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**MASTER'S THESIS**

The Role of Peace Education in the Process of Peacebuilding: The Case study of  
Colombia

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## Introduction

The period of social instability and the expansion of protracted social conflicts on one side, and the increased activities related to peacebuilding and conflict prevention on the other, have brought the possibility of developing and examining the concept of peace education. The concept itself was researched by many authors, but the gap between the theory and practice still exists. This gap exists due to the fact even though there are theories which examine the topic, there are still no formal postulates on how peace education should be performed in the process of peacebuilding and which topics it should cover.

On the practical side, peace education programs are usually conducted by international organizations or the nongovernmental sector, and each of these programs is different in terms of their content, formal curricula, goal, objectives and results. Therefore, the diversity of these practices offers a way of gathering the necessary information, experiences, but also, mistakes.

This thesis will examine both theoretical and empirical side of peace education, since we consider that is impossible to conduct a research that will be complete and relevant, without including both aspects.

The importance of peace education in peacebuilding can be perceived through its capacity of transforming the society by transforming the perceptions and the existing narratives.

The expansion of the global inequality, increased rate of intrastate conflicts, problem of refugees the expansion of nationalism and important environmental challenges are some of the factors which can not be solved only through the interventions of the state, they must be permanently resolved by changing the consciensness about these issues. The biggest difficulty is in the fact that the majority of these issues are impossible to be treated only through the formal institutions of a nation state, and to be solved instantly. Since the power of a nation state has decreased in favor of the international community, it is important to emphasize that the resolution of this type of problems includes certain level of a transformation of consciensness and attitudes, which is a long lasting process.

The increased conscience about the topics that peace education advocates for, should become an imperative of a modern society, and represent a way of establishing a new set of values based on integrity, respect for the differences and peace. In this thesis we will examine some of the ways in which these goals can be achieved through the process of peacebuilding.

Main aims of this thesis are both theoretical and empirical. Theoretical part will be dedicated to examining different theoretical and philosophical approaches to peace education, in order to understand the essence of peace education and its most important aspects. Theoretical part will be divided in a way that will examine the theory of the most relevant, but yet different approaches. The main aim of the theoretical part will be to determine the basic postulates of peace education, and the way in which it is understood by different authors. By comparing these theories, we will be able to summarize and comprehend the core of peace education.

Second aim is to empirically examine the impact of peace education and determine the influence of peace education in the process of peacebuilding in post conflict societies. This part of the research will be complemented by a case study of Colombia, a country with the history of protracted conflict and division of the society.

We chose Colombia as an object of research for several reasons. First, Colombia is a country which faced a conflict that lasted for almost half of the century. Time dimension is important when considering the strength of the narratives created during the conflict, and the ‘cycle of violence’ which was created. In order to break this cycle, it wasn’t enough to declare ceasefire and sign the peace agreement. Real transformation of attitudes is a long-lasting process, which includes peace work on multiple levels. The entire process of peacebuilding serves to achieve this goal of sustainable peace, which cannot be completely accepted unless there hasn’t been a shift in the perceptions and existing narratives.

Second reason is related to the fact that the main peacebuilding programs were conducted by the Colombian government and supported by the nongovernmental sector and international organizations. This was a challenging aspect to research, since peace education is in most cases related only to the foreign factors or NGOs. In this field, the research will rely mostly on the theory of the professor E. Chaux, who was one of the founders of the projects of peace education in Colombia.

The main challenges in researching this topic are the lack of theories related strictly to peace education, since most of them are questioning research on peace or peacebuilding. When researching the theoretical base of peace education, it is impossible not to notice the variety of approaches, and the lack of concrete information. In order to provide a form of summarizing the existing theories, the theoretical part of the research will also include the integrative theory of peace education by H.B. Danesh.

The biggest challenge and difficulty of the empirical part of the research is in the way of evaluating the programs of peace education. The reason why this part has been challenging is because these evaluations are mostly based on description and self - evaluation, which are not the most precise and reliable methods. For example, in case of evaluating the program *Aulas en Paz*, we were able to make conclusion about the outcomes of the program based on the change of attitudes among students. These variables are unstable and not able to represent the exact results. We believe that one of the biggest obstacles in realizing and demonstrating the importance of peace education, is the fact that its results cannot be properly analyzed and presented.

The methodology used in this thesis will mostly rely on the qualitative methods of research, mostly on deduction, description and the comparative method. The research of the impact of peace education on the peacebuilding process in Colombia in this thesis will be conducted through the content analysis of the main aspects of two initiatives of peace education, including the research of the main goals, objectives and the process of conducting these programs. The research will be complemented by the content analysis of the qualitative research conducted to evaluate the outcomes of the implementation of the programs. We consider that qualitative research methods are more reliable in evaluating this topic, since the both programs were followed by the self - evaluations of the students and since the programs were dedicated to the transformation of existing social narratives. We find that the best way to present the results of such research is through observation and self – evaluation, even though there are limitations and difficulties that are part of this process.

The structure of the thesis will be designed in a way that the research will consists out of three segments. The first segment will research the theoretical framework of peace education, by examining the most influential authors. This part will consist out of three parts, each one dedicated to different theoretical approach. The first chapter will examine the theory of J. Galtung and his

perception of peace education as an instrument of reducing structural violence and as a term inseparable from action. The second chapter will examine the core of peace education and every peace action in general – whether it is a way of social responsibility or way of expressing the ethics of care. The reason why this chapter is significant is because it provides an insight to the core reason that stands behind any peace action. If we can understand what is behind peace education, it will be easier to develop these aspects among population and students. Finally, the third chapter is related to the overview of the theories and practices of one of the most important organizations in this field, the United Nations. The practices of the UN can show us the way in which peace education is perceived and performed by an international organization, but also point out on the mistakes and difficulties.

The second segment will be dedicated to the empirical research of the case study of Colombia, and the way in which peace education was implemented in this country as a form of peacebuilding practice. This segment will also be divided in three chapters.

The first chapter in the second segment will provide a brief overview on the history of the Colombian conflict and the main tendencies of the peace education projects in this country. This chapter will research the main aspect of the Havana peace process, and its main outcomes. The second chapter will examine the program of citizenship competencies in Colombia, a program conducted by the Colombian government, dedicated to implementing aspects of peace education in the formal educational system, by the special pedagogy. This chapter will research the main goals and objectives of the program, as well as its evaluation and main challenges. The third chapter will examine the program *Aulas en paz*, which was a continuation of the program of citizenship competencies, but it was incorporated through a much more developed pedagogy. The evaluations of this program will provide us the possibility to make conclusions about the success or failure of this and similar projects. We will use the methodology of a content analysis and deduction in order to examine the main outcomes of the evaluation of the program and comparative method in order to examine the results and differences of the two performed evaluations.

The third segment of the thesis is dedicated to the suggestive section that will introduce different approaches to the topic, whose importance is significant since they provide the diversity and possibility to improve the current practices. This segment will also question the main aspects of art and theatre as the ways of improving and enriching the programs of peace education.

Finally, the conclusion will present the obtained results, demonstrate the main outcomes and summarize the final notions of the research.

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## 1. Theoretical base of peace education

### 1.1. Historical background

I. Harris offers a brief review on the history of peace education with an emphasis on the biggest and most important steps towards theory of peace and the concept of peace education were founded in the second half of the 20th century. World War II has left Europe and the entire world with complete devastation of population, infrastructure, economy and political systems. War led to division of the world into two opposite blocks, with two different ideologies. The threat of a nuclear conflict was tangible and realistic.<sup>2</sup>

During this period and in these circumstances, first peace movements began to develop and operate. The importance of this movements is in the fact that they are inseparable from the theory of peace since they represent its practical dimension, equally important as the theoretical one. This movements have produced numerous fractions and aspects in the theory of peace, and one of them is peace education. In the first place they were an answer to the nuclear threat, and to the war in Vietnam, but in time became a new way of thinking and acting towards peace. They also started promoting equal education, gender equality, care for the environment.

Ian Harris emphasizes the ideas of Maria Montessori as the example of how an individual can contribute developing new ideas and concepts of peace education. He finds her concept of education significant in addressing the way in which education should be conducted, and is based on the idea that education should be focused on self learning and not in authoritarian imposing of knowledge. She considered that there is a corelation between peace and education in a way that if a child is educated in a way that allows it to be unique and learn by itself, there will be a small possibility for that person to become violent in the adulthood.<sup>3</sup>

During the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21th century, the number of organizations for peace and peace education has increased. This phenomenon can be explained as a result of numerous protracted conflicts, atrocities and hostilities that have influenced a shift that

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<sup>2</sup> Ian Harris, "History of peace education", in: Monisha Bajaj (ed.), *Encyclopedia of peace education*, Information age publishing, Charlotte, North Carolina, 2008, pp. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 2.



considered that huge instabilities among nation states have been replaced with raising intrastate instabilities. The problem that appeared was that it was no longer sufficient to question the topic of nonviolence between states, but also between different parts of one society.

On the other hand, freedom of speech and wider opportunities for the activities of the non governmental sector have influenced bigger opportunities for questioning different topics. Peace education in the last decades has been oriented towards different aspects of the society, such as political participation, gender politics, anti nuclear movements, refugees, child soldiers, empowerment of women, ecology and environmental issues. Many of these movements include the aspect of peace education as an instrument which can be used to promote and establish peaceful values in the society, but also help preventing and resolving conflicts.

In the beginning, peace education was oriented towards the institutions of formal education, but with time it has evolved towards the aspects of civil society, questioning different topics and problems. Despite all of its attempts „formal school systems have largely ignored the educational insights provided by peace activist educators, mostly because of cultural and economic pressures to ramp up their curricula to include more math and science so that school graduates can compete in a high tech global economy. Peace education in most countries is seen as “soft” and not embraced by frightened citizens who fear imaginary or real enemies.”<sup>4</sup>

Peace education in the last few decades is mostly related to the nongovernmental sector and informal education. It covers diversity of topics and its methods are mainly lectures, interactive workshops, seminars and projects in different fields.

Many challenges are following the research on peace education, which is making this topic difficult to be evaluated. The reason why it is difficult to research this topic is due to the fact that the results of research are often difficult to be measured, since they are based on evaluations of personal attitudes and values, which are relative categories. It is difficult to measure the exact shift in the perception of certain topic, or the range of the transformation of certain opinions. Since all of these variables are relative and unstable, it is challenging to make any strict rules on how peace education should be conducted.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pp. 5.

There is no strict definition of peace education or the universal classification of its types. In the literature can be found that I. Harris defines it based on its purpose that „hopes to create in the human consciousness a commitment to the ways of peace.”<sup>5</sup> It is important to emphasize that J. Galtung was one of the most influential authors in this field whose understanding of peace education was mostly related to the need of performing specific actions, a dimension that he considered crucial. His definition of peace education is based on the basic goals and objectives, therefore he states „peace education should be seen as a way of achieving, individually and collectively, a higher level of consciousness, an awareness of social reality and solidarity in a joint learning community, not as a mechanism social classification.”<sup>6</sup>

The amount of definitions of peace education have in common the idea that peace education represents an instrument dedicated to the development of virtues and conscienceness of peace. Galtung perceives peace education as an important part of peace action, and perceives action as a fundamental part of peace studies in general.

There are different ways in which peace education can be conducted, but the main division is the one between formal and informal types. Peace education has inclined towards implementation in the system of formal education, as the way of making impact on the widest part of the society. Although this is still one of the cravings of peace education programmes, due to the fact that formal education usually has a rigid and inflexible structure, not ready to implement changes and respond to the new tendencies, peace education has focused more on the informal side of education.

Therefore, peace education has developed different strategies which have grown stronger in the last few decades, characterizing peace education as a set of different activities oriented towards promoting peaceful and nonviolent ways of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Peace education is usually conducted through lectures, seminars, workshops, sport or artistic activities etc. Although it is mostly dedicated to children, it is also widely oriented towards educating the adults about peace, especially in the areas affected by conflict or in the post conflict societies.

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<sup>5</sup> Ian Harris, „Peace education: definition, approaches and future directions“, in: Ada Aharoni (ed.), *Peace, literature and art*, Encyclopdia of life support systems, Oxford, 2009, pp. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Johan Galtung, „Form and content of peace education“, in: Monisha Bajaj (ed.), *Encyclopedia of peace education*, Information age publishing, Charlotte, North Carolina, 2008, pp. 3.

Peace education is not always necessarily dedicated towards big interstate conflicts, or conflicts on the global level. It is also oriented towards the local issues, such as the problems of bullying in schools, discrimination, human rights, helping the refugees and many more. Helping improve all these aspects together leads to improving the overall state of peace in one society.

In this place it is important to emphasize that peace education is oriented not only on the questions of war and peace and the prevention of armed conflicts, but also on the development of attitudes and environment that will prevent any form of violence in the society, including both the direct and the indirect one.

The type of the peace education program that will be implemented in a society depends on several factors, but mostly on the current situation in the state, whether there is a current conflict going on or not. If the society is facing an ongoing conflict, it will be necessary to implement a convenient type of peace education. This model is described as the indirect model of peace education, since it is trying to establish a new repertoire that is conducive to peacemaking but at the same time does not negate directly the contents of the ethos of conflict and of collective memory of conflict.<sup>7</sup> Although this model does not involve direct and profound influence, it can make a significant change in terms of a slow but progressive impact in the transformation of values and attitudes. The best ways of implementing this type of peace education is through the development of tolerance, acceptance, respect of the human rights and especially through development of reflective thinking. This way of thinking was described by John Dewey, who states that „reflective thinking denotes questioning held beliefs, including dominant assumptions, and raising doubts and skepticism about the present understanding of an issue.”<sup>8</sup>

We consider that this type of peace education is a form that should be present in a society, regardless of the existing direct violence, as a base and precondition for sustainable peace. It can also be perceived of way of establishing a culture of peace, which will include all the essential virtues of peace that help creating a healthy and harmonized society.

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<sup>7</sup> Daniel Bar-Tal, Yigal Rosen, and Rafi Nets-Zehngut, “Peace education involved in intractable conflicts: Goals, conditions and directions”, in: G., Salomon, & E. Cairns, (Eds.), *Handbook on Peace Education*, Psychology Press, New York, 2010, pp.28.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

Another way of promoting peace through education is through direct peace education, described as an education that “refers directly to themes of conflict and tries to change societal beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors related to culture of conflict.”<sup>9</sup> This type of education is a transformative action with clearly defined and determined objectives and goals, which are conducted through institutional or nongovernmental level. It usually includes conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacemaking and peace keeping. Operating on the level of community provides a higher level of influence and ability for transforming the society.

Therefore, peace education serves as an instrument of transformation and improvement in the society on multiple levels. Its ability to operate through institutions, but also by its own means and methods, makes it capable of widening the concepts of peace at all levels of the society. In that way, while being implemented in a society that is facing direct violence, it can address the question of empathy and reconciliation, while in the countries without ongoing conflict it can address questions of conflict prevention and tolerance.

## 1.2. Galtung’s perception of peace education

In order to understand Galtung’s view on peace education, it is necessary to start from its perceptions of peace and peace research. He considers the most relevant topics in this field are the topics of positive and negative peace, form and content of peace education, and peace action. In order to determine the definition of peace, it is important to emphasize his understanding of violence. His definition of violence doesn’t include only physical violence, but also claims that “violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations.”<sup>10</sup> From this definition we can understand that this term is not only related to making acts of violence, but also on the lack of the realized potentials, which is a much wider spectrum of operating. This leads to the conclusion that the nature of violence is multidimensional, and includes several possible sources and types, where physical violence is only one of the possible modules.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid, pp.32.

<sup>10</sup> Johan Galtung, „Violence, peace and peace research“, *Journal of peace research*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 1969, pp. 168.

Galtung makes a difference between direct and indirect violence, and this difference impacts his view on peace. Direct violence includes all forms of open violent atrocities, and the absence of this type of violence leads to the state of negative peace. This kind of peace is usually defined as ‘negative’, since it’s based only on the absence of some factor, it doesn’t include any positive structures or initiatives. He defines it stating “if there is a sender, an actor who intends these consequences of violence, then we may talk about direct violence; if not, about indirect or structural violence.”<sup>11</sup> While direct violence represents something viable and tangible, indirect or structural violence is much more difficult to be noticed, since it’s implemented in the structure of the society. What makes structural violence dangerous is its capacity to conduct the acts of violence acts towards some (or all) parts of the society, and to do it often without any direct violent actions. Even though these two types of violence are different by its nature, they are also interconnected in a way that the sources of direct violence are in most cases found within the structure that provides support to it.

Galtung considers that the structural violence is expressed mainly through exploitation and repression.<sup>12</sup> Even though their ways of expression don’t include acts of direct violence, their violent nature can be recognized through actions which are conducted in order to repress or exploit a part of the society. Structural violence is the biggest threat to positive peace, since its structure is not so tangible, and is usually operating through the culture of a society.

What we find as the most important reference related to peace education in Galtung’s theory is the concept of cultural violence. He defines stating that “cultural violence serves to legitimize direct and structural violence, motivating actors to commit direct violence or to omit counteracting structural violence; can be intended or unintended.”<sup>13</sup> Cultural level represents the highest and widest level of a social structure; it gathers all other aspects and makes influence through them. In this way, violence can be spread through art, science, education, religion, and other parts of culture.

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<sup>11</sup> Johan Galtung, *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization*, Sage publications Ltd., Oslo, 1996, pp. 2.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, pp. 31.

Related to the topic of cultural violence, Galtung claims that this type of violence is the most difficult one to be reduced or eliminated.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, his idea of positive peace represents the condition of a society where the structural and cultural violence are reduced to a minimum, if not completely eliminated and in which there are also proactive initiatives and actions towards peace. For this type of violence is not enough to stop the ongoing conflict, but also to start from the core and change the structure itself.

In this point of transforming the structure and breaking the cycle of violence, peace education has an important role. When examining the theory of structural and cultural violence, it is important to emphasize the importance of education, as one of the structures which determine main values in the society. Education is a powerful tool used to undermine each system, to provide support for it by propagating its ideas and values to all levels of the society.

The history of formal education has demonstrated that the curricula and history classes are mostly oriented towards learning much about war and little about peace. By doing so, an idea is formed in a society that war is something positive and usual and something that should be celebrated, while peace represents something intangible and in the domain of utopia.

This way of thinking also leads to creating the culture where violence and war are accepted as something usual, and where peace is difficult or even impossible to be reached. Galtung illustrates it saying that “what is taught usually reflects the past, which is simply handed over to the present so as to secure continuity into the future in conformity with national ideology and upper class thinking”<sup>15</sup>

Galtung perceives peace education as one of the instruments of positive peace, when it comes to the aspect of schools and formal education, and he understands it as an opposite to militarization in cases of cultural violence.<sup>16</sup> Ways in which peace education operates can help in changing the structure that promotes violence, and the importance of that is in the fact that in that way the roots and main causes of violence may transform. Galtung understands violence as a cyclic

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, pp. 199.

<sup>15</sup> Johan Galtung, „Form and content of peace education“, in: Monisha Bajaj (ed.), *Encyclopedia of peace education*, Information age publishing, Charlotte, North Carolina, 2008, pp. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Johan Galtung, *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization* Sage publications Ltd., Oslo, 1996, pp. 33.

phenomenon, in which there is no strict distinction between different types of violence. Cultural violence produces repression and exploitation, which further lead to atrocities and acts of direct violence and makes them interconnected.<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, when resolving direct violent conflicts, we understand that it is not enough to only reduce direct violence, because its causes are much deeper, and mainly implemented in the structure expressed through the culture of a society. In that way, peace education does represent one of the instruments which serve in order to change the structure from the inside to be able to notice the results on the outside.

Galtung perceives peace education as part of the structure that supports positive peace. In this place we will examine his idea of form and content of peace education, the ways in which it should be conducted and the importance of the element of peace action.

Galtung considers that the influence of peace research can be related to the elites and to the people in a society. His understanding is that “dialogue should be the goal, but elites tend to seek advice that can be accommodated within their own paradigms, not advice they might identify with the opposition or with opposed countries.”<sup>18</sup> Therefore we can say that the possible influence on elites is minor and difficult to be conducted, since among the elites political and individual interests prevail which make them less interested in accepting ideas of peace among the population. Interest in accepting these ideas are closely related to individual interest and in most cases may not be accepted. What Galtung also claims to be the determining factor, is the monopoly that the elites consider having in terms of the means of force, which opens the possibility of forming structural violence.

The other channel of influence is what Galtung calls peace education or popular education, oriented towards the population in own country. He claims that there are three models of this type of influence, based on the way of promoting the values of peace.<sup>19</sup>

The first model relates to the peace movements during the period of Cold war, where there was no defined structure of peace education, and the population has been educated at the movements,

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid, pp. 2.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, pp. 27.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, pp. 28.

together with other peace actions that were being conducted. This way can be perceived as spontaneous, but it lacks organization and defined goals and strategies. The other model is the one that is based on the actions of peace movements which have gained some trust and credibility in the population and comes out as the “bottom – up” education. This model was represented at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, after many established peace movements emerged and questioned different topics, which resulted in the necessity of educating the population in order to make wider influence.

The third model denies both previous models and forms the one based on the academic freedom of research in addition to dialogue with the population. Galtung perceived this model as the most academic one, and the one that most tended to be independent from current peace movements and oriented towards establishing objective peace research.<sup>20</sup>

This progression led to the transformation of the main concept of peace education, which Galtung understands as shift from the distinction peace/war, to the concept of conflict competence. This represents one of the biggest transformations of peace education, since it reflects on the structure of the society itself. During the period of Cold war, it was crucial and of highest importance to avoid nuclear war, and peace education was mostly focused on preventing conflicts between states, and raising the conscience of the dangers of war.

Since the end of the Cold war, the possibility of the outbreak of nuclear conflict was reduced and correspondingly, a shift happened in the concept and goals of peace education. We could say that conflict competence, as one of the main concepts of modern peace education, relies on the belief that the conflicts that appear not only on the level of nation states, but also within a society and among individuals, have the same, or even bigger, importance.

The impact of non-state conflicts we can relate to what Galtung calls invulnerability.<sup>21</sup> By this term he understands that the more a society is strong from within and has strong and healthy local communities, the more it will be invulnerable towards the foreign threats. This concept represents a shift in the direction of moving towards peace. Instead of building it from the outside and

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Johan Galtung, „Peace education: Learning to hate war, love peace, and to something about it“, *International review of education*, Vol. 29, No. 3, pp. 285.



focusing on the prevention of conflict with other states, this concept tries to build peace from within, and in that way making a strong base for defense and peace on the outside. He claims that “all of this can be summarized into a simple proposition of applied peace education, understood fully by the peace movement of Europe in recent years: international peace is also a local issue, not only a national- and an individual - level one.”<sup>22</sup>

This kind of theoretical shift made a difference in the understanding of the type of action of peace education. The field of impact has shifted forward to all aspects of a society which may have benefits from it. Therefore, Galtung questions different ways in which peace education can be implemented, in terms of demonstrating all the possible sources of action that he considers crucial. The system of formal education represents a structure that offers different types of possible influence of peace education.

Galtung claims that peace education can be implemented at all stages of education, from kindergarten to universities. The approach to each level should be different, primary education should be focused on building the base of respectful attitude towards others, secondary one should learn the pupils the approaches to conflict and highest academic education should enable the option to study peace education on undergraduate, MA or PHD level.<sup>23</sup> All these programs should be adjusted to the students depending on their interest and type of the society they live in, but also on some basic global postulates, which Galtung understands as ‘requirements for global citizenship’.<sup>24</sup>

The way in which Galtung perceives the ‘education for global citizenship’ is as a type of educational program that includes the promotion of values necessary for establishing peaceful society.<sup>25</sup> Among others, it is important to emphasize his understanding of multiculturalism and tolerance, and the importance of these two terms for future global citizens.

Galtung understands multiculturalism as a necessary tool and instrument for obtaining and keeping peace in the modern societies. He formed this assumption on the fact that the national boundaries have weaken, and that the formal national education is no longer enough, claiming that “unicultural

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Available from: <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/articles/2064-interview-johan-galtung>, accessed on 13.5.2019.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

education is insufficient preparation for life in a multicultural reality, not only at the world level but also in the local social practice of an increasing number of people.”<sup>26</sup>

Multiculturalism provides the opportunity to build strong connections among nations and prevent conflicts, but also to accept differences. We understand that the importance of multiculturalism can be found in its capacity of preventing the distinction ‘us – them’ which can lead to the demonization of the Other, which often occurs in conflicts. This type of distinction is the factor which often causes conflicts and serves as a rationalization of it. Without interaction and knowledge about the Other, it is easier to make violent acts and participate in wars.

Therefore, the solution that Galtung suggests is related to the establishment of peace education which would include learning about differences among cultures, and in that way realizing the similarities that are connecting them. He points out the huge importance of language teachers in this process, claiming that “what is demanded is competence, respect, understanding -- a sense of being familiar with, and at home in, other cultures. Just as we borrow words and expressions from other languages, we shall borrow from other cultures, and have always done so in a spirit of exchange.”<sup>27</sup>

The other important difference is the one made between tolerance and curiosity. Although tolerance is a term accepted as an ideal of every peaceful society, Galtung’s understanding goes beyond that level. He observes that, when it comes to establishing and accepting the values of peace, it is not enough to promote only tolerance.<sup>28</sup> Tolerance is perceived more as a term that belongs to negative peace, which defines the absence of disrespect or violence, rather than the presence of positive attitudes and values. He defines tolerance as a passive state, considering that tolerance means "you may continue to exist, because I am so generous, even magnanimous, given that I could have unleashed a whole battery of prejudice, discrimination and violence upon you.”<sup>29</sup>

Curiosity can be perceived as a state characterized by open minded individuals who not only respect, but also find other cultures interesting and worth learning about. This approach creates

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

deeper bonds among cultures and individuals, and lead to understanding that no culture is superior to others, but that each one is special and worth of respect.

The way in which Galtung examines the distinction tolerance – curiosity, is related to his most important distinction between negative and positive peace. We understand that tolerance represents the aspect of negative peace since it doesn't include any specific action, but only passive acceptance. On the other side, positive peace, and the values of multiculturalism are related to action and concrete acts that lead to mutual respect.

Closely related to curiosity is the element of action, which is one of the most important aspects of peace education that Galtung emphasized. His understanding is that peace education must be formed as some kind of 'do-able' theory in order to have any impact on the society.<sup>30</sup> The importance that action has, is linked to the changed perception of peace education, where peace and war are not related anymore only to the level of nation states, but also to the local level of the society. Even though on the level of state, there is little an individual can do in terms of peace, there is much bigger possibility for that on a local level.

This action is supposed to be conducted through local community, in order to raise conscience and improve the social structure, and after that eventually try to make an influence on a higher level. As Galtung states "the days are past when one could truly claim that peace education is only a question of being informed, so as to accept or oppose governmental policy, whatever the case may be. It is true that beyond conscientious objection (or the opposite, choosing war as one's profession), there is little that single individual can do. Many individuals can do more when conscientized and organized."<sup>31</sup>

The importance of the component of action is significant because the term of peace itself is defined and understood as something dynamic and in the state of constant movement. Peace is not only the absence of violence or war; it is also an aim for a better society, based on a healthier structure. This kind of structure should be built from the bottom, since it's the only way to make it an integrative part of the culture. Actions that lead to peace are not reserved exclusively for the state

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<sup>30</sup> Johan Galtung, „Peace education: Learning to hate war, love peace, and to something about it“, *International review of education*, Vol. 29, No. 3, pp. 283.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, pp. 286.

officials, if we perceive peace in the way in which Galtung perceives it. If the goal is to create a society that will be based on a structure that supports peace, then this structure should be constructed on the attitudes and actions of all its participants.

In terms of peace education and action, one is inseparable from the other. Galtung suggests a form of peace education that would “have to be compatible with the idea of peace, i.e. it has in itself to exclude not only direct violence, but also structural violence. This is important because schools and universities are still important means of education, and in the structure is the message.”<sup>32</sup> The institutions of education are the actors which tend to adjust the system of values in a society and make an impact on the understanding of questions of war and peace, among others.

The first important aspect of the form of peace education is the nature of the educational structure itself, which should be questioned at all the levels. The current educational system in most states is rigid and inflexible, reserved to new ideas and suggestions. The problem of formal education can also be a subjective understanding of historical events and the interpretation of those events. Peace education should try to avoid these obstacles, and build a system based on acceptance, diversity and the respect for differences. It should also be a system capable of accepting innovations and criticism. Only in this way we can say that education is helping raise consciousness instead of indoctrination or manipulation.

Another problem Galtung points out when it comes to the form of peace education, is the system of formal education, divided into grades and levels. Although it is possible to implement peace education on all levels of formal education, there are tendencies of the school authorities to control and decide which parts will be accepted or rejected. Galtung perceives it stating that “something innovative may be squeezed through such machinery, but at the risk of becoming so flattened out that, even if the form of education was untouched, there would be little of the original content left.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Johan Galtung, „Form and content of peace education“, in: Monisha Bajaj (ed.), *Encyclopedia of peace education*, Information age publishing, Charlotte, North Carolina, 2008, pp. 2.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, pp. 3.

The content of peace education project should define the basic values, postulates and goals on which it is based. Galtung claims that there should be five phases of the peace research project: analysis, goal – formulation, critique, proposal-making and action.<sup>34</sup>

In terms of goal-formulation, we should say that this type of formulation is specific for peace education in comparison to other social theories, since it is not focused only on research and analysis, but also on the practical side. “There has to be something concrete and explicit in the idea of peace: the world we would like to see. It is not enough to say that peace is the absence of something or the other; much more concrete images must be provided.”<sup>35</sup> From his point of view, there must be a specific goal that should be set as an ultimate guide for theoretical work, since the theories of peace are not as useful if they do not include a dynamic factor or action.

Closely related to goal-formulation, is the phase of proposal making, which brings an even more practical dimension into peace education. When it comes to proposal making, Galtung claims that it represents a concrete plan in which peace action should be conducted, with the exact goals, location and participants. “Finding a transition path is a question of proposals about what to do, who should do it, when and where, how, and why it should be done. Proposal-making should be seen as a basic part of any peace education program. Indeed, no part would be more ideal for general participation than this.”<sup>36</sup>

As we can see, the most important and significant part of peace education process that Galtung emphasized, are the ones related to peace action. He considered the theoretical parts, such as analysis, less important for this type of research.

We can conclude that Galtung’s vision of peace education can be understood as a combination of peace research and peace action, gathered in order to make an impact on the changing and developing a structure of a society which would try to minimize every type of violence, and support the development of a culture of peace.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, pp. 3.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, pp. 4.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, pp. 5.

### 1.3. Responsibility or care?

Besides Galtung's perception of peace education, there are other theoretical approaches that provide the opportunity to examine and understand this concept. This chapter will be dedicated to some of the basic approaches related to the theoretical base of peace education. In order to determine the theories that explain the motives for peace education, research will be oriented to the social responsibility and to the ethics of care. The reason why these topics are being examined is because they offer two different types of ethical motivation when it comes to peace education.

The basic difference lying in the background of peace actions, are the motives which can be perceived as a moral obligation on one side, and moral aspiration on the other. In these terms, we will examine two possible theoretical bases that come from social responsibility and the ethics of care.

The concept of social responsibility evolved in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is mainly related to the concept of business social responsibility. This interpretation is mainly related to sustainable development, but this concept has an even wider base when perceived as a form of a moral theory. Millican states that it "involves the notion that an entity – be it an organization or an individual, has an obligation to take some responsibility for the society in which they operate."<sup>37</sup>

The idea of social responsibility is also grounded on the understanding that there should be a conscience that goes beyond individuals, and their own interests, which can be understood as a responsibility to provide the safe environment for the future generations. This aspiration comes from the determinism that every action that an individual take may have certain repercussions and consequences on the entire society. It is possible to say that social responsibility represents a form of duty, which comes from the awareness of the obligation of everyone towards this community, or even wider.

When it comes to questioning the aspect of social responsibility related to the educational system, there is a general understanding about the influence education has on the society. We could say that the most important influence lies in the capacity that education has in shaping the attitudes

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<sup>37</sup> Juliet Millican, "The social role and responsibility of a university in different social and political contexts" in: Juliet Millican (ed.), *Universities and conflict: The role of higher education in peacebuilding and resistance*, Routledge, London and New York, 2018, pp. 18.

and the discourse of the society. Also, besides participating in creation of the main discourse, education also participates in modifying or abolishing of it.

Milican examined the engagement of the universities and the role and responsibility they have regarding peacebuilding and conflict resolution. She mentions three possible ways of the engagement of the universities: providing knowledge, contributing to the development of science and making an impact on the society.<sup>38</sup> Besides the fact that universities have the capacity to make positive or negative impact on the society, she claims that “their role in educating the next generation of citizens, with an awareness of their national and global responsibilities is an important one, as is the way their selection and inclusion policies impact on current generation of citizens.”<sup>39</sup>

Regarding this observation, we could say that there is a strong relation between higher education and social responsibility, but that the awareness on the importance of this relation hasn't been recognized enough. Many universities do provide knowledge and contribute to science, but not many of them participate in the questions related to the society, due to the lack of comprehension of the importance of their action, or due to other reasons which are related to the current political or social climate. This leads to understanding that social responsibility is a factor that encourages education, but not in the enough way.

There are certain differences between the understanding of the terms of social responsibility between formal education and peace education. The obligation and responsibility that formal education has can be found in the fact that formal education is grounded on the institutional level and its responsibility should come from the significant amount of influence it has on the society.

On the other side, peace education should also be perceived as a form of expressing social responsibility, but is in most cases not integrated in the formal curricula, or in the institutions of the formal education, which makes it more difficult to make an impact that will be significant for further actions. Unlike formal education which very often has none or little conscience of the responsibility to the society, peace education doesn't lack motivation or sense of moral duty, but it has much less opportunities to express that motivation.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid, pp. 14.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, pp. 25.

There are two main problems that appear when we try to relate peace education with social responsibility. The first one is in the fact that there is no established attitude that would emphasize the importance of this relation. Also, this topic still hasn't been researched in enough way and hasn't been demonstrated to the public in a way that would raise the sense of social responsibility of educational institutions. The second problem is the fact that the concept of social responsibility brings up a sense of obligation and duty, which is something that is not always accepted in the political and social establishment.

The approach, based more on the aspiration rather than the obligation, is the ethics of care. Difference between social responsibility and the ethics of care is in the basic motives that are in the essence of the two approaches.

Page examined the role and connection of different type of ethics and peace education. Besides from the aesthetic, conservative, political, consequentialist and virtue ethics, he put special attention to the ethics of care. The emphasis of his theory is based on a fact that the ethics of care and peace education have in common the conscience of the importance of personal relationships. He considers that this is the base of the ethics of care, the sense of helping the other and establishing bonds of trust and support based on personal beliefs rather than following the ethical rules. He states that "put quite simply, we learn within the context of and from relationships, and peace education is concerned with establishing a nurturing and supportive relationships."<sup>40</sup>

Noddings was one of the first authors who examined the question and determination of the ethics of care, and perceived it "as requiring or recommending that individuals act caringly, and this means in effect that we act rightly or permissibly if our actions express or exhibit an attitude/motive of caring toward others."<sup>41</sup> Care is perceived as a state in which there is a concern for the welfare of other individuals or groups of people, regardless of the personal interest.

Although the natural instinct of care exists in every individual and is projected towards the people that are closely related to him, the importance which ethics of care has in terms of peace and peace education lies in the possibility of the expansion of that group. As Slote understands Noddings

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<sup>40</sup> James Page, „Peace Education: Exploring Some Philosophical Foundations“, *International review of education*, Vol. 50, No. 1, pp. 7.

<sup>41</sup> Michael Slote, *The ethics of care and empathy*, Routledge, London and New York, 2007, pp. 10.



“she holds that we should not only be concerned about the wellbeing of those with whom we already stand in intimate, caring relationships, but should also try to extend the circle of such caring to include strangers and people we don’t (yet) know. Her ethics of care recommends and/or requires the creation, building, and sustaining of caring relations or relationships.”<sup>42</sup>

We understand that this expansion leads to the improvement of both qualitative and quantitative dimension. In terms of improving the quantitative dimension, the concept of care is projected to the wider group that can include even the entire society. In this way, there is a much bigger sense of connection among the individuals and groups.

The importance of the extension of the circle of care in terms of qualitative dimension is in the increased sense of connection and empathy with other groups of people, that further leads to establishing relations of mutual respect and care with others. Also, this concept of care provides motivation for further action inspired by care towards others.

This point is crucial in terms of relation with peace education, since this type of engagement must be based on some sense of empathy and care for other beings. In this case, care is oriented towards the entire groups, nations or even to the global level. The concept of care also includes concern for the issues of sustainable development, protection of the environment, respect of the human rights and other topics that may have impact on a global level.

We would say that the biggest influence that the ethics and the sense of care has on peace education, is in its capacity to generate motivation for change and induce concrete actions oriented to specific goals. This aspect should not be neglected, having in mind the importance of the aspect of action for peace education.

When it comes to the relation with peace education, we should emphasize this importance of the preservation of autonomy, since the general topics and goals of peace education programs, and its curricula should be accepted by all its participants and not be imposed in any possible way to the participants. In any different case it would represent breaking the autonomy and promotion of personal interests, which is unacceptable when it comes to the topics of peace action and peace education.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid, pp. 11.

## 1.4. Integrative theory of peace education

In order to cover and gather all important aspects which define peace education, we will examine and compare two theoretical approaches by H.B. Danesh and B. Reardon. Both authors offered theories that were perceived as a universal approach to peace education, the integrative theory of peace education and the comprehensive theory of peace education.

Danesh's integrative theory consists of four preconditions that determine the way in which peace education should be conducted – the unity-based worldview, culture of healing, culture of peace and peace-oriented curriculum.<sup>45</sup>

First, he defines peace education as “the concept that peace is, at once, a psychological, social, political, ethical and spiritual state with expressions at intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup and international areas of human life. The theory holds that all human states of being, including peace, are the outcome of the main human cognitive (knowing), emotive (loving) and conative (choosing) capacities which, together, determine the nature of our worldview.”<sup>46</sup>

His main idea was that there should be an established and accepted theory of peace education that will gather different theories which already exist. This observation comes from examining different existing theories of peace education, and perception that none of them was complete and universal. This was not only a problem from the theoretical point of view, but also affected peace education in terms that there was no strong base which would serve as a motivation for concrete action. Even though the motivation could have been based on moral responsibility, categorical imperative or the ethics of care, there was no specific theory that would explain and determine peace education, the way in which it operates and the goals it wants to reach.

Danesh introduces a new concept of the curricula of the education for peace, which consists of critical thinking, emotional insight, creative experience and constructive action.<sup>47</sup> These aspects tend to gather different aspect of human behavior, in order to constitute a comprehensive theory of peace education. Critical thinking is considered to be an inevitable part of learning, since it

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<sup>45</sup> H.B. Danesh, „Towards an integrative theory of peace education“, *Journal of peace education*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2006, pp. 55.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, pp. 63.

<sup>47</sup> H.B. Danesh, The Education for Peace integrative curriculum: concepts, contents and efficacy, *Journal of Peace Education*, Vol.5, No. 2, pp. 164-165

prevents indoctrination and allows the ability of establishing a worldview that will not be imposed by some external factor but created as a product of critical and reflective thinking. Danesh finds the emotional insight important for the true and complete implementation of a certain worldview. He claims that “regardless of how individuals and groups respond, awareness of worldviews creates a profound degree of emotional alertness and, in many people, leads to a much higher insight into both their thought content and corresponding emotional processes.”<sup>48</sup> The third part of the curricula is the creative experience and constructive action, an aspect that gathers the critical and emotional aspects, turning them into concrete action. These three aspects create an integrative curricula of peace education, whose main objective is to promote and implement universal peace values.

Danesh understands that there are certain statements that the universal theory of peace education should contain. First of all, he considers that the theory of peace education should be based on a widely accepted world view on peace, claiming that “truly effective peace education can only take place when the conflict-based worldviews which inform most of our educational endeavours are replaced with peace based worldviews.”<sup>49</sup> His understanding of this topic emphasizes the importance of establishing and implementing the worldview based on peaceful values, stating that the majority of educational institutions propagate and teach theories of war, despite formally advocating for peace.

We could say that this statement represents one of the most important tasks that should be conducted in order to make changes by conducting peace education. The reason why this topic has such a significant importance is in its capacity of making an impact on the development and transformation of children and young people. Schools and other educational institutions represent a place which could project certain values and points of view on the part of the population that will construct the society in the future. Therefore, he claims “it is my assertion that a comprehensive program of peace education should constitute the foundation and provide the framework for all curricula in schools everywhere. The long, disturbing history of human conflict and education’s

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid, pp. 165.

<sup>49</sup> H.B. Danesh, „Towards an integrative theory of peace education“, *Journal of peace education*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2006, pp. 58.

role in promoting conflict-based worldviews demand a new approach to education delivered within the framework of peace principles.”<sup>50</sup>

The second important prerequisite he mentions is that the best way for peace education to be performed is in the context of culture of peace. He understands this statement saying that “common sense dictates that we cannot educate our children and youth about peace in an environment of conflict and violence,”<sup>51</sup> but we could state that these two processes are supporting each other and making mutual impact. In this sense, for the projects of peace education is beneficial to be conducted is the established culture of peace, and on the other side, peace education itself also makes impact on developing and improving the culture of peace.

Another precondition that Danesh considers important for establishing peace education is that peace education takes place best within the context of a culture of healing.<sup>52</sup> By this he understands that there is a necessity of creating an atmosphere of reconciliation and peacebuilding as a strong base for conducting the projects of peace education. The reason why it is important to make such background is because without resolving the existing issues, especially in post conflict societies, and without questioning previous conflicts and feelings, it is difficult to implement peace education as a project that would have positive outcomes.

It is considered that the biggest effects that peace education may have are the ones which come as a result of constituting the framework for all educational activities. He claims that “the notion of peace-based curriculum demands a total reorientation and transformation of our approach to education with the ultimate aim of creating a civilization of peace, which is at once a political, social, ethical and spiritual state.”<sup>53</sup> Danesh understands that in order to make impact on all levels of the society, it is necessary to have a widely accepted understanding of peace and its values. Only after establishing peace as a main value it is possible to operate on a political, social or institutional level. Therefore, the essence of his theory is that there should be a universal, integrative theory of peace that will serve as a guide in conducting transformative action.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid, pp. 58.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, pp. 59.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, pp. 60.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, pp. 62.

The importance of the theoretical base of peace education can also be perceived through the statement that “the foundation of every culture is based on its worldview and understanding of the nature of civilisation and the manner in which this understanding is translated into reality and transmitted to the next generation.”<sup>54</sup> The classification that Danesh makes between three possible worldviews determines the main attitudes and values that are promoted in a society, and on which society is based on. These worldviews contain all the important points of view, attitudes and sentiments of one society, and they represent a base for every action that will be conducted, included peace education. He perceives it in a way that “these worldviews reflect the particular characteristics of three distinct aspects and phases in the development of every individual and society, respectively designated as survival based, identity-based and unity-based worldviews.”<sup>55</sup> We could say that this categorization of the possible worldviews is directly related to the level of the integrated culture of peace in one society.

Danesh understands that “the use of power in the survival phase is in the form of ‘hierarchical power structure’ with a considerable proclivity to conflict and violence because within this mindset the world is viewed as a dangerous place, operating on the principles of force and control, with the twin ultimate aims of survival and security for oneself and one’s group. In the survival-based worldview authoritarian and dictatorial practices are common and deemed justified.”<sup>56</sup> In this type of an ideological and theoretical background it is difficult to conduct activities that promote peace and peacebuilding, such as peace education. Even if there would be possibilities to perform this type of actions, their reach wouldn’t be high enough and their base wouldn’t be strong.

Identity based worldview is perceived as a form of constant competition between main actors in the society, with the main goal to win and gain ultimate power.<sup>57</sup> The characteristics of this phase are similar to the first phase where the focus was on survival, with the difference that this phase offers an opportunity for raising the conscience of unity.

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<sup>54</sup> H.B. Danesh, „The Education for Peace integrative curriculum: concepts, contents and efficacy“, *Journal of Peace Education*, Vol.5, No.2, pp. 158.

<sup>55</sup> H.B. Danesh, „Towards an integrative theory of peace education“, *Journal of peace education*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2006, pp. 66.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, pp. 66.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, pp. 67.

Finally, the unity-based worldview is the one that represents the ideal base for any type of peace activities, including peace education. Its specific characteristic is that “society operates according to the principle of unity in diversity and holds as its ultimate objective the creation of a civilization of peace— equal, just, progressive, moral, diverse and united.”<sup>58</sup> It represents a society in which human rights are respected, there is a universal view on questions of war and peace, and there is respect for the rule of law and the political system.

The importance of Danesh’s theory is in shaping and categorizing the theory of peace education, not only through the concept itself, but also through the society in which it operates. He pointed out the importance of the prevailing attitudes and conditions, as well as the universal point of view that would be oriented towards peace. The highlight of his theory is his concept of a unity-based worldview, which is relatable to the concept of a culture of peace and to Galtung’s concept of positive peace. The essence of these ideas is that there should be a precondition in form of a certain structure that supports peace that would enable and encourage peace activities, including peace education.

B. Reardon theory’s main aim was to contribute to the field by introducing a theory that will offer a unique and comprehensive view on the main concepts and objectives of peace education. She illustrates this statement claiming that „we need to go beyond the immediate aim of preparing for nonviolent politics and investigate the root causes of the violent conditions we face so that we can determine how education can be used to interrupt the cycle of ever-increasing violence in which we are now swept up.“<sup>59</sup> She finds it crucial for the further development of peace education to establish a certain theoretical framework that will include a general consent on the basic concepts, goals and institutional approaches to the field.<sup>60</sup>

Reardon mentions three phases of the chronological development of peace education: the reform, reconstructive and transformational approach.<sup>61</sup> While the reform approach was oriented towards preventing wars and direct violence, the reconstructive and transformational were dedicated to establishing new social structures (for the reconstructive approach the emphasis was on the

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid, pp. 68.

<sup>59</sup> Betty A. Reardon, *Comprehensive peace education: Educating for global responsibility*, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1988, pp. x.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, pp. 10.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, pp. xi.

institutional reforms). The emphasis of the theory was put on the aspect of transformation, that includes transformation on all levels of the society, but also on the individual level. Peace education is perceived as a instrument of this transformation, which can serve not only for reducing open conflicts but also to actively participate in rebuilding the society.

These three approaches define the difference between education for positive and negative peace, since this two approaches are perceived as important for the implementation of peace education projects. The main lack of the education for negative peace is in the fact that this type of education is usually related to the particular cases of violence, without creating universal concepts or theories. It is also perceived that education for negative peace doesn't offer a comprehensive theory of war and conflict, but is focused mainly on the conflict resolution. This way of conducting peace education leads to the understanding that peace is an unidentified and abstract term that represents only the absence of violence, which is an attitude that relies strongly on Galtung's understanding of negative peace.<sup>62</sup>

The education for negative peace mostly relied on informing the population of the damages and consequences of war and on the ways of protesting against it by conducting concrete actions and therefore it belongs to the phase categorized as reformatational one.<sup>63</sup> Since this approach to peace education was mostly present during the period of Cold war and is mostly related to preventing nuclear war, we consider that it is important to question the role of this type of education in the present time. We could say that this type of peace action has it's role and importance in preventing conflicts (for example, protests against the war in Vietnam were can be put in this category), but they lack the capacity of creating new culture and transforming the society. In this way, negative peace represents an inevitable step and precondition for sustainable peace, but cannot be perceived as an ultimate goal of peace education.

Reardon finds that the central concept of education for positive peace is the global justice, defining it as „a comprehensive concept in which changes in global, social and economic systems are seen as the necessary preconditions for authentic world peace.“<sup>64</sup> The author considers that social justice is a concept that makes positive peace reachable and possible to be obtained. It is understood that

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid, pp. 14.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, pp. 20.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, pp. 26.

the global justice generates the virtues of caring, sharing, cooperation and solidarity. Peace is perceived as natural consequence of implementation of this concept, „a network of human relationships based on equity, mutuality, and the inherent worth of all persons might be interpreted as the manifestation of global justice.“<sup>65</sup> This approach is very similar to Danesh's understanding of unity-based worldview, since it focuses on the equal rights and understands peace as a holistic and comprehensive term.

There are three identified approaches to education for positive peace – environmental education, development education and human rights education.<sup>66</sup> Each of these approaches covers a topic that is significant for constructing a state of positive peace, including the raising of the conscience of the protection of ecosystems, establishing a set of values that promote equality and basic human rights. All of these aspects contribute to establishing the system of peace, in which both direct and structural violence is reduced to a minimum.

Human rights education included a specific concept that was defined as human dignity and was described as the implementation of the holistic approach to the human rights education.<sup>67</sup> It is stated that „since human rights education is also values education, we seek to educate toward the belief in and commitment to a set of core values and sub-values that derive from the fundamental central value of human dignity.“<sup>68</sup> The aspect of dignity is reflecting the comprehensive approach to human rights, since it gathers all the basic, economic, social and political human rights, and also spreads the concept to the level that equals all human beings. This way of perceiving the human rights is inevitable for the comprehensive theory of peace education, since it focuses not only on the aspects of war and peace on a national or global level, but also questions the aspect of peace on an individual level.

Reardon emphasizes four dimensions that constitute the comprehensive theory of peace education.<sup>69</sup> The first dimension is the holistic, yet individual approach to education, that is based

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid, pp. 30.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, pp. 31.

<sup>67</sup> Betty A. Reardon, *Education for human dignity: Learning about rights and responsibilities*, University of Pennsylvania press, Philadelphia, 1995, pp. 2.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, pp. 3.

<sup>69</sup> Betty A. Reardon, *Comprehensive peace education: Educating for global responsibility*, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1988, pp. 74.



on the idea that an individual is the essence of the educational system, but that it shouldn't be neglected that he is also an inseparable part of the global entity. This dualism helps create a worldview that will gather both individualistic understanding of human nature, but also provide conscience of the global interconnection and awareness of the fact that individual is correlated to global. This understanding is closely related to Galtung's concept of education for global citizenship and Danesh's concept of a unity-based worldview.

The second dimension is defined as the concept of interconnection on a personal, human level. This kind of connection goes above the abstract, holistic level and relies on the belief that that the human nature itself is the aspect that should bring people together and raise conscience of the fact that all types of social, economical and political relations are depending from the perception of a human-to-human relation.<sup>70</sup>

The third dimension is the one where Reardon introduces a concept neglected by Danesh, and that is the ecological and planetary dimension. Even though closely related to the first holistic dimension, we find the ecological dimension more concrete and more dedicated to conducting specific actions.

Finally, the fourth dimension is perceived more as a way of establishing the first three dimensions, since it represents a concept of a constant development and improvement of the basic postulates of peace education. Reardon described it as „the development of the individual, of the human species in general, and of the species in relationship to other species and other parts of the whole, engaging in a process relationship, an organic, living process of development, in the sense of the development of an organism, a life form.“<sup>71</sup> As we can see, the final dimension gathers the previous ones, by representing peace education as a integrated process of development.

Inseparable part of establishing the mentioned dimensions are the basic human capacities - care, concern and commitment.<sup>72</sup> Reardon emphasizes the importance of the aspect of care as the basic motivation of peace educators, which connects this aspect to the evaluations of the ethics of care, examined in the previous chapter. Care is perceived as the emotional ability to perceive the

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, pp. 75.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, pp. 76.

problems and needs of others, without introducing any personal or selfish interest. Concern is a more rational capacity that provides knowledge of the problem and possible ways of resolving it. Care and concern gathered create the third capacity, the commitment. Without commitment, the first two aspects are useless, since they are not converted into concrete action, but remain in the domain of theory. All these aspects are gathered in the final capacity, which Reardon defines as cohesiveness or cohesion.<sup>73</sup> We find this aspect as the crucial one for the entire theory, since it gathers the most important aspects that should be included in a theory of peace education.

The comprehensiveness of the theory is perceived through the inclusion of all aspects that constitute peace education – it can be seen as a gradation from individual to holistic level in terms of the main dimensions of peace education, and also through gradation from the basic emotional and motivational level to the level of concrete action, when it comes to the aspect of required human competencies.

By examining the basic dimensions of peace education, we find that Reardon offers similar, but more comprehensive and integrative approach to peace education than Danesh.

The first difference between these two theories is the Danesh's understanding of a unity-based worldview which consists of sharing the same values about peace and war on a global level, while Reardon enhances the theory by introducing the relation individual-global. Although Reardon's approach may seem to abstract and utopic, if we have in mind that peace education proclaims the goals that are supposed to be accepted and implemented on a global level, it can be considered that the theory of peace education itself should offer a correspondingly comprehensive base. While Danesh emphasizes the model of survival- dominance-cooperation, Reardon's model can be described as individual-global-holistic.

Another important difference is in the fact that Reardon examines the human capacities that contribute to the theory and practice of peace education, while in Danesh's theory aspects that refer to personal competencies for peace are not included, which creates a gap in explaining the process in which the unity-based worldview (as the central aspect of peace education) is developed.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid, pp. 77.

Finally, the most significant distinction between these two theoretical approaches is in the emphasis of two different aspects of peace education. On one side, Danesh considers that the essence of the integrative theory of peace education is in the point of view that includes accepting peaceful values on a global level, which constitutes the theoretical aspect as the crucial one and as the essence of peace education. In comparison to this point of view, Reardon's theory formulates action as the final and most important aspect of the theory, the aspect that gathers all the other aspects. Even though the theoretical base is essential and inevitable, if we have in mind the goals and objectives of peace education, it is possible to conclude that the aspect of action is the one that makes crucial difference between peace theory and peace education.

### 1.5. Peace education in the United Nations

The importance of examining the role of peace education in the UN is related to the fact that it provides the ability to understand the basic concepts of peace education through a perception of an international organization with the widest experience in this field. As J. Page finds “since international peace and co-operation are central to the founding principles of the UN, it is logical that, within the official declarations and instruments of the UN, one ought to find formulations regarding peace education.”<sup>74</sup> This part will examine the crucial concepts of peace education through the postulates of UNICEF, UNESCO and UNHCR, which is important for examining and demonstrating the way in which peace education can be conducted in practice, and introducing the main obstacles and challenges in this field. It also represents a transition from theory to practice in terms of research of the topic. Each of the agencies of the UN has its own developed system and perception on peace education, even though the main principles are similar and correlated to the basic concept of the importance of education, stated in the Universal declaration of human rights (1948), where it is stated that “education shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.”<sup>75</sup> We could say that this statement represents a general view on education that reflects on the attitudes and documents of UN's special agencies.

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<sup>74</sup> James S. Page, „The United Nations and peace education“ in: Monisha Bajaj (ed.), *Encyclopedia of peace education*, Information age publishing, Charlotte, North Carolina, 2008, pp. 1.

<sup>75</sup>“Universal declaration of human rights”, UN General Assembly, Paris, 1948, pp. 54.

One of the most relevant document that questioned the aspects of education and peace education in UNICEF, is the 1990 Declaration on Education for all, considering that after this document UNICEF has started with the programs of peace education all over the world.

First, it is necessary to emphasize that UNICEF proclaims that the main concept related to education is the concept of human rights. This essential value consists of several human rights, such as the right of access to education, the right to quality education and the right to respect in the learning environment.<sup>77</sup> Relying on the aspect of human rights as the essence of (peace) education, leads us to understanding that this perception is more oriented to education for negative peace, which can also be perceived through the fact that peace education is mentioned as an instrument of the protection of child's integrity, together with information for children and training for teachers.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, peace education is perceived as a tool of prevention and protection of children from any type of violence in schools, by implementing the concepts of non – violence and reconciliation.<sup>79</sup>

UNICEF defines peace education as “the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level.”<sup>80</sup>

The concept of the implementation of the concepts of peace education is perceived by S. Fountain mainly through the behavioral change, which is defined as a process of eight stages: “becoming aware of the issue, becoming concerned about the issue, acquiring knowledge and skills pertaining to the issue, becoming motivated, based on the new attitudes and values, intending to act, trying out a new behavior, evaluating the trial and practicing the recommended behavior.”<sup>81</sup> She understands that this way of defining the stages of progress represents the belief that it is possible to change human behavior through the program of peace education, stating that “peace education

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<sup>77</sup>“A Human Rights-Based Approach to EDUCATION FOR ALL: A framework for the realization of children's right to education and rights within education”, UNICEF, 2007, pp. 29.-37.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, pp. 82.-83.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Susan Fountain, „Peace education in UNICEF“, Working paper, Education section, Programme division, UNICEF, New York, 1999, pp. 6.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, pp. 5.

in UNICEF promotes the development of values as the basis for behavioral change, and views behavior as an indicator of an individual's or group's values."<sup>82</sup>

The provided scheme was supposed to explain the way in which the behavioral changes occurs, but is important to point out that the conditions for this change in perceptions are not always ideal as it is presented in this statement, and they often depend on the social, economic or political factor in the society. Having in mind that these factors are usually present for a long period of time and are deeply incorporated in a society, we may say that the mentioned behavioral are not always possible to occur, as described in this chapter.

A document that introduced the element of peace education in terms of positive peace, is the Convention on the rights of a child (1989), where in the Article 29 is stated that one of the main goals of education should be "the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all people, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin."<sup>83</sup> Despite this formulation that emphasizes the importance of education in the process of creating a culture of peace, J. Page finds that peace education in UNICEF is still perceived as a part of reconciliation process, and is mostly oriented to children in post conflict societies, "given the importance of peace and peace education for children, it is not surprising that peace education figures prominently in promotional literature from the United Nations' Children's Fund (UNICEF), although UNICEF's emphasis on peace education mostly concerns post-conflict situations."<sup>84</sup>

Regarding the initiatives related to peace education, it is important to emphasize the importance of several topics that UNICEF considers important developing as a part of peace education. These topics include education of children for human rights, education for development, gender training, global education, life skills education, landmine awareness and psychosocial rehabilitation.<sup>85</sup> Despite all these aspects represent an integrative part of the peacebuilding process, we find global education to be the most similar one to the education for positive peace.

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> "Convention on the Rights of the Child", UN General Assembly, *Treaty Series*, Vol. 1577, New York, 1989, pp. 12.

<sup>84</sup> James S. Page, „The United Nations and peace education“ in: Monisha Bajaj (ed.), *Encyclopedia of peace education*, Information age publishing, Charlotte, North Carolina, 2008, pp. 2.

<sup>85</sup> Susan Fountain, „Peace education in UNICEF“, Working paper, Education section, Programme division, UNICEF New York, 1999, pp. 7.

Global education in UNICEF represents education about the topics of peace, ecology, tolerance, multiculturalism and environmental issues. The accent of global education is on the transformation of conscience towards the global one and creating the attitudes and values that will be accepted on a global level.<sup>88</sup> This approach gathers both the aspects of diversity and unity, through respecting the differences but also noticing the similarities between people and nations. This concept is relatable to Galtung's idea of education for global citizens and Danesh's idea of a unity-based worldview.

Closely related to global education, is the education for life skills, which is perceived as a set of practical skills that can help in promoting the values of peace and they include the training on the practical skills of negotiation, problem solving, reconciliation, dialogue, communication, assertive communication and many others.<sup>89</sup> We consider that having trainings about this set of skills is essential for any program of peace education, since it introduces a practical dimension that is crucial when it comes to the implementation of the program.

One of the initiatives of UNICEF that represented a step forward in combining the peacebuilding activities and peace education, was the initiative 'peacebuilding through schools'.<sup>90</sup> This type of activities was conducted in eastern and southern Africa and represented a form of learning about peace through daily activities, rather than only through the curricula. Importance of this program is in the fact that it provided the possibility of creating the environment of peace based on everyday activities, which can be conducted even after the education finishes. This project also helped establishing bonds between schools and creating the relations of respect and tolerance.

Despite the fact that UNICEF has introduced the aspect of global education in its curricula, if we consider the projects that include peace education, it is possible to notice that the main aspect of the concepts of peace education was related to the protection of children in conflicts and prevention of conflicts, while the activities that were related to developing and building sustainable peace were mostly related to the post – conflict areas.

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid, pp. 10. – 11.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, pp. 11.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, pp. 20.

Peace education has also been part of the UNHCR curricula, essentially through the refugee education in developing countries. The Refugee convention (1951) declared the right to education as one of the crucial aspects of the regulation of the status of refugees. Article 22 of the Convention declares that: “1. The Contracting States shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education. 2. The Contracting States shall accord to refugees treatment as favorable as possible, and, in any event, not less favorable than that accorded to aliens generally in the same circumstances, with respect to education other than elementary education and, in particular, as regards access to studies, the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges and the award of scholarships.”<sup>92</sup>

The UNHCR conducts the majority of its peace education practices in the refugee camps and war affected or post conflict areas. Many challenges are interfering in this process, starting with difficulties in defining the aims of the process in a way that will be suitable for all participants, but also the difficulties in the implementation of the program.

One of the reasons why this organization has challenges with the population of the country in which it operates is because of the circumstances which are defining the situation, as stated that “most would agree that the objectives of promoting peace to prevent violence and of empowering people to solve conflicts peacefully are laudable. But promoting peace and preventing conflict are difficult to do. Expectations of programme success can be unreasonably high.”<sup>93</sup>

The main reason why it is difficult but also important to conduct peace education through UNHCR, is because of the population that comes from areas already affected by war. Many of them have gone through war and are facing different types of discrimination or trauma. Also, they are the ones who have felt the consequences of war and are able to perceive the real impact if it. Many of them are victims of the violation of human rights and have gone through traumas.

All these reasons are motivation for the actions of peace education. We consider that working with refugees represents one of the most important segments of the practical side of peace education.

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<sup>92</sup> “Convention relating to the status of the refugees”, UN General Assembly, Treaty series, Vol. 189, Geneva, 1951, pp. 117.

<sup>93</sup> Marc Sommers, „Peace education and refugee youth, Learning for a future: Refugee education in developing countries“, UNHCR, Geneva, 2001, pp. 179.

Peace education in these occasions serves, not only for long term goals of conflict transformation and peacebuilding, but also for coping with trauma and stress on a personal level.

Revised guidelines for educational assistance to refugees (1995) offer a set of basic postulates when it comes to education of refugees. The necessity and importance of the education of refugees is especially perceived through the improvement of the psychosocial objectives – a concept that had a goal of helping the refugees deal with the psychological consequences of the war, but also to enable them to rebuild their relations with other people.<sup>94</sup> While UNICEF focuses on the aspect of protection in its vision of education, we could say that the essence and basic goal of UNHCR's view on education is – recovery and prevention.

Peace education is perceived in UNHCR as the integrative part of formal, non-formal and informal channels that should be used to promote environmental, health and reconciliation messages.<sup>95</sup> It is perceived that the ability of implementing and learning about the methods of peaceful conflict resolution, reconciliation, cooperation and tolerance are useful and essential for prevention of further conflicts, in a way that “attitudes of reconciliation and peace may be prerequisites for the durable solution of voluntary repatriation and reconstruction, and should be promoted among children as well as adults, to avoid a repetition of conflict by a new generation.”<sup>96</sup>

Two peace education initiatives conducted by UNHCR offer a possibility of defining the main concepts through their evaluations – one program was conducted in Kenya and the other one in Uganda.

These two initiatives showed that some of the concepts of peace education are not applicable in certain cultural environments, and that for a successful peace education program it is necessary to involve the local population as much as possible. It has been noticed that “most [peace education] programmes start with self-esteem; but “self” as a core concept belongs to those societies that are individualistic – this is not valid for many traditional societies and it is not generally valid for many groups for whom the project is designed.”<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>94</sup>“Revised (1995) guidelines for educational assistance to refugees”, Education unit, UNHCR, Geneva, 1995, pp.2.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, pp. 40.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, pp. 41.

<sup>97</sup> Marc Sommers, „Peace education and refugee youth, Learning for a future:Refugee education in developing countries“, UNHCR, Geneva, 2001, pp. 181.



Here we should point out the problem that UNHCR is facing in peace education programs. As M. Sommers claims, peace education is mostly a project based on the concepts of the western world, where certain concepts are accepted and the other ones rejected. The problem occurs when a project tries to impose its own values to a society that has developed a different set of values.<sup>98</sup> Therefore, one of the crucial aspects of UNHCR's peace education initiatives should be the respect and acceptance to the values of the local community.

The importance of the peace education program in UNHCR can also be found in the fact that its participants come from the environments where peace is the highest aspiration, but there is insufficient knowledge and conscience of the factors and skills that provide peace. "In UNHCR PEP community workshops, participants express a strong desire for peace, but they have little understanding of the behaviors and attitudes that promote peace or those that are not peaceful (or promote conflict). There is a tendency to solve problems by violence or by postponing the problem. The responsibility to solve problems belongs to the elders or leaders."<sup>101</sup> This leads to understanding that the basic concepts and objectives of peace education in UNHCR are to provide education for peace for those who come from the areas where peace is most needed, who understand its importance and have a capacity to make changes in the future.

The first document that emphasizes the importance of education in UNESCO is the Convention against the discrimination in education (1960). The article 5 of this Convention relates education to peace by the statement "education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; it shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace."<sup>103</sup>

UNESCO has contributed to the development of peace education through its numerous initiatives, mostly based on the development of culture of peace. The main goal of this organization is the preservation of cultural goods, but also promoting the basic values of the UN. Peace education in UNESCO is perceived as "the key outcome of the system-wide effort to strengthen education for peace is improved and enriched learning by students in schools. The ultimate goal of the process

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid, pp. 170.

<sup>101</sup> Available from: <https://www.unhcr.org/3ee980d717.pdf>, accessed on 17.5.2019.

<sup>103</sup> "Convention against the discrimination in education", UNESCO, Paris, 1960, pp. 120.

is to foster understandings, skills, values and behaviors in students that will lead to peaceful, sustainable and secure communities and societies.”<sup>104</sup>

The Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms (1974), brings an even more defined relation between education and peace, by declaring that “education should stress the inadmissibility of recourse to war for purposes of expansion, aggression and domination, or to the use of force and violence for purposes of repression, and should bring every person to understand and assume his or her responsibilities for the maintenance of peace.”<sup>105</sup> The document emphasizes another important dimension, which is the inclusion of the cultural dimension in peace education projects. This dimension was supposed to enable learning about different cultures and their perceptions, learning different languages and the cultural heritage of different civilizations.<sup>106</sup>

In the programme and meeting document from 2008, UNESCO declares its commitment for using peace as the instrument of achieving peace, with the main goal of addressing the main roots and causes of the conflicts.<sup>108</sup> This program perceives peace education through the two main concepts – respect and skills. The aspect of respect can be understood as the basic precondition for any activities conducted by UNESCO, having in mind the basic motives and actions of this organization, which are related to tolerance and acceptance of cultural diversities. Respect is perceived as the aspect of negative peace, in terms of allowing other nations the right to their own culture, while the skills were supposed to bring a practical dimension into the concept of peace education, by introducing an aspect of concrete action dedicated to establishing a culture of peace, and therefore can be considered as an instrument of positive peace.

UNESCO perceives and emphasizes the importance of education in its Declaration on Education 2030, where the established goals are related to the development of education and implementation

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<sup>104</sup> “Education for peace: Planning for curriculum reform: Guidelines for integrating an education for peace curriculum into education sector plan and policies”, Education sector, UNESCO, Available from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000233601/PDF/233601eng.pdf.multi>, pp. 3., accessed on 12.6.2019.

<sup>105</sup> “The Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms”, UNESCO, General conference, 18<sup>th</sup> session, Paris, 1974, pp. 2.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, pp. 3.

<sup>108</sup> „UNESCO’s work on education for peace and non-violence: Building peace through education”, UNESCO, 2008, pp. 2., Available from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000160787>, accessed on 15.6.2019.

on all levels of the society.<sup>109</sup> The importance of this declaration is in stating some of the basic values of peace education, among other, that education should be gender equal and that no social group should be excluded from it. It is considered that the educational objectives wouldn't be considered successful unless they were implemented on all levels of the society.<sup>110</sup>

The concept that was suggested, was the one based on the respect of the human rights and supported by the entire educational system. It was emphasized that it is not enough to only promote and teach peace education, regardless of the regular education and social system. We find this statement to be of the most important aspects of the implementation of peace education processes and it is related to the environment in which it is being conducted. The environment represents one of the most important processes in terms of peace education, because it is much more difficult to conduct such programs in an environment that is not showing any interest for peace activities.

Another important segment of the implementation of the program was identifying the main principles and objectives of the program, which can be a difficult task, since it is necessary to compose such objectives that will gather the universal postulates of peace education, but also take in consideration the national strategies and goals, and the social environment in general.

This is closely related to the conceptualization of the curricula, meaning that every country should formulate its own way of implementing peace education, taking in consideration all the difficulties and specific circumstances.<sup>116</sup> We consider this distinction significant since it provides a certain level of liberty to the national level in defining its own peace education agenda. There are two reasons why this is important – the first one is because in this way there is smaller possibility for the nation state to perceive peace education as something imposed by a foreign factor; on the other side, the goals will be correspondent to the real needs of a society in which the program is being implemented.

Another important aspect for peace education is the 'hidden curricula', which represents the informal channels of influence on the students, which go beyond the formal level and can even be

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<sup>109</sup> "Education for peace: Planning for curriculum reform: Guidelines for integrating an education for peace curriculum into education sector plan and policies", Education sector, UNESCO, pp. 7., Available from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000233601/PDF/233601eng.pdf.multi>, accessed on 13.6.2019

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid, pp. 31.

more influential than the formal curricula. The hidden curricula are defined as the cultural discourse of a school community, that defines the basic concepts, beliefs and behaviors among its members.<sup>118</sup> This aspect is significant since it provides an insight on the real set of values and assumptions, that can whether be a support or an obstacle to establishing a real culture of peace.

Finally, we can conclude that although some of the basic concepts of UNESCO are similar to the concepts of UNICEF and UNHCR, the biggest difference is in the emphasis of the culture of peace, which would accept all the cultural differences, but also promote a unique set of values, based on peace, tolerance and mutual respect.

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid, pp. 40.

## 2. Colombia – Peace education in a protracted conflict

### 2.1. Brief history of the conflict and Havana peace talks

A.M. Bejarano described the Colombian conflict as protracted and mainly political, due to its duration for more than 50 years, but also to the involvement of all aspect of the community.<sup>120</sup> Having in mind Azar’s perception of these conflicts as “hostile interactions between communal groups that are based in deep-seated racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural hatreds and which persist over long periods of time with sporadic outbreaks of violence”<sup>121</sup>, we could say that the conflict in Colombia fulfills all of these requirements.

The nature of the conflict is specific due to the fact that it represents one of the longest and most complex conflicts in the modern period. Besides the fact that the conflict started in 1964 and lasted for over 50 years, it shouldn’t be neglected that the precondition of the conflict was the period of *La Violencia* that started in 1948. This period started with an assassination of the leader of the Liberal party, Jorge Eliecer Gaitan, and it is estimated that 200,000 persons lost their lives during the period between 1946 and 1964.<sup>125</sup> The period after his assassination was followed by massive riots and rebellions known as *Bogota Bogotazo*.

The official beginning of the conflict is an often discussed issue, since there are theories that consider that the conflict started after the end of the period of *La Violencia* in 1958, while the others finds that the conflict started in 1964 with the founding of Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).<sup>126</sup>

The consequences of the conflict were devastating in terms of the number of the number of victims, social and economic consequences and proliferation of drug trafficking and structural violence.

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<sup>120</sup> Ana Maria Bejarano, “Protracted conflict, multiple protagonists, and staggered negotiations: Colombia, 1982-2002”, *University of Calgary Press, Canadian Association of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 55/56, 2003, pp. 224-228

<sup>121</sup> Ronald Fisher, „Cyprus: The failure of mediation and the escalation of an identity – based conflict to an adversarial impasse“, *Journal of peace research*, vol. 38, No. 3, 2001, pp 308.

<sup>125</sup> Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Colombia/La-Violencia-dictatorship-and-democratic-restoration>, accessed on 26.8.2019.

<sup>126</sup> Available from: <https://www.elheraldo.co/politica/las-teorias-del-origen-del-conflicto-armado-en-colombia-184562>, accessed on 26.8.2019. (Spanish, our translation)

When it comes to the human victims, the estimated number was 220,000 dead, 25,000 disappeared and around 5.7 displaced persons.<sup>127</sup>

The complexity of the conflict can be perceived through the involvement of almost all levels of the society, based mostly on its inequality and the numerous national and international actors that were involved. The actors of the conflict included both national and international factors, both governmental and guerilla, military and paramilitary groups, each of them representing different interests. Colombian government was officially representing the stability of the society, the guerilla movements such as the FARC and National Liberation Army (ELN) were fighting for social justice, but also among themselves for their influence in Colombia. The government had the international support from the United States, which represented the involvement of the foreign factor in the conflict and its internalization. In addition to all these factors, the actors were also involved in drug trafficking and criminal, and there were a significant number of children involved as child soldiers.<sup>128</sup>

A significant cause of the Colombian conflict was the inequality, since “nearly 85% of the population finds the income distribution to be unfair. More than 70% of the population believes that policies should be implemented by the government to reduce income inequality.”<sup>129</sup> Another cause of the conflict was the land ownership, perceived by the Stockholm international peace research institute as the main cause of conflicts and atrocities in Colombia since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>130</sup>

As protracted conflict, with numerous actors involved, and with the basic problem of social inequality, the war in Colombia has influenced the attitudes and perceptions of war and peace among the population. War has become a normal state of being, while peace was perceived as imaginary and unreachable.

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<sup>127</sup> Claire Felter, Danielle Renwick, “Colombia’s civil conflict”, *Council on foreign relations*, 11 January 2017, Available from: <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/colombias-civil-conflict>, accessed on 26.8.2019.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Joel Gillin, “Understanding the causes on Colombia’s conflict”, available from: <https://colombiareports.com/understanding-colombias-conflict-inequality/>, accessed on 5.7.2019.

<sup>130</sup> Thomas Edward Flores, “200 years of landlessness? Land inequality and the search for peace in Colombia”, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2013, available from: <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/blog/2013/200-years-landlessness-land-inequality-and-search-peace-colombia>, accessed on 5.7.2019.

The peace process between the Colombian government and guerilla movements started in 2012 in Havana and finally ended in 2016. The process consisted of numerous dialogues and initiatives, but was also facing periods of crisis and de-escalation on violence. The first signed agreement was the General agreement for the termination of the conflict and the construction of the stable and lasting peace, signed in August 2012, by the representatives of the Colombian government and the FARC.

The main aims of the agreement were related to the end of violence, solution to the problem of illicit drugs, and pacification of the society. The agreement was signed by both sides, but the peace process has already faced a crisis in 2013, which has interrupted the dialogue process.

After another crisis in 2015, the final agreement was signed on August 24, 2016, but failed on the referendum held on October 2, 2016. 50.2% of the voters voted against the agreement, which lead to the revision of the peace agreement. This revised agreement was signed on November 24 and was ratified by the Congress, which lead to the final ending of the conflict on November 29-30, 2016. The failure of the referendum showed that its main aspects were not accepted by the half of the population, which clearly reflects the division of the society that was still present, regardless of the declared ceasefire.<sup>132</sup>

The importance of the agreement is in the fact that it prescribed the measures that would help Colombian society in reconciliation and reintegration after the conflict. The peace agreement included a comprehensive rural reform, political participation, promoting greater participation in politics, agreement on ceasefire and demobilization, reincorporation of the FARC member into civilian life, security guarantees and fighting against criminal organizations, solution to the problem of illicit drugs and agreement regarding the victims of the conflict. Besides all these regulations, there was still a problem of the division of the society, the narratives that still persisted and the unhealed traumas.

The peace deal prescribed two measures important for peace education. These measures are related to the promotion of democratic and participatory culture that would include all citizens of Colombia, and the ones that considered the promotion of a culture of tolerance, non-stigmatization

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<sup>132</sup> Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Colombia/Colombia-in-the-21st-century>, accessed on 28.8.2019.

and reconciliation. In the aim of obtaining that goal “a National Council for Reconciliation and Coexistence (Consejo Nacional para la Reconciliación y la Convivencia) and Territorial Councils (Consejos Territoriales) will be created, whose role will be to advise and assist the government in the implementation of mechanisms and programs, such as the design and execution of a reconciliation, coexistence and anti-stigmatization programme; and promoting respect for differences, criticism and political opposition, amongst others programs.”<sup>133</sup>

Even though the measures related to demobilization and social reforms were strictly defined, that wasn't the case with the two measures mentioned above. These two measures were left to be designed by the local institutions but having in mind the devastation of Colombian society after going through five decades of conflict, this wasn't an easy task. Difficulties came from concrete obstacles, such as organization and funding, but also from the environment that still wasn't healed from conflict and violence.

Another important factor is the corruption that appeared in the Colombian society during the long period of violence and became a direct opponent of any kind of social change or progress. With all these obstacles, it was clear that the problem wasn't only coping with the past, but also facing problems in the current system that needed to be changed. Peace education initiatives were one of the important factors that helped recover the society from the conflict and work on improving the social structure.

## 2.2. Citizenship competencies in Colombia

The roots of the educational reform in Colombian society started in the early 1960s, by improving the system of primary education in rural areas. The process of reform started by the project *Escuelas Unitarias*, conducted mainly in the rural areas, which were facing lack of primary education. The project was based on several aspects, which included multigrade system (one teacher was teaching all grades), automatic promotion, developing learning skills individually,

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<sup>133</sup> Summary of Colombia's agreement to end conflict and build peace, pp. 11., available from:<http://www.altocomisionadoparalapaz.gov.co/herramientas/Documents/summary-of-colombias-peace-agreement.pdf>, accessed on 1.7.2019.



learning material adequate for teaching different courses and teaching ex-cathedra.<sup>134</sup> Due to the difficulties the program was facing, including lack of training and the content of the curricula, the program *Escuela Nueva* was introduced by the Ministry of Education in 1975. In the beginning, the program included only several schools, but by the year 1982 it reached the number of 1,500. Some of the basic concepts of the new form of education included a multigrade system, inclusion of students and their families in the educational system through a student government, special trainings for the teachers and a self-controlling mechanisms.<sup>135</sup> The program represented a new, modern ways of educating, oriented to a more individual approach of learning.

The biggest innovation that this program brought was the rural-reform, that included an idea of an education based on an individualistic approach, but at the same time connected to the local community and adapted to the region or society in which it is being conducted, as it was stated “in general, the pedagogy of the *Escuela Nueva* can be characterized as ‘active’, relying upon students to acquire and construct knowledge for themselves, guided by the teacher.”<sup>136</sup>

The project was mainly described as successful, by the authors who were stating that *Escuela Nueva* had an important influence on student outcomes, involvement of their families and local community.<sup>137</sup> It was also claimed that the positive outcomes can be perceived through “the pedagogical orientation of learning citizenship competencies by doing things, that is, learning about cooperation, peaceful interactions and democratic participation not by talking about it but by being involved in activities where students have to put their cooperative, peaceful and democratic competencies into practice.”<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> George Psacharopoulos, Carlos Rojas, Eduardo Velez, “Achievement Evaluation of Colombia's "Escuela Nueva": Is Multigrade the Answer?”, *Comparative Education Review*, , Vol. 37, No. 3, 1993, pp. 263

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. 264-265

<sup>136</sup> Patrick J. McEwan & Luis Benveniste, “The politics of rural school reform: Escuela Nueva in Colombia”, *Journal of Education Policy*, Vol. 16, No.6, 2001, pp. 553.

<sup>137</sup> George Psacharopoulos, Carlos Rojas, Eduardo Velez, “Achievement Evaluation of Colombia's "Escuela Nueva": Is Multigrade the Answer?”, *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 37, No. 3, 1993, pp. 274.

<sup>138</sup> Chau Enrique, Ana M. Velasquez, Peace education in Colombia: The promise of citizenship competencies, in: Virginia Bouvier (Ed.), *Colombia: Building peace in a time of war*, United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C , 2009, pp. 5.

Although the concept of the program was imagined in a way that supports local communities, the fact that Colombia was facing direct violence during the period when the program was implemented and the credibility of the state in rural areas was weakened, led McEwan and Benveniste to the conclusion that “the form and structures of multigrade schools continued to exist, but the core educational practices of multigrade teachers began to resemble less and less the prescribed pedagogies of the ideal *Escuela Nueva*.”<sup>139</sup>

Even though the perceptions of the outcomes of the program are contrary, there are certain observations that were noticed and emphasized by both sides. First of all, violence was an interfering factor that was making the process more difficult and delayed the full implementation of the program. The other interfering factor was the financial one, since the state financial resources weren't able to cover the funding of the project, which had consequence in the lack of training for the teachers and lack of needed material for students. Finally, the third problem was related to the institutionalization of the program and weakening of the state, since it often occurred that the process of institutionalization depended on personal preferences of the local community officials.<sup>140</sup>

Even though the educational reform didn't directly include the aspect of peace education, we find its significance in creating a framework for future activities in this field. After entering the phase of reconciliation and approaching peace, it became clear that it is necessary to adjust so that the country can recover after the long-lasting conflict, but also to prevent future atrocities.

Numerous projects were founded with a goal to introduce the concept of peace in the aspect of education, such as: Proyecto Ciudadano (Citizenship Project) from Fundación Presencia, Habilidades para la Vida (Life Skills) from Fundación Fe y Alegría, Jóvenes Constructores de Paz (Young Peacebuilders) from the International Center for Education and Human Development CINDE, Proyecto Hermes (Hermes Project) from Bogotá's Chamber of Commerce, Ética con Inteligencia Emocional (Ethics with Emotional Intelligence) from Asesores de Proyectos

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<sup>139</sup> Patrick J. McEwan & Luis Benveniste, The politics of rural school reform: Escuela Nueva in Colombia, *Journal of Education Policy*, Vol.16, No.6, 2001, pp. 556.

<sup>140</sup> George Psacharopoulos, Carlos Rojas, Eduardo Velez, “Achievement Evaluation of Colombia's "Escuela Nueva": Is Multigrade the Answer?”, *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 37, No. 3, 1993, pp. 275.

Educativos, Convivencia Productiva (Productive Convivencia) from Corporación Empresarios Convivencia Productiva, Cultura de la Legalidad (Culture of Legality).<sup>141</sup>

The reason why education was understood as the main tool for the transformation of the Colombian society, is because its capability to make impact on breaking the cycle of violence. E. Chau examined the impact of armed conflict on the levels of violence in schools. It was demonstrated that among 5th graders, 29.1% reported having been bullied by classmates, 21.9% reported bullying classmates and 49.9% reported observing bullying among classmates. Among 9th graders, 14.7, 19.6 and 56.6% reported having been bullied, bullying and observing bullying among classmates.<sup>142</sup>

Children in Colombia have been involved in conflicts for almost their entire lives and violence was perceived as a normal state of being. All the aspects of social relations were perceived through a prism of violence. Besides direct violence, there was an established structure and culture which supported violence and provided credibility to it. By being involved in violence in everyday life, since the early age, children were used to it and it became an inseparable part of their lives. Special relation was perceived between armed conflicts and violence in schools, in a sense that the schools in areas which were more exposed to violence used to have higher levels of bullying.<sup>143</sup>

In the 1990s, Colombia began to accept the democratic values and perceive education as one of the factors that can contribute to reconciliation. The first shift was the new Constitution approved in 1991, that introduced the concept of human rights and finally ended the responsibility of the Catholic church in the aspect of moral education. The other important document was the General

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<sup>141</sup> Chau Enrique, Ana M. Velasquez, Peace education in Colombia: The promise of citizenship competencies, in: Virginia Bouvier (Ed.), *Colombia: Building peace in a time of war*, United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C, 2009, pp. 6.

<sup>142</sup> Chau, Enrique, Andres Molano and Paola Podlesky, "Socio-economic, socio-political and socio-emotional variables explaining school bullying: a country-wide multilevel analysis", *Aggressive behavior* Vol:35, No. 6, pp. 524.

<sup>143</sup> Eliana Villar-Márquez, "School-Based Violence in Colombia: Links to State-Level Armed Conflict, Educational Effects and Challenges", Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education, UNESCO, 2010, pp. 4.

law of education (1994), which for the first time mentions ethical education as a mandatory part of schools' curricula.<sup>144</sup>

Educational system was noticed that as the opportunity to break the cycle of violence and help Colombia cope with the challenges of inequality, corruption and learn about a different set of values and narratives. Therefore, the Colombian Ministry of Education introduced a Program of citizenship competencies in 2004, perceived as “development of civic engagement in Colombian youth.”<sup>145</sup>

The program was designed in a way that besides mathematics, languages, social science and social studies policy, introduced teaching of a new set of skills, defined as citizenship competencies.<sup>146</sup> Having in mind the decentralization of the Colombian educational system, this program was perceived as an intent of creating universal values that should be incorporated at all levels. The standards were perceived as a minimum that every student needs to fulfil, and it included a total of 30,442 educational units in the state.<sup>147</sup>

The new paradigm this program introduced was the difference between knowledge and competencies, where knowledge provided theoretical insights and an academic background, but wasn't enough for creating a true citizen. Citizenship consists of other elements besides knowledge, such as tolerance, understanding, empathy and the behavior that corresponds to these virtues.<sup>148</sup> If we compare this program to the comprehensive and integrative theories examined in the theoretical part of the research, we could say that this program makes a connection between theory and practice, where one is inseparable from the other.

Competency represents a capacity of responding and reacting to a certain situation in a certain way, based on the values of citizenship. Patti and Espinosa find that this shift in the perception and role of education refers to an “educational approach that favors the development of applicable

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<sup>144</sup> Rosario Jaramillo, José A. Mesa, “Citizenship education as a response to Colombia’s social and political context”, *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 38, No.4, pp. 469.

<sup>145</sup> Janet Patti, Adriana Cepeda Espinosa, “Citizenship competencies in Colombia: Learning from policy and practice”, *Conflict resolution quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 110.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid, pp. 111.

<sup>148</sup> Rosario Jaramillo, José A. Mesa, “Citizenship education as a response to Colombia’s social and political context”, *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol.38, No. 4., pp. 473.

knowledge articulated with the necessary abilities and attitudes Citizenship Competencies in Colombia that allow students to face new problems in daily life flexibly.”<sup>149</sup>

It is important to mention that this initiative was conducted on a national level, and conducted inside Colombian educational system, as it was noticed that Colombia’s national policy is based on the assumption that schools should have the ability to develop and evaluate their curriculum in their own way, so that each region can determine its own educational approach.<sup>150</sup>

The standards were deployed among three dimensions:<sup>152</sup>

- **Convivencia (coexistence) and peace;** The aspect of *convivencia* is the base of establishing prevention of direct violence, in a sense that it develops a basic level of tolerance. Convivencia provides accepting the Other, and its rights, but it stays on a level of passive coexistence. As Chaux argues “students may have the experience of living within a social system that works differently than their violent environment, and may realize that this alternative system actually works and has benefits.”<sup>153</sup> We find this aspect to be inevitable part of peacebuilding process, but it certainly not enough for establishing strong relations based on mutual respect.
- **Democratic participation and responsibility;** This aspect was introduced in order to bring the democratic system and values closer to a society which hasn’t had a history of democratic political systems. This general standard was defined with a statement “I participate, in my immediate context (with my family and classmates), in the construction of basic agreements about norms for the achievement of mutual goals and I follow them.”<sup>154</sup>
- **Plurality, identity and the value of differences;** When the notion of democratic values is created, it is possible to introduce the values of plurality to the society. This leads the

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<sup>149</sup> Janet Patti, Adriana Cepeda Espinosa, „Citizenship competencies in Colombia: Learning from policy and practice“, *Conflict resolution quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 111.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Rosario Jaramillo, José A. Mesa, “Citizenship education as a response to Colombia’s social and political context”, *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol.38, No.4, pp. 474.

<sup>153</sup> Chaux Enrique, Ana M. Velasquez, Peace education in Colombia: The promise of citizenship competencies, in: Virginia Bouvier (Ed.), *Colombia: Building peace in a time of war*, United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C, 2009, pp. 4.

<sup>154</sup> Janet Patti, Adriana Cepeda Espinosa, „Citizenship competencies in Colombia: Learning from policy and practice“, *Conflict resolution quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 113.

society beyond the level of tolerance, but also includes respect, acceptance and importance of the diversities among groups. This may be the most important task for every peacebuilding and peace education action in protracted social conflicts, since it provides the base for establishing structural peace and destroying the real causes of conflict. Also, this represents the most challenging aspect, since it takes time and effort to transform the existing discourses and narratives that groups have for one another.

In order to obtain and achieve these values, the program identified the main types of the citizenship competences, which include emotional, cognitive, communicative, integrative and knowledge-based competencies.<sup>155</sup> Each of these competencies were designed in way to promote certain behavior, but they were also part of the vision in which all these particular competences will gather in creating a new type of society.

*Emotional competencies* are considered to represent a capability to detect and constructively use the emotions, instead of letting the emotions dictate the behavior. This is one of the basic competences that should provide the rationalization of emotional conditions and prevents outbreaks of violent or irrational behavior.<sup>156</sup>

*Cognitive competencies* are widely accepted as an inseparable part of every democratic society and are based on critical thinking. Chauz described this competency by stating that “this citizenship competency facilitates, for example, that people think critically about the discourses or actions that legitimize violence.”<sup>157</sup>

*Communicative competencies* were designed to promote a way of establishing the basic level of communication between different levels of the society and to promote participating in a peaceful dialogue.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Rosario Jaramillo & José A. Mesa, “Citizenship education as a response to Colombia’s social and political context”, *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 38, No.4, pp. 475.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Chauz Enrique, Ana M. Velasquez, Peace education in Colombia: The promise of citizenship competencies, in: Virginia Bouvier (Ed.), *Colombia: Building peace in a time of war*, United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C, 2009, pp. 4.

<sup>158</sup> Rosario Jaramillo, José A. Mesa, “Citizenship education as a response to Colombia’s social and political context”, *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol.38, No.4, pp. 475.

*Integrative competences* were described as a process of help gathering all the previous competences and conducting special actions in order to obtain such values.<sup>160</sup> This segment is inevitable for the process of the transformation of the educational system, since it provides the background and guidelines for further actions.

Finally, *knowledge competencies* represented the final and most complex competency that should be able to provide an individual conscience about the issues important for the society and should come as a consequence of successfully implementing the rest of the competencies.<sup>161</sup>

We could say that the theoretical design of the competencies takes in consideration important aspects of civil society, based on knowledge, emotions and action. It establishes a bond among these aspects with the main goal of increasing the conscience and creating a sense of a “common good”, which makes this theory relatable to the comprehensive theory of peace education. The main aspiration of this theory was to conduct concrete actions based on understanding and knowledge, while the idea of citizenship competencies promotes understanding that practicing certain human behavior will lead to knowledge and conscience. In both theories, the accent is on connecting behavior with ethical principles that motivate this behavior.

When it comes to the implementation of the program, Patti and Espinosa define three main concerns that appeared during this period, that were related to reaching all teachers and schools, monitoring and controlling the program and including other actors that could support the project.<sup>162</sup> These aspects were related to fact that, as mentioned earlier, the educational system in Colombia was decentralized and every region has its own perception how an educational system should look like. Taking in consideration that Colombia was facing ongoing violence during this period, and high levels of inequality, it is understandable why any initiative that came from the level of state, could have been perceived as authoritarian intrusion.

The implementation process consisted of numerous trainings organized mostly by the Ministry of Education; also, the implementation included pilot studies and resource publications which had

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Janet Patti, Adriana Cepeda Espinosa, “Citizenship competencies in Colombia: Learning from policy and practice”, *Conflict resolution quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 114.

the goal to develop and explain the main concepts of the citizenship competencies, but also their possible impact on the society.<sup>163</sup>

Another aspect of the implementation was inclusion of other actors in the program, which referred to the support to Secretariats of education at the regional and local level in order to ensure the implementation of the program on all levels and in all schools. This process included various actors; among them there were universities, structured programs of international organizations like UNICEF, control agencies (*Defensoria del pueblo*), interest groups, church and NGOs.<sup>164</sup> This cooperation had an intention of achieving full implementation of the program, but having in mind the political and social context of Colombian society, this aspect was challenging since “these alliances are not easy to implement unless there is a prior working relationship between these groups. In some instances there is deep distrust because of fear of information being used either by the government or others for political purposes.”<sup>165</sup>

When it comes to the aspect of monitoring and control, the idea was to establish a type of controlling mechanism that would enable the local communities to make their own evaluations of their work. This was enabled through the *SABER* tests, that had an objective of demonstrating the main difficulties and the real state of citizenship competencies in one educational unit. The first test was held in 2003, before the program started and its main goal was to demonstrate the current state of competencies and to point out the main challenges of the implementation. This test also provided a possibility of creating a curricula that would correspond to the specific needs of every region, so that the local level was given liberty to define its own program, as long as it was fulfilling the universal requirements. The test evaluated six areas: actions, attitudes, knowledge, context, cognitive competencies and emotional competencies.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid, pp. 115.

<sup>164</sup> Rosario Jaramillo, José A. Mesa, “Citizenship education as a response to Colombia’s social and political context”, *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol.38, No.4, pp. 478.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Janet Patti, Adriana Cepeda Espinosa, “Citizenship competencies in Colombia: Learning from policy and practice”, *Conflict resolution quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 116.



When it comes to the conduction of the test, it was conducted among a total of just over one million students (about 60 percent of whom were fifth-graders and 40 percent were ninth-graders), in more than 90 percent of Colombian municipalities.<sup>167</sup>

Patti and Espinosa find that the results of this 2003 pre-test show oscillation between 5.06 and 6.10 for fifthgraders and 5.18 and 6.86 for ninth-graders (scale of 0 to 10), as it is demonstrated in the Figure 1.<sup>168</sup> The results demonstrated the difference among fifth-graders and nine-graders when it comes to cognitive competencies and empathy.

Figure 1. 2003 National Citizenship Competencies Means for Fifth- and Ninth-Graders

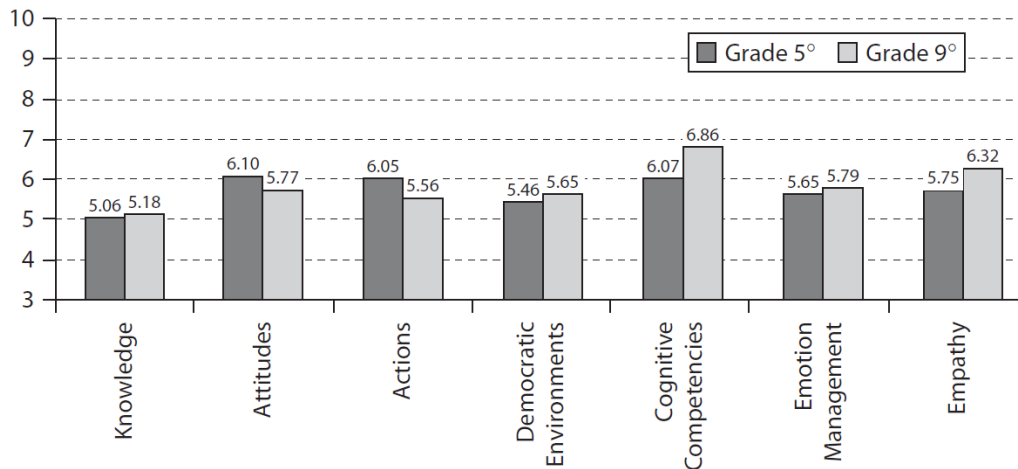


Table 1: Janet Patti, Adriana Cepeda Espinosa, “Citizenship competencies in Colombia: Learning from policy and practice”, *Conflict resolution quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 118.

The presented results were described as unsatisfying, since the most important aspects of citizenship, like democratic environments, emotion management and empathy were ranked very low, between 5.46 and 6.32. All these results can be perceived through a prism of a long-lasting conflict that involved all levels of the society and became part of the everyday life, which can

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid, pp. 118.

especially be perceived through the low levels of democratic competencies. Therefore, it was clear from the beginning that the implementation of these standards will be a long-term process.

The importance of the practical implementation and evaluation of the program is in its ability to point out the main challenges and limitation that the program was facing, since the case of Colombia can serve as an example to conducting similar program in other countries facing protracted conflicts. During the process of implementation, the project was facing several difficulties. In order to understand which were the main obstacles and evaluations of the program, we will compare the findings of different authors.

One of the limitations of the program was the lack of training, since the standards were published before the initial training took place.<sup>169</sup> The results of the *SABER* pre-test were useful in terms of defining the wider social context of the research, but the difficulty was in organizing different approaches that would correspond to the results of the test. Consequentially, this could lead to another difficulty, which is the incorrect implementation of the program. Chaux emphasized this issue since he considered that there was a possible misunderstanding of the meaning of competencies, due to the limited information about the program. Instead of promoting the practical implementation of these skills in real life, the program implemented incorrectly could lead into neglecting “the development of critical thinking skills since students are taught to conform to the values chosen for them.”<sup>170</sup>

In addition, J. Mesa and R. Jaramillo argued that the program was implemented on a regional level before the regions had the opportunity to revise it or make any objections, which had the background in the biases that the program represented a part of a neo-liberal discourse.<sup>171</sup> In this way, the initiative was perceived as imposing of the goals of the national level to the regional level. Having in mind that the Colombian society was still involved in armed conflicts, this issue could have made the divisions among regions become even stronger.

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid, pp. 116.

<sup>170</sup> Chaux Enrique, Ana M. Velasquez, Peace education in Colombia: The promise of citizenship competencies, in: Virginia Bouvier (Ed.), *Colombia: Building peace in a time of war*, United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C, 2009, pp. 10.

<sup>171</sup> Rosario Jaramillo, José A. Mesa, “Citizenship education as a response to Colombia’s social and political context”, *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 38, No. 4, pp. 482.

The implementation of the program was facing difficulties in the organizational and bureaucratic sense<sup>172</sup>, since the Colombian society was affected with a highly developed system of corruption, that was disabling any type of progress and represented an aspect deeply incorporated in the Colombian social structure.

This aspect influenced frequent changes of the policy, which happened as the result of the fact that the social structure was still fragile and recovering from long lasting violence, and there was no continuity in the actions and initiatives coming from the national level.<sup>173</sup> This aspect made a bad impact on the trust of the regional level towards the national level, since the actions seemed to be temporary and unorganized.

Perhaps the biggest identified difficulty was the problem of the socio-economic and moral context of the implementation<sup>174</sup>, having in mind that Colombian society was still facing an ongoing violence and criminal activities and therefore it wasn't easy to conduct the program of citizenship competencies in all regions of the country. The discrepancy between the projected goals and objectives on one side, and the actual state of the social structure, was often too big. In addition to this, Chaux finds that "one of the most common criticisms of the program is that it ignores the large regional diversities found throughout the country and for this reason the basic idea of a national standard is called into question."<sup>175</sup>

The main difficulty of the evaluation of the program was in the fact that the evaluation was conducted through a set of questions there were being proposed to the student, and which had the objective of obtaining information about the possible transformation of attitudes. The questions were designed in a way that they were letting the student describe their feelings in certain situations, and by following the changes in these answers, make evaluation of the program. This way of evaluation is unprecise and the results it provides are relative and unable to provide concrete

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid, pp. 483.

<sup>173</sup> Janet Patti, Adriana Cepeda Espinosa, "Citizenship competencies in Colombia: Learning from policy and practice", *Conflict resolution quarterly*, Vol. 25, No.1, pp. 116.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, pp. 481.

<sup>175</sup> Chaux Enrique, Ana M. Velasquez, Peace education in Colombia: The promise of citizenship competencies, in: Virginia Bouvier (Ed.), *Colombia: Building peace in a time of war*, United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C, 2009, pp. 9.

analysis of the program. The problem gets even bigger when we take in consideration the political and social context and the presence of the on-going conflict. As Mesa and Jaramillo find, “neither teachers nor educational administrators are used to bringing into play an assessment of school effectiveness as an information source to make decisions affecting curricula.”<sup>176</sup>

In 2008 the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement conducted the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) that included 38 countries. Colombia was ranked 29 out of the 38 countries that took part in the evaluation, with an average score of 462 (38 points below the ICCS average). On the other hand, most of the students who participated in the test scored at level 1 (36%), which is the basic level of the program, and below level 1 (21%). The evaluation demonstrated that only 11% of the Colombian students tested obtained results equivalent to the highest level of performance (level 3).<sup>180</sup>

According to these results, we can summarize the program of citizen competences in Colombia through several insights. First, we find that the main lack of the program was in the fact that there was an insufficient connection between the theory and the practice. The ideas which the program promoted were perhaps too difficult to implement in a society that was still facing direct violence. We should have in mind that in the period of conducting the program, Colombia was still facing a violent conflict inside its borders and that the social climate was not prepared for accepting new paradigms and ideas.

If we compare the concept the competencies to the basic human competencies described in the theoretical part of this research, we can notice that the main difference was the lack of the aspect of commitment. This aspect of consistency and dedication is crucial for achieving long-term goals, but in order to achieve commitment it is necessary to have strong motives and values that inspire such actions. Therefore, considering the fact that the program didn't achieve the expected results, we could say that there was no basic framework that would lead people into action.

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<sup>176</sup> Rosario Jaramillo, José A. Mesa, “Citizenship education as a response to Colombia’s social and political context”, *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 38, No.4, pp. 483.

<sup>180</sup> Luzkarime Calle Diaz, “Citizenship education and the EFL standards: A critical reflection”, *PROFILE Issues in teachers’ professional development*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 155-168

Finally, for successful conducting of this type of a peace education program, is necessary to have support from different social actors, that would include, besides national level, the non-formal sector, as well. Even though these actors were integrated in the main concepts of the program, as the result of the high decentralization of Colombia's educational system, this relationships weren't established in a way that it was expected, as Mesa and Jaramillo argue "these alliances are not easy to implement unless there is a prior working relationship between these groups. In some instances there is deep distrust because of fear of information being used either by the government or others for political purposes."<sup>181</sup>

### 2.3. *Aulas en Paz*

The national Program of citizenship competencies managed to determine the main concepts that should be included in initiative, it didn't manage to explain the exact way in which this initiative should be conducted and therefore didn't manage to fulfill the proclaimed objectives. This chapter will examine the initiative that included a cooperation between the national and non-governmental level. The project *Aulas en Paz* (Classrooms in Peace), closely related to the Program of citizenship competences, was created in 2005, by the Group for aggression, conflicts and peaceful coexistence, from the Department of Psychology of the University of Andes, led, led by Dr. Chaux. The specific attribute of the program was the fact that it included cooperation between the academic level and the non-governmental organization *Convivencia Productiva* (Productive Coexistence).<sup>182</sup>

The proclaimed mission of the program is to provide training and pedagogical tools for schools in order to help development of citizenship competencies, with a goal of creating peaceful environment in schools and contributing to the process of peacebuilding.<sup>183</sup> The program included the development of peaceful coexistence and prevention of violence, mainly through the

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<sup>181</sup> Rosario Jaramillo & José A. Mesa, "Citizenship education as a response to Colombia's social and political context", *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 38, No.4, pp. 478.

<sup>182</sup> Jose Fernando Mejia, Enrique Chaux, "Aulas en paz (Classrooms in peace)" in: B.Garcia-Cabrero et al. (Eds.), *Civics and citizenship*, Sense Publishers, 2017, pp. 194.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 193.

development of the citizenship competences of the student in the second and fifth grade of primary school.

The theoretical base of the program was focused on the development of citizenship competences and it especially emphasized the aspect of peaceful coexistence. The basic postulate and aim of the program, was transforming the cycle of violence, which was present in the Colombian society. The premise was that if a child is directly exposed to violence from the early age, there are higher possibilities that such individual will act violently as an adult.

Therefore, the program was focused on breaking this cycle by providing an alternative narrative to children from their early age, in order to demonstrate that there are other ways of possible coexistence, that doesn't include violence. This was especially challenging since the children in Colombia show "distrust towards the state and politics, and especially towards dialogue as a means to resolve conflicts."<sup>185</sup> In order to achieve such transformation of attitudes, the strategy of the program was to take actions both on the general and on the individual level.

The program was imagined in a way that it was supposed to cover both universal and individual approach to development of the citizenship competencies. The universal approach consisted of the school-based approach, while the targeted one questioned the especially aggressive children individually, through activities outside of school and home visits.<sup>186</sup>

The general level was based primarily on the Program of citizenship competencies, which was conducted in schools in all regions of Colombia, with a goal of implementing the same competence on all level of the society and creating a unique set of civic values. On the other side, the project presumed that acting on the institutional level only, and through formal education, would not be enough for creating sustainable and deep transformation. For this reason, the project included the individual dimension in its curricula, which included widening of education to the families, friends and non - formal institutions, which were also able to make influence on the children. The basic

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<sup>185</sup> Carolina Meza Botero, "Post-conflict in Colombia (8) From Havana to the classrooms", available from: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/democraciaabierta/post-conflict-in-colombia-8-from-havana-to-classrooms/>, accessed on 1.09.2019.

<sup>186</sup> Jose Fernando Mejia, Enrique Chaux, "Aulas en paz (Classrooms in peace)" in: B.Garcia-Cabrero et al. (Eds.), *Civics and citizenship*, Sense Publishers, 2017, pp. 194.

idea was that if one idea is incorporated simultaneously on different levels, a student will have higher opportunity for developing the citizenship competencies.

The first two cities in which the program was conducted were Cali and Palmira, both facing similar social issues, such as poverty, organized crime, drug trafficking and both ranked as the most violent cities by the *Consejo Ciudadano para la Seguridad Pública y la Justicia Penal*.<sup>187</sup> Regarding the statistics of the participants that were taking part in the project, a total number of 1154 student from second to fifth grade participated in the pretest. The average age was 8.7, and 48.9% participants were females. When it comes to the age distinction among grades, about 86% of second graders were between 7 and 8 years of age, 81% of third graders were between 8 and 10 years of age, and 77% of fourth graders were between 9 and 10 years of age.<sup>188</sup>

The program consisted out of three segments:<sup>190</sup> (Spanish, our translation)

- The first one is the component that has been referred to as the school-based component. The main idea was that the approach should include two types of courses, the one teaching citizenship competencies and the other teaching language. It was decided that the age should be between the second and fifth grade of primary school, since in this period children are learning about peace and relations with other people. This is the period crucial for obtaining and formulating the attitudes about the social relations. This period of socialization is often followed by the cases of bullying and violence among children and is one more reason why implementing the program among this age is significant. The topics that the courses emphasized were related to aggression, conflicts, intimidation (bullying), while the developed competencies were empathy, anger management, tolerance, active listening and assertiveness.<sup>191</sup> This approach has provided the opportunity of theoretically learning about certain values and was supposed to enable the student to develop a conscience and cognitive understanding of certain concepts. We could say that segment

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<sup>187</sup> Available from: <http://seguridadjusticiaypaz.org.mx>, accessed on 1.09.2019.

<sup>188</sup> Enrique Chau, Madeleine Barrera, Andrés Molano, Ana María Velásquez, Melisa Castellanos, María Paula Chaparro, Andrea Bustamante, "Classrooms in Peace Within Violent Contexts: Field Evaluation of *Aulas en Paz* in Colombia", *Prevention science*, Vol. 18, Issue 7, 2017, pp 2.

<sup>190</sup> Cecilia Ramos, Ana María Nieto, Enrique Chau, "Classrooms in peace, Preliminary results of a multi-component program", *Interamerican journal of education for democracy*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2007, pp. 39.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

can be classified as conceptual and that it establishes a base for deeper implementation of the main concepts through concrete actions.

The competencies were developed directly and indirectly. Direct way included learning about the terms such as assertiveness, tolerance or peace, while the indirect learning consisted of interpretation of certain texts or books on language classes. Through this analysis, children were able to compare the situations and characters from the books with their own experiences and in that way achieve better understanding of the topic.<sup>192</sup>

- The second segment is related to the organization of the program, where the main idea was to create mixed groups of participants in the course, formed by the most violent children, and the most sociable ones.<sup>193</sup> The main idea was to mix them together in the process that should teach the violent children of the acceptable form of behaving, which they will be able to learn from their own school friends. In this way, learning wouldn't be based only on lectures and theories, but also on the practical examples from the closest environment.<sup>194</sup> In addition, children were participating in the role plays in which they simulated the conflicts and in that way learned how to peacefully solve problems among their friends. The aspect of mixed groups also included an important component that was used as a support for children that were expressing higher level of violent behavior. This concept was based on the idea that these children should be included in activities outside of schools as well and that their families should be included in the process as well. In this way, a micro-approach would be created, in a way that all important aspect of a child's social life and interaction will be covered.<sup>195</sup>
- The third and final aspect included the introduction of children's families into the conduction of the program.<sup>196</sup> The idea was to help the families through visits or phone calls, in order to spread the field of influence on to all aspect of life, not only school. In

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid, pp. 40.

<sup>194</sup> In order to avoid the opposite, that the aggressive children make impact on the more social ones, the program was implemented in a way that in this mixed groups, the majority of children are the more social ones, and in that way provide them a role of natural leaders

<sup>195</sup> Jose Fernando Mejia, Enrique Chaux, "Aulas en paz (Classrooms in peace)" in: B. Garcia-Cabrero et al. (Eds.), *Civics and citizenship*, Sense Publishers, 2017, pp. 194.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.



this way a child will have similar attitudes and values accepted in school, among friends and family, which in this way, covers the biggest part of the social circle of a child of this age. It was stated that “home visits do not intend to evaluate or supervise families, but seek to help them with issues which usually worry them such as conflicts, norms, discipline and communication.”<sup>197</sup> This aspect represented an innovation in comparison to other peace education initiatives, since it attempted to apply a comprehensive approach to peace education by covering both school and family aspect.

When it comes to the implementation of the program, the techniques that were being used were designed in way that should provide support to the students and make the topic understandable and interesting. Therefore, a program used some of the common phrases and concepts that would bring the project closer to children. This was achieved through introducing the familiar terms which were supposed to make the topic more relatable and understandable. Some examples of these terms are: ‘*Respibomba*’, related to the technique of anger management and perceived through the terms that illustrates inflating and deflating a baloon; ‘*Oso cariñoso*’, a term that illustrates a hug to someone feeling oppressed or victimized; ‘*Dino*’ – a friendly dinosaur who represents an example of assertive communication.<sup>200</sup> In this way, the program provided the possibility for student to become an integral part of the program, by actively participating not only in the project activities, but also in the content of the program.

Based the theoretical framework of the program we can conclude that the approach was imagined as the synthesis of theory and practice and focused on learning theory through practice. Comparing to the theoretical analysis of this thesis, we could say that the concepts determined as crucial for this program were related to those explained by Danesh and Galtung.

Even though the program offered a more practical approach to peace education, its biggest relation to these theories can be perceived through the emphasis that has been put on developing the bonds of trust, respect and friendship among participants, regardless of their social background. These concepts are gathered in one universal value, the citizenship competencies, a term that gathers all the virtues necessary for calling someone a true citizen. This distinction enables us to relate the

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Cecilia Ramos, Ana Maria Nieto, Enrique Chaux, „Classrooms in peace, Preliminary results of a multi-component program“, *Interamerican journal of education for democracy*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2007, pp. 39.

term to the concept of global citizenship defined by Galtung, or the unity-based worldview defined by Danesh.

The three authors pointed out the crucial importance of the element of action for any peace education practice, which is an element also essential in the program *Aulas en Paz*, considering the statement of Mejia and Chaux, who perceive the program as “built upon the principle of learning by doing and is consistent with a competencies development approach.”<sup>201</sup>

Another relation to the theory is in emphasizing empathy as one of the most important competencies developed through the program, since the empathy was perceived as one of the values which contribute to better understanding and tolerance. Empathy was developed through role-plays and analysis of texts and articles, but also through story-telling. The sense of empathy provided deeper connection among participants and influenced the changes in their future perceptions and actions, which is closely related to the theory of N. Noddings and J. Page.

The program was implemented among more than 60.000 children in more than 200 schools in 42 cities in Colombia.<sup>202</sup> The first two cities in which the program was conducted were Cali and Palmira, both facing similar social issues, such as poverty, organized crime, drug trafficking and both ranked as the most violent cities by the *Consejo Ciudadano para la Seguridad Pública y la Justicia Penal*.<sup>203</sup> After the year 2008, the program was implemented in 27 educational institutions in more than 15 municipalities across the 4 Colombian regions (*Magdalena, Cesar, Norte de Santander, Uraba*), due to the help of the Ministry of Education and international organizations (USAID, UNICEF). In the period after the 2011 until today, the program has been implemented in the majority of the regions of Colombia, but the biggest base of the covered schools remained situated in Cali and Palmira.<sup>204</sup> The implementation was encouraged by the Law 1732 from September 2014, which proclaimed that peace education should be included in all educational institutions in Colombia.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Jose Fernando Mejia, Enrique Chaux, “Aulas en paz (Classrooms in peace)” in: B.Garcia-Cabrero et al. (Eds.), *Civics and citizenship*, Sense Publishers, 2017, pp. 194.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 198.

<sup>203</sup> <http://seguridadjusticiapaz.org.mx>, accessed on 1.09.2019.

<sup>204</sup> Available from: <https://aulasenpaz.uniandes.edu.co/index.php/com-docman-submenu-config/implementacion/implementacion-2008-2009>, Spanish (our translation), accessed on 1.9.2019.

<sup>205</sup> Available from: <http://www.suin-juriscal.gov.co/viewDocument.asp?ruta=Leyes/1687408>, Spanish (our translation), accessed on 31.8.2019.

The implementation was conducted by the non-governmental organization *Convivencia Productiva*, in a way that the members of this organization conducted trainings for the regular teachers and provided them with all needed material. The organization also provided additional support through workshops and trainings for the teachers who needed help with their classes. The teachers were observed during at least one of their classes and provided a feedback from the organization regarding their work. The activities outside of schools and the ones related to visiting the families were conducted by a group of undergraduate students of pedagogy, who were also provided with the help of the NGO.<sup>206</sup>

Organizing the implementation process in this way enabled the students to learn about citizenship competencies with the teachers that are already familiar and with whom they already established a relation of trust. Therefore, the entire concept of learning about citizenship wouldn't be perceived as something foreign and imposing. On the side, implementation organized in this way showed certain difficulties, as the consequence that the provided training wasn't always enough for the schools' teachers. These difficulties had consequence in adaptation of the process of implementation, by including the trainings for the teachers dedicated to classroom management. The other innovation was that the process of implementation would be conducted by the members of the organization who live in that same region, so that there is a better connection with the local community.<sup>207</sup>

The most significant part of the program was the evaluation of its results. In order to make a conclusion of the success of the program, we will examine and compare three evaluations, the first two who evaluated the program using a larger sample and the third one evaluating only one educational unit.

The first evaluation of the program was conducted in 2007 and it mostly relied on the observations of the children's behavior by a psychologist. The participants of the evaluation were 40 children aged 7 to 9 years. The evaluation also included the families of the children from the heterogeneous groups. The evaluation process lasted for one school year (9 months) and the children's behavior

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<sup>206</sup> Enrique Chau, Madeleine Barrera, Andrés Molano, Ana María Velásquez, Melisa Castellanos, Maria Paula Chaparro, Andrea Bustamante, "Classrooms in Peace Within Violent Contexts: Field Evaluation of Aulas en Paz in Colombia", *Prevention science*, Vol. 18, Issue 7, pp. 5.

<sup>207</sup> Jose Fernando Mejia, Enrique Chau, "Aulas en paz (Classrooms in peace)" in: B.Garcia-Cabrero et al. (Eds.), *Civics and citizenship*, Sense Publishers, 2017, pp. 199.

was observed by a psychologist three times during the year (February, June and October). A total of 100.5 hours of interaction were observed.<sup>208</sup>

The research was using a mixed method to determine the change in perspectives and attitudes of the participants, which combined frequency counts in each category (aggression, prosocial behavior, interruptions due to indiscipline and following of the instructions), but also the qualitative analysis of these categories. The observations of the psychologist were not interactive, except in cases of children from heterogeneous groups. In addition, the psychologist asked each child the question “Who are your friends?”, during the three months.<sup>210</sup> A method imagined in this way was supposed to enable the possibility of providing the most accurate results of the program, since it wasn’t focused only on the statements made by the participants, but also on the observation of their behavior.

The results have demonstrated changes in three aspects: aggression and prosocial behavior, classroom atmosphere and the increase in the developed friendship networks among the participants.<sup>211</sup>

In the evaluation of the aspect of aggression, a significant decrease was noticed as the result of the observations of the behavior of the 4 children identified as the most aggressive ones (Table 1). On the other side, the results of the qualitative analysis have showed significant difference in the statements made by the participants. It was possible to notice this type of a qualitative change through some of the children’s statements during the three months of the observation, such as:

*“I saw Fernando pushing Carlos, who is quite smaller. Carlos pushed him when the teacher was not looking at them. (Monday, January 30, 2006).”*<sup>212</sup>

*“Rosa came to me and told me that Diego and Irma did not want to let her play and that, in the cooperative team, they sometimes did not let her work with them.(27.10.06).”*<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Cecilia Ramos, Ana Maria Nieto, Enrique Chau, “Classrooms in peace, Preliminary results of a multi-component program”, *Interamerican journal of education for democracy*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 40-42.

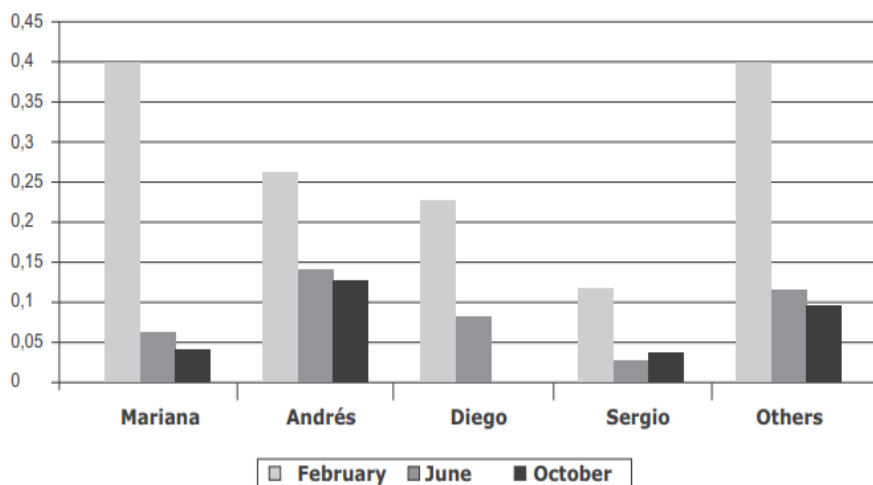
<sup>210</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 42.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 40.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 43.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid*.

This statements show us that the level of direct violence had decreased, even though the indirect violent behavior (such as exclusion), still remained. It was perceived that there was a shift in the type of the aggression. The evaluation demonstrated that, in the beginning of the process, there was a significantly high level of physical aggression, while during the period of workshops and trainings, this rate has decreased. By the end of the third month, level of physical aggression decreased, and there were only rare cases in which was possible to detect it.



**Figure 1.** Number of observed aggressions per hour for the four children identified initially as the most aggressive (names are not real) and for the rest of the class.

Table 2: Cecilia Ramos, Ana Maria Nieto, Enrique Chau, „Classrooms in peace, Preliminary results of a multi-component program“, *Interamerican journal of education for democracy*, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 42.

The second examined component of the evaluation was the component of prosocial behaviors, which were defined as “behaviors such as caring, helping, demonstrating affection, comforting, promoting reconciliations, and supporting classmates in using the techniques learned in the program.”<sup>216</sup> In the beginning of the project, it was difficult to detect such behaviors, since the discourse of violence still prevailed. During the second and third month, it was noticeable that these behaviors were starting to appear, not only among the more social children, but among the violent ones as well.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid, pp 44.

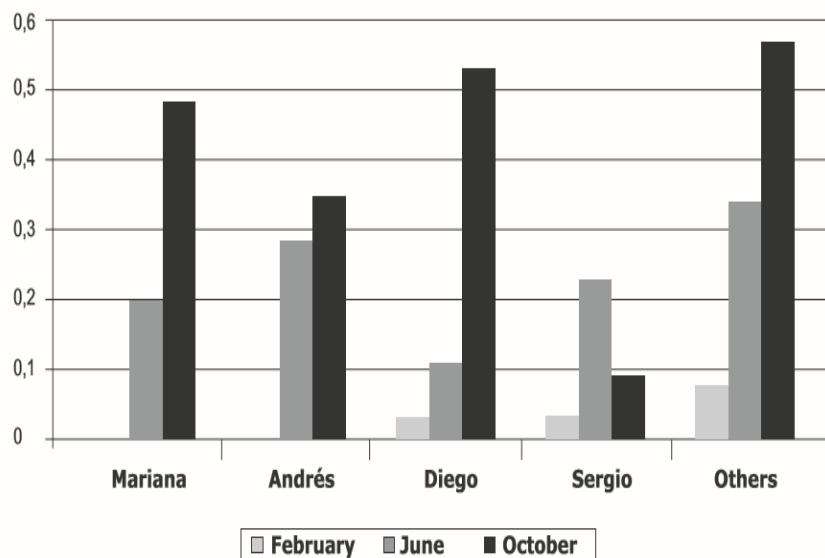


Figure 2. Number of observed prosocial behaviors per hour for the four children identified initially as the most aggressive (names are not real) and for the rest of the class.

Table 3: Cecilia Ramos, Ana Maria Nieto, Enrique Chau, *Classrooms in peace*, „Preliminary results of a multi-component program“, *Interamerican journal of education for democracy*, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 44.

One of the qualitative observations of children’s behavior shows the way in which they started implementing some of the citizenship competences. An evaluator of the project observed the behavior of children and noticed one situation, among many other, that shows the impact of project on children’s behavior. From one statement made by a participant, it was possible to notice the shift in perception of the aggression:

*“As Andrés continued unabashed, Diego said: ‘Come on, let’s do something: let Andrés think about it before saying it.’ I could not believe what I was hearing. Then, I asked him: ‘Diego, does it work for you to calm down and then talk?’ And he answered, ‘Sure, when I am angry, my mom sends me to my room, I think about the issue, and then we talk’.* (Tuesday, June 13, 2006).”<sup>218</sup>

As the biggest importance of the development of the prosocial behaviors, we find the increasement of empathy among children that participated in the program. At the beginning of the program, prosocial behavior was showing low levels, but in time, reducing the levels of direct aggression, it

<sup>218</sup> Ibid, pp 45.

has started to increase. If we take in consideration the theoretical analysis of this research, we could say that the element of empathy is crucial for successful and comprehensive peace education.

The third evaluated component was the classroom atmosphere, “as measured in terms of following instructions for performing classroom activities and of interruptions to such activities, changed dramatically in the course of the implementation of the program.”<sup>219</sup>

This is important to emphasize, since the classroom is a place where children spend the biggest part of their day, and in that way, if the atmosphere in the classroom is peaceful and respectful, they are being able to carry these values into the other segments of life. The improvement in this field shows us the amount of impact the program left of the sense of respect and responsibility towards others.

In the beginning of the project, it was difficult to obtain order and peace in the classroom, and this period was characterized as chaos. In further months, a significant improvement happened, since there was less noise in the classroom and the listening of other people talking was on a higher level.<sup>220</sup>

The qualitative analysis has demonstrated that the change has occurred, not only in the aspect of peace and order in the classroom, but also in the active participation of the children in class. At the beginning of the evaluation, they showed little interest to the teachers’ lectures and didn’t tend to answer the questions, but after the third observation, the situation was improved. This shift can also be illustrated with some statements made by the children in different stages of the evaluation:

*“Once more, the scene of the teacher with her hand raised repeated itself for several minutes, until some of them raised their hands.”* (Monday, January 30, 2006).<sup>221</sup>

*“During the presentation, all children listen to them quietly, and those who have a question, like Andrés and Milena, patiently wait for their turn to speak.”* (Thursday, June 15, 2006).<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid, pp. 46.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid, pp. 47.

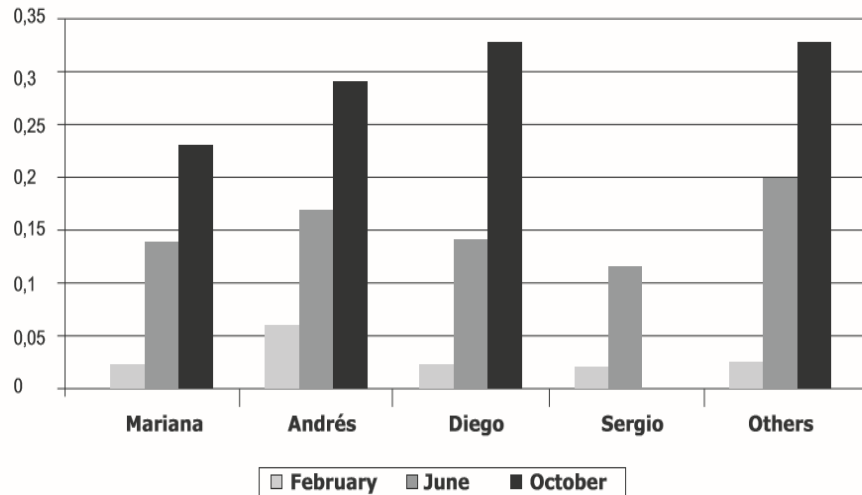


Figure 3. Hourly frequency in which the four children identified initially as the most aggressive and the rest of the class were observed following classroom instructions.

Table 4: Cecilia Ramos, Ana Maria Nieto, Enrique Chau, "Classrooms in peace, Preliminary results of a multi-component program", *Interamerican journal of education for democracy*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 46.

The final observation was about the friendship networks among the participants of the program. The amount of bonds of friendships increased significantly during the program, which was demonstrated by the qualitative observations as well, in which children defer to their classmates as friends more than in the beginning, when the program started. Quantitative analysis demonstrated that the 4 children identified as the most aggressive one at the beginning (and who identified 0-3 friends), have increased the number of the children whom they consider as friends, up to 20.<sup>224</sup>

We find creating bonds of friendship among the participants is crucial for the long-term success of the program. The main aim of the program was to bring children closer by teaching them the values of peace and citizenship, and the best way in which this idea will continue after the program has ended, is precisely through creating personal bonds and relations. This way has turned out to be one of the important parts of the peacebuilding process as well, since the biggest part of hostilities come from the absence of a human contact. Another important advantage of the creation of the relations of friendship, is in promoting the curiosity, besides tolerance, as we could see in the theoretical part of the research. Although tolerance (in this case, coexistence) is an important

<sup>224</sup> Ibid, pp 48.



and inevitable precondition for any further action in peace education, it is certainly not enough for creating strong bonds and relationships of trust.

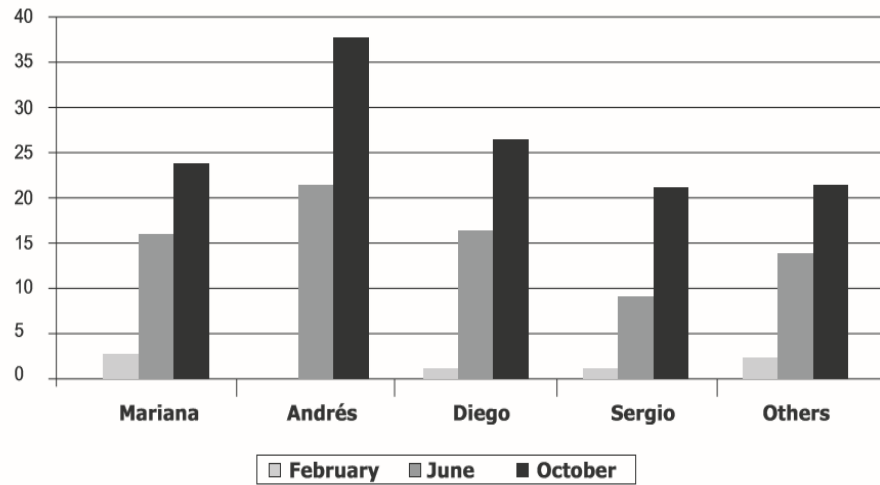


Figure 5. Number of classmates labeled as friends by the four children identified initially as the most aggressive and the rest of the class.

Table 5: Cecilia Ramos, Ana Maria Nieto, Enrique Chau, „Classrooms in peace, Preliminary results of a multi-component program “, *Interamerican journal of education for democracy*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 48.

Even though the evaluation from 2007 has showed positive results, its biggest limitation was in the size of the sample, missing data and the short duration of the process.<sup>226</sup> Therefore, a new evaluation was conducted in order to improve all the aspects of the previous one and obtain more accurate information about the implementation of the program. The second evaluation included a larger sample, lasted for 2 years and had the basic objective to demonstrate how can participating in the program Classrooms in Peace contribute to the socio-emotional competencies of the children.<sup>227</sup>

The evaluation included a sample of 1154 students from second to fifth grade from 7 public schools and all schools were in the cities of Cali and Palmira. The difference between this evaluation, and the first one, was in the methods that was used in order to conduct the evaluation. This evaluation

<sup>226</sup> Enrique Chau, Madeleine Barrera, Andrés Molano, Ana María Velásquez, Melisa Castellanos, Maria Paula Chaparro, Andrea Bustamante, Classrooms in Peace Within Violent Contexts: Field Evaluation of Aulas en Paz in Colombia, *Prevention science*, Vol. 18, Issue 7, 2017, pp. 2.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

consisted mainly from questionnaires that consisted of the questions that the children were supposed to answer, and which targeted the topics of victimization, empathy, assertiveness and demographic information. The teachers also fulfilled a set of questions about their student, related to their prosocial behavior. The same procedure was conducted among the treatment group and the control group. One pretest was conducted before the beginning of the school year, the second one at the end of that year, and the third one was held at the end of the second school year.<sup>228</sup>

The general results of the evaluation demonstrated significant improvement in the aspects of aggression and prosocial behavior, according to the teachers' reports. Regarding the students' reports, the biggest improvement was perceived in the aspects of verbal victimization and assertiveness, especially in the second year of implementation. The first results of the pretest brought surprising results that demonstrated higher levels of aggression and lower levels of prosocial behavior among the students in the treatment group, compared to the student assigned to the control group, which was described by some authors as the possible indication of the failure of the program.<sup>229</sup>

These unexpected results were explained by the authors who conducted the evaluation as a consequence of the schools' tendency to assign the most problematic students to the intervention, and the constant changes in the participants of the two groups.<sup>230</sup> These aspects were addressed as the difficulties that the program was facing and which should be improved in the future evaluations.

Despite the unexpected results of the pretest, the overall results of the evaluation were described as positive and have demonstrated the success of the program, as Chaux finds that "the evaluation of the Classrooms in Peace program shows that it is not only possible to implement a multicomponent program through alliances and support from local universities and non-

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<sup>228</sup> Ibid, pp. 2-4.

<sup>229</sup> Manuela Jimenez, Juanita Lleras, Ana Maria Nieto, "La paz nace en las aulas: evaluación del programa de reducción de la violencia en Colombia", *Educacion y Educadores*, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 352. (Spanish, our translation)

<sup>230</sup> Enrique Chaux, Madeleine Barrera, Andrés Molano, Ana María Velásquez, Melisa Castellanos, Maria Paula Chaparro, Andrea Bustamante, *Classrooms in Peace Within Violent Contexts: Field Evaluation of Aulas en Paz in Colombia*, *Prevention science*, Vol. 18, Issue 7, pp. 8.

governmental organizations but also possible to reach, at very low costs, positive results in aggression, prosocial behavior, and assertiveness.<sup>231</sup>

We find that the biggest contribution of the program *Aulas en Paz* to the process of peacebuilding in Colombia can be perceived through the positive outcomes of the implementations of the program and the influence that the program had both on the other schools and educational institutions in Colombia, as in the region.

Another evaluations have demonstrated the benefits from the implementation of the program *Aulas en Paz*. One of these evaluations of the implementation of the program in the Popayan city, in the school John F. Kennedy, provides a deeper insight in the program itself, since it gives the opportunity to observe the program and its results on a micro level.

The evaluation was conducted in 2013 and included a sample of 23 boys and 12 girls, the age of the 9-10 years , from the third grade of the primary school of the educational institution John F. Kennedy. The methods that were used in the research were the same as in the second evaluation of the program, through a pretest and a post-test and included the examination of the personal competencies, democratic competencies, conflict management, types of aggression and discrimination.<sup>232</sup>

When it comes to the evaluation of the personal competencies, related to the perception and knowledge about the concepts of democracy and human rights, an increase of 19% has been noticed while comparing the results of the two tests. Bigger difficulty was demonstrated among the abillites defined as cognitive, which included the capacity of critical thinking and resolving the conflicts in a creative way, where 15% of the children have demonstrated this abillity.<sup>233</sup> At this point, we should have in mind that the children were coming from environments which were usually exposed to violence, and have been used to the narratives completely opposite from the ones present in the program. We find this aspect related to the Galtung's concept of cultural

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<sup>231</sup> Ibid, pp. pp. 9.

<sup>232</sup> Luz Elena Patiño, Sandra Lorena Peña Bedoya, Julia Emma López Muñoz, Lida Gómez Mamián, "Aulas en paz un espacio pedagogico para la sana convivencia", *Plumilla educativa*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 11.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid, pp. 12.

violence, in which the paradigms and attitudes are firmly incorporated in the society, which can explain the difficulties the children were facing in this segment.

Regarding the development of emotional competencies, the increase of 8% showed that children were still unable to completely identify their feelings and to recognize them among their friends.<sup>234</sup> This type of competency can be related also to the age of children and to their own character, but as the way of improving this aspect it has been proposed introducing the role-plays, that could help children in identifying their emotion through observing the emotions of others.

The aspect of democratic competencies included three aspects: construction of the statements, respect of the human rights and the responsibility towards the others. The first two aspects have showed a minor increase (between 3-6%), while in the aspect of responsibility for the others they have showed biggest improvement (between 54-57%).<sup>235</sup> This improvement can be perceived through the sense of connection and empathy the students have developed during the process of the implementation of the program.

Finally, the part that evaluated the capacity of resolving the conflicts, has demonstrated the biggest success. In the element of dialogue and aggression the evaluation has showed significant improvements. Children improved their application of dialogue (46-49%), lowered the levels of aggression (91-71%), while the aspect of negotiation demonstrated the same results (71%).<sup>236</sup> Based on these results, as the basic outcome of the research was the improvement of the competencies related to the conflict resolution, which was the declared as the main aim of the program, while in the aspects of democratic and cognitive competencies the results didn't show high improvement, as it was described before.

All three evaluations have showed similar results when it comes to the evaluation of the competencies related to citizenship. The first evaluation demonstrated the concurrence of the results obtained by both quantitative and qualitative research, and showed improvement in all

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<sup>234</sup> Ibid, pp. pp. 13.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid, pp. 14.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid, pp. 15.

observed variables. The second evaluation showed similar results based on the examination of a larger sample, in which the most significant improvements were perceived by comparing the results of the tests taken at the beginning and at the end of the process. The introduction of the time dimension in the evaluation process, enabled obtaining more accurate results of the program by comparing the outcomes of the two tests.

In order to complement these two evaluations of big scale with the research of a micro level, we included the third evaluation that was concentrated only on the results of one school. In addition, the time variable was significant since the three evaluations took place in different periods of the implementation of the program. The results were mainly positive regarding the aspect of citizenship competencies, which complements the micro level with the macro level. Therefore, we could say that the project *Aulas en Paz* has achieved successful results during the period of time longer than one decade, which can also be perceived through the fact that many countries in the region have implemented the same program in their environment (Chile, Mexico, etc.).<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Available from: [aulasenzpaz.uniandes.edu.co](http://aulasenzpaz.uniandes.edu.co), accessed on 30.8.2019.

### 3. The informal approaches to peace education - art and theatre

Introducing a dimension of informal education, as complementing element to formal education, may have an impact on the process of peace education in several ways. Informal education provides bigger liberty when it comes to the promotion of certain values, which in cases of the implementation by the formal institutions can often be perceived as imposing and demanding. It provides a framework of equal participation in the process of peace education. In this way, it is possible to say that due to its unmandatory character, informal education might be able to achieve more successful results. It is a known issue that the mandatory courses in schools are often undesirable and rarely manage to reach to the students.

In addition, informal education can offer covering of a wider spectrum of aspects that need to be questioned, which is often difficult to be conducted through a national strategy. The reason lies in the fact that the local communities and organizations dedicated to one goal or aspect, may have more knowledge in a certain field and are more familiar with the attitudes and needs of the local population. This is especially applicable in case of the states with a decentralized system of education, like it is the case of Colombia. By conducting a program that would be based on the actions of various informal organizations questioning different aspects of peace education, it would be possible to create a more comprehensive approach to the practical implementation.

Finally, the biggest advantage we find in informal ways of conducting peace education, is in its implications to the societies facing long-lasting conflicts. In these type of societies it is difficult to maintain the respect of the prescribed values as we could see on the example of Colombia, where the concept of peace education through citizenship competencies wasn't clarified enough to the local communities. The possible reason can be found in the fact that these societies still haven't developed a culture of peace that will support peace actions. Therefore, we find that the solution for peace education in protracted conflicts could be through the initiatives on a local and informal level that will support creating and developing a culture of peace.

Implementing peace education through art can provide the protracted conflict with the much required possibility of overcoming nationality, race, gender or any other diversity. The power of

art is in providing the sense of individual, yet holistic point of view of the world. Artistic work comes from an individual point of view but is universal and it enables the insights which show that there is something that unites human beings and goes beyond all differences and divisions.

There are numerous benefits from including art in peace education. Its special advantage is in the fact that it can be used as during the entire process of peacebuilding, but also as the prevention of conflicts. Art provides possibility of creating bonds among the people who participate in the process of creating an artistic peace of work, regardless of their nationality, race or religious beliefs.<sup>246</sup> Art has often been part of these processes, in a way that enabled presenting opposed points of view through artistic work. In addition, as it was stated by a Global campaign for peace education, “even those who have never created art before can learn to draw simple human shapes, symbols of peace, and even abstract work that can serve as a basis for self-discovery, expression of emotion, and a basis for discussion of events and feelings that are sometimes too difficult to express through words.”<sup>247</sup>

Art can serve as informal initiative of peace education on a local level, since it provides freedom in composing a program and doesn't necessary require implications from a national level. Chambelland argues that “artistic initiatives which are local and community-based have the intrinsic potential to generate will and a demand for peace among the population concerned.”<sup>248</sup>

If we aim to develop a comprehensive peace education approach, as described in the theoretical part of the research, art can be one of the instruments of establishing what Danesh called a ‘unity-based worldview’, or what Reardon perceived as a basic, holistic, approach to human nature and the sense of inter-connection. This type of perception can be developed through the sense of empathy created in creating or observing an artistic work. A study by the Frontiers in human neuroscience showed that there is a significant correlation between artistic work and increased prosocial behavior (including the sense of empathy).<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Celia Chambelland, “Art, a miracle remedy of peace?”, 2018, available from: <https://www.peaceinsight.org/blog/2018/08/art-miracle-remedy-peace/>, accessed on 31.08.2019.

<sup>247</sup> <https://www.peace-ed-campaign.org/promoting-peace-through-art/>, accessed on 31.08.2019.

<sup>248</sup> Celia Chambelland, “Art, a miracle remedy of peace?”, 2018, available from: <https://www.peaceinsight.org/blog/2018/08/art-miracle-remedy-peace/>, accessed on 31.08.2019.

<sup>249</sup> Aleksandra Herman, Clair Morissey, “What is art good for? The socio-epistemic value of art”, *Frontiers in human neuroscience*, Vol. 11, No. 114, 2017, available from: <https://www.frontiersin.org/>, accessed on 31.08.2019.

Finally, art provides the chance of expressing the individual in a way that develops creativity, but also the sense of tolerance and acceptance. In addition, S. Ketelhohn finds that art “is a universal language that arises from the human need to express themselves, to communicate and transmit experiences.”<sup>250</sup> The ability that art has is in enabling each individual in expressing his own vision and perception of peace, without anyone imposing or interfering in the process. By comparing these individual perceptions, it is possible to extract some universal values (like peace) that are relating these expressions. In addition, “art has the potential to promote and encourage individual changes, which are essential for social transformation.”<sup>251</sup>

Some of the possible ways of introducing art in peace education curricula is through dialogue and story-telling, creative drama method, application of music and other methods like painting, calligraphy or dance.<sup>252</sup> Even though the methods are different, each of them will provide children to express themselves but at the same time develop a sense of tolerance and empathy.

One of the possible ways of introducing art in peace education curricula, is through theatre. Theatre has been questioning and addressing the socio-political relations since its earliest stages. The opportunity that theatre provides is to question different aspects of the society by bringing them on the stage. In the process of acting, a person playing the role can develop deeper understanding of a certain problem, while the audience can receive a different perspective of a problem. Both attending the play and participating in it provides the opportunity of creating bonds of tolerance and understanding, which is especially important in societies where the existing social narratives are influencing the division of the society.

There are several examples where theatre was used as an instrument of peace education and peacebuilding. One of the forms was the project ‘Theatre of the oppressed’, based on the idea that theatre can be an element of social change. The concept was designed by a Brazilian theatre visionary Augusto Boal, based on the idea that “the audience is not made of passive spectators but

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<sup>250</sup> S. Ketelhohn, *Peace education program through the expressive arts: A multi-systemic approach to social justice*, 2016, pp. 3, available from <http://cartadelatierra.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/ARTSUSTAINABILITYEARTHCHARTER.pdf>

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Mahin Barkhordari, Hasanali Bakhtyar Nasrabadi, Mohammad Hossein Heidari, Mohammad Reza Neyestani, “The Importance of Art-Based Curriculum in Peace Education”, *Review of European Studies*; Vol. 8, No. 4, pp. 228.



instead active “spect-actors” invited on stage to explore solutions on the issues at hand.”<sup>254</sup> The initial idea was to create space in which it would be possible to express opinions and attitudes in a way that the play is calling the audience to explore their own realities participate in creating new narratives.<sup>255</sup>

This approach allows the transformation to happen through a direct, yet non-imposing action, which can be beneficial in societies with deeply incorporated narratives. The concept consisted of six approaches that offered different ways of addressing the conflict, but the one that is most frequently used is the ‘Forum theatre’. This is a technique that is based on problem solving and conflict transformation, which brings an unresolved issue to the scene and involves the audience as one of the actors of the play. The role of the audience is in stopping the play and replacing the role of the character they perceive as the most oppressed one.<sup>257</sup>

One of the initiatives that included theatre in the peacebuilding process was in the initiative *Jana Snskriti* (JS) in West Bengal, started in 1985 as the organization using political theatre. The main aim of the organization was to question the topics of structural and cultural violence through Boal’s concept of the ‘Theatre of the oppressed’, although the concept was adapted to the requirements of the local community.<sup>258</sup> The way the organization operated was described as a “constant process of performing resistance in the public and private spheres, bringing the insidious politics of social and political structures into the public space of theatre and communal discourse.”<sup>259</sup>

The program was especially focused on addressing the issue of local community, where the narratives were often too incorporated in the conscience of the people. The way in which the project questioned these narratives was mostly through the constant participation in the activities

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<sup>254</sup> Available from:<http://www.mandalaforchange.com/site/applied-theatre/theatre-of-the-oppressed/>, accessed on 31.08.2019.

<sup>255</sup> Nilanjana Premaratna, “Theatre for peacebuilding: transforming narratives of structural violence”, *Peacebuilding*, DOI: 10.1080/21647259.2018.1491278, 2018, pp. 5, available from: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21647259.2018.1491278?journalCode=rpcb20>, accessed on 31.8.2019.

<sup>257</sup> <http://www.mandalaforchange.com/site/applied-theatre/theatre-of-the-oppressed/>, accessed on 31.08.2019.

<sup>258</sup> Nilanjana Premaratna, Theatre for peacebuilding: transforming narratives of structural violence, *Peacebuilding*, DOI: 10.1080/21647259.2018.1491278, 2018, pp. 4, available from: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21647259.2018.1491278?journalCode=rpcb20>, 2018, accessed on 31.8.2019.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 11.

of the political theatre. In this way, theatre hasn't been perceived only as an artistic expression, but as an inseparable part of everyday life.

Another important segment of the organization was questioning the aspects of cultural violence, by “encouraging the audience to recognize the connection between isolated incidents of oppression as performed in *The Brick Factory* and the larger web of structural violence – such as gender discrimination and economic exploitation – that fosters such actions.”<sup>260</sup>

We find this approach applicable for peace education in protracted conflict for two reasons. First, it provides the possibility of changing the point of view on the certain problem or conflict and it is crucial in long-lasting conflicts in which the identification with certain attitudes is deeply incorporated. By the form that this type of theatre provides, it is possible to obtain insights about the ‘Other’, without the need of the direct confrontation.

The second reason can be perceived in the ability of making direct contributions to the conflict transformation process, through suggesting concrete actions. The element of inclusion of all parts of the society and the active participation in the process of conflict resolution through the suggestions of possible resolutions, can result in making bonds of trust and empathy among the participants and lead to conflict transformation.

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<sup>260</sup> Ibid, pp. 9.

## Conclusion

There were two main aims of this research, both theoretical and empirical, determining the basic postulates of peace education by comparing the theories of different authors and examining the impact of the peace education programs in the process of peacebuilding in the case of protracted conflicts.

The main problem when it comes to the theory of peace education, is in the fact that there is no structured theory that would cover all the important aspect that every peace education program should contain. By comparing the theories of the most influential approaches in peace education theory, our aim was to determine if there are any similar aspects that these theories suggest and that can be incorporated in peace education programs.

First, it was possible to notice that among all the examined theories, there was a consent regarding the universal point of view that should be developed for the peace education to be successful. This aspect was present in the theories of Galtung, Danesh and Reardon. Galtung referred to this idea as the global citizenship, while Danesh and Reardon perceived it as the unity-based worldview and a holistic understanding of interconnection. We find this aspect to be the precondition to every peace education action, or even, any peace work in general. Conducting any peace education action without the essential respect for every human being and its rights, or with the sense of a ‘common good’ cannot be perceived as a true action of peace.

Another observation when it comes to the elements of peace education theory, is in the difference between positive and negative peace. We find this distinction crucial in terms of formulating goals and objectives of peace education, since it provides the base for deeper understanding of the real impact of peace education actions. If the actions are focused only on the decreasing direct violence, the improvement will be temporary, since the main causes of violence haven’t been targeted. This dimension was noticed in all examined theories, especially in the theories of Galtung and Reardon, but also in the basic theoretical approaches of the international organizations (UN), who found this distinction crucial for peace education.

When it comes to the aspect of the required human competencies that should be adopted in programs of peace education, we found that empathy and the sense of caring were the aspects described as the most motivating and inspiring ones. The aspect of empathy is crucial both for the educators, as well as for the participants of the program, since it provides the educators with the sense of compassion and desire of helping the others, while among the participants developing the sense of empathy and care has been notified as the biggest improvement when it comes to establishing the relations of peace. Another important precondition for peace education when it comes to the aspect of human competencies, is the aspect of social responsibility, whose importance is perceived as the sense of a moral obligation towards those who need help and support. We find aspects of care and responsibility complementing in way that when conducting peace education, one cannot exist without the other.

The next component we found present in the examined theories, and crucial for peace education, is the aspect of the culture of peace. This aspect was defined by Galtung, but it was also emphasized by Danesh and Reardon, as the aspect of the culture of healing and creating a framework for all educational activities. We perceived this aspect as an important precondition, but at the same time, a goal of peace education practices. If the aim is not only to stop direct violence, but also prevent it and create conditions for establishing a different set of narratives and attitudes, it requires changes in the structure and culture that have supported violent discourse. In these terms, working on changing the dominant culture and creating a culture based on the values of peace can be perceived as one of the ultimate goals of peace education.

Finally, an aspect emphasized by all examined theories, including the theories of international organizations, was the component of action in peace education. This component has been perceived as crucial, since it represents the main difference between peace action and peace theory. Therefore, it has been noticed that every peace education theory shouldn't be based only on theory, but also on practice.

In order to understand the way in which peace education is conducted in practice and is it compatible with the examined theoretical concepts, we included a case study of Colombia, by examining the concepts and evaluation of the two conducted programs.

By examining two peace education initiatives in Colombia, we came across several conclusions. First, the two approaches have demonstrated significant compatibility with the most important components of peace education mentioned above. Both initiatives implemented the aspects of structural peace and examined not only impact of the program on the levels of direct violence, but also the aspects of empathy and prosocial behavior. The aspect of the universal view that was described in the theories of peace education, we found complementing to the concept of citizenship, that the both initiatives proclaimed as their main value.

In addition, both programs showed the importance of developing certain human competencies in order to build peace, described as emotional, communicational and integrative competencies. The role of these competencies was to enable the participants to successfully implement the main concepts of the program, not only during its conduction, but also after the program is finished. In this way, the aim of the programs can be perceived as oriented towards creating a culture of peace, which is one more aspect in which the practice complements the theory.

In order to understand the results that the program *Aulaz en paz* had both on the macro and micro levels, we included the evaluations that targeted both levels. The demonstrated results showed us that the compared outcomes very complementing, which leads us to the conclusion that this project can be perceived as successful.

The success of the program has showed us that it is possible to develop and conduct a program of peace education even in a country that has a long history of violent conflict and in which the understanding of the basic principles of peace was at a very low level. The biggest improvement was precisely in the aspects of empathy and responsibility, as well as in creating bonds of friendship and developing more social behavior. We find these results as indicators of the creation of a new set of values and narratives that was starting to develop. It is especially important to emphasize the importance of the inclusion of the participant's families, which is one indicator more that the project wasn't focused only on the implementation on the level of schools but tended to cover all aspects of social life.

All these components lead us to the conclusion that the program was designed in a way of creating the environment of peace in schools, but also on the level of the society. Since the main research question of this thesis was to determine whether the programs of peace education can have impact

on the process of peacebuilding, we can conclude saying that this program of peace education has showed us that it is possible to make such impact even in the country that had the experience of a protracted conflict and was deeply affected with both direct and structural violence, as well as with the deeply incorporated discourse of violence. We hope that this research will demonstrate the importance of implying peace education in other countries affected with protracted conflicts, and that the results of the examined programs and theories will be beneficial for further initiatives.

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