook under the ISAG has references relevant to two positive peace values, wellbeing and peace bond, but no references to recognition of violence, nonviolence, gender mind, social justice, ecological responsibility or prevention.

The references relevant to wellbeing and peace bond values of peace education in the Dari textbook of ISAG are important information for students that learn in a time of war and conflict in Afghanistan. As mentioned earlier, during Mujahedeen power as opposition groups to PDPA or as government of Afghanistan, schools were place of physical war. There was no attention in the textbook's content to improvement or improvement to education generally. So, finding text relevant to wellbeing and peace bond values of peace education can be viewed as positive considering the war situation.

The text or narratives in the Dari language textbook under ISAG relevant to wellbeing and peace bond are very much connected to Islamic values. The narratives demonstrate more of a good Muslim personality and characters and uses the example of the Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) behavior and good character regarding wellbeing. Information relevant to peace bond referred to the context of

Muslim brotherhood with reference to jihad. The information is linked to religious references. On page (55) of the textbook as lesson discusses neighbour's rights and encourages students to be empathetic with their neighbor with reference to Almighty Allah.

> Almighty Allah will be happy with us if we show good behavior to our neighbours and do not create *problems for them*.

Discussion of algebra textbook

The Algebra textbook for class 4 of school under the Islamic State of Afghanistan government (ISAG) contains no references relevant to any of the peace education elements: recognition of violence, nonviolent conflict transformation and positive peace. However, there are fourteen (N=14) narrative questions in this textbook that promote violence. There are texts that speak favorably about the Mujahedeen in general and support fighting with Russian forces and PDPA government forces (26, 33, 34, 35, 48, 57, 60, 61). These 14 questions have content that relates to Mujahedeen attacks on Russian forces, calculation of bullet numbers and killing of Russian soldiers.

The following are some of the questions:

> *In a Mujahedin camp, from 446 people 44 Mujahed per night work as security guards to watch the camp, and 320 Mujahed have been deployed to attack the Russian forces at midnight. Please calculate how many Mujahed are on duty per night. (26)*
>
> *In a Mujahedeen camp during the night 1926 Mujahed perform prayers, 540 Mujahed attack the atheist state forces and 423 Mujahed work as security guards of the camp. Please calculate how many Mujahed are awake at night. (26)*
>
> *The Mujahedeen had a total of 90,090 bullets for the Kalashnikov (gun). 8095 of them were used in an attack on Russian forces, and they seized 40,549 Kalashnikov bullets as booty. Please calculate how much bullets they have now? (33)*

A group of Mujahedeen had 5,009 bullets for the Yazdateera (type of gun) and 5,196 bullets for the Kalashnikov. They used 2,085f Yazdateera bullets and 5,196 Kalashnkov bullets in an attack on Russian forces. As a result of the attack, the Mujaheedin seized heavy weapons and 21,095 Yazdateera bullets and 25,965 Kalashnikov bullets as booty. Please calculate how many Yazdateera bullets and how many Kalashnikov bullets the Mujahedin have now. (34)

These questions are not relevant to peace education elements, but rather are relevant to war education. According to Lynn Davies, teaching about struggle, war and violence prepares children mentally for war (Davies 2005).

These references demonstrate that it was war time and school curriculum textbooks were utilized for political purpose (Jeaniene 2005; LeThanh 1999; Davies 2010; Jones 2008; Jones 2009; Jeaniene 2005; UNICEF 2011; Cardozo 2008). These lessons narratives convince students to get familiar with war physical tools; guns, bullets etc. Students were encouraged to help the Mujahedeen ideology and become fighter to support them. The impact of these lessons remained on students' mentality for life time and affected students' behaviors with themselves, family, community and society. Rather than encouraging non-violence, these textbooks are teaching students very explicitly to accept violence, war and killing of others regarded as enemies.

Conclusion

The Afghanistan Ministry of Education considered information relevant to peace education in the current school textbooks that were developed in the years 2004 to 2014. The information related to peace education is more relevant to positive peace, while there are limited references to recognition of violence and nonviolent conflict transformation. The analysis of the Dari language textbook shows that the Afghanistan Ministry of Education considered information about peace education with a focus on society's needs, but this has not been well operationalized in all textbooks. Further attention is required to integrate information about peace in all possible school textbooks, particularly in the social science area.

By contrast, the previous school textbooks that were in use in schools from1980 to 1996 contained less information relevant to peace education. The

previous textbooks also contained information that clearly favored political party influence and supported undesirable education or even education for war. Textbooks under the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, the Communist regime from 1978 to 1992, provided information in favour of this government.

The school textbooks of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, the Mujahedeen regime from 1992 to 1996, contained information that supported both the Mujahedeen regime and fighting Russian forces and communist-supported government forces.

Recommendations

Peace education content incorporated into the school textbooks under the AIRG, particularly the Dari language subject that covers all eight elements of peace education, has been defined in this research's theoretical framework. However, the information related to peace education is more relevant to positive peace, and fewer references are relevant to the recognition of conflict and nonviolent conflict transformation. Recognition of violence, nonviolent conflict transformation and positive peace are the main peace education objectives that have been defined in this research. The Dari language textbook of the AIRG contains few texts relevant to recognition of violence and nonviolent conflict transformation.

Peace education is a strategy for peacebuilding, in which the core elements include recognition of violence and nonviolent conflict transformation. The Afghanistan Ministry of Education in another round of reform of the school textbooks should focus on integration of more information on recognition of violence and nonviolent conflict transformation in school textbooks, as well as in other sectors of the education system. There is an opportunity for skills in conflict resolution to be taught at all levels of the school, with appropriate instructions for the teachers and exercises for the students to be provided in the textbooks. Some more practical and applied instructions would be of value here.

Gender mind as an important element of peace education has also not been adequately covered in the textbooks under the AIRG. The Dari language textbook of the AIRG has only three sentences relevant to gender mind as a value of positive peace. Gender is an important aspect of positive peace, and positive peace cannot be considered to be comprehensively covered without further consideration of gender equality. Information on gender is not only important for peace education but is essential for social cohesion.

Simply, there needs to be more information on gender included in the textbooks. The example given previously of the image on page (46) of the Dari language textbook showing a girl and a boy with school bags and books means that

the idea of gender and education for girls and boys has been considered, but this could also include a narrative on the importance of schooling for girls and boys, or the inclusion of both boys and girls in education programs. It would give students further knowledge of gender equality and important roles for girls and boys, and men and women, in a nation state and in the world. In this way the idea of gender could be operationalized into the book's content. A separate study of school textbooks on gender inclusion could support the Ministry to better understand the gender gap at the school level.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that the Algebra textbook of the school curriculum of the Afghanistan Islamic Republic Government has limited text related to peace education. While there were opportunities to integrate more content relevant to peace education into Algebra textbook, there are only six references related to the wellbeing value of positive peace in the entire book. Based on this research finding, I recommend further inclusion of peace education content into the Algebra textbook. The content of the Algebra textbook questions is an opportunity to integrate text related to the topic of peace education. For example, the third question on page 9 of the Algebra textbook of the current school curriculum is about immunization of children. This question is relevant to the wellbeing value of positive peace. More examples and exercises could be provided that bring to children's attention the place for girls in the education system, to cover the gender mind element. More integration of text relevant to all elements of peace education, is possible in the Algebra textbook.

It is necessary to operationalize peace education content into all school subject textbooks, not only Dari language and Algebra textbooks. It is essential to integrate information related to peace education in all possible subject textbooks.

Under the Afghanistan Islamic Republic Government, the Dari textbook content relevant to positive peace as an element of peace education discusses the society's needs, which is very supportive of peace education practice. The Dari language Class 4 textbook of the current school curriculum contains lessons that are relevant to ecological responsibility, wellbeing and social justice elements of positive peace, focussing on the Afghan population's needs and concerns. It is helpful and constructive learning to consider information related to peace education that addresses the people's needs. These texts in the school textbooks contribute to peace education in practice towards peace-building. The Afghanistan Ministry of Education should maintain this practice, addressing the society's needs and further reinforcing them.

This study's findings show that peace education information has been considered in the school textbooks, but there is a need for further research to fulfil

this huge gap. More research is certainly required on the Afghanistan school curriculum, particularly school textbooks.

This research is a comparative study of current and previous school textbooks and addressed peace education information in two subject textbooks, Dari language and Algebra. More research to review all current curriculum textbooks is needed, and possibly research on textbooks in comparison to other countries' school textbooks would be helpful for the Ministry of Education to ensure quality education towards peace. A comparative study of the Afghanistan school curriculum or textbooks with other countries' school curricula may support the Ministry of Education to reflect on their work towards a standard education system, for example, a comparative study of Afghanistan and Indonesia would be useful to reflect on the standard of education in Afghanistan or see how other countries with a similar culture provide education for their school students.

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