Regional Master's Programme in Peace Studies

MASTER'S THESIS

Peace Education in schools of the Western Balkans

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Introduction

Violence comes in numerous forms. Violent language, aggressive behavioural patterns as well as the structural violence oftentimes go unnoticed, or happen to be considered as a norm in a given society. The youngest population, susceptible to acquisition of the given patterns, has no choice but to either consciously or subconsciously reciprocate vile patterns. So, is it possible to break these patterns? The higher chances of an affirmative answer are to be found in education and among trained educators. Peace Studies, as a separate subject or within another subject, should be introduced in both primary and secondary schools. Not earlier than the late 1940 and UNESCO initiatives and 1950s and Johan Galtung's effort had the Peace Studies as a scientific discipline been recognised as pivotal in overcoming the dominant violent paradigms.

 However, it is still mainly being learned and talked about within the academic circles, among well-equipped adults. The paradigms of the well-established numerous violent structural and systematic patterns have to be shifted. They should be shifted at an earlier age. The acquisition of the peacebuilding skills, as a separate subject or within the established ones, at a school age, should enter the agenda and consequently be welcomed within school curricula all around Serbia. During those classes, students should acquire tools for non-aggressive conflict resolution, learn and talk about history and the atrocities of wars and violent conflict resolutions, meet those who had been affected by conflicts and learn from them. Naturally, the programs and topics should be aligned with the students' age and maturity.

Without active engagement of the primary or secondary school students, peace will remain as an abstract and ephemeral idea. By educating young individuals, gradually and meaningfully in regard to peace and its numerous implications, we could be impacting the world on a larger

scale in the long run. The peace conversations have predominantly been led within the secluded circles, consequently leaving out the most important ones- young, developing and eager to learn and acquire individuals. The transition from violent to peaceful means of conflict resolutions among the youngest and the most vulnerable simply cannot be done without active implementation of Peace Education in both primary and secondary schools.

Numerous educators and researchers have expressed their interest in the implementation of the peace studies in the educational systems worldwide. This exposure to the peace studies and active engagement provides them with greater chances of becoming positive change agents in the future[1] A fair point which came up as evident upon the initial research was that: "the lack systematic evaluation, of some of the empirical studies of peace education has been prominent."[2]

One should not disregard the importance of the theories that underline effective peace education as well as the research validating these theories, such as social interdependence theory, constructive controversy theory, and integrative negotiations theory.[3] It is essential to state that schools play a significant role in the reproduction of "'structural violence' (i.e. the existence of oppressive and unequal socio-economic and political relationships"[4] Structural violence in schools can be noted through imposed gender roles within violent environment, the language, students' social status, media's glorification of violence.[5] We cannot expect students to prosper and reciprocate different norms and behavioural patterns, without giving tools to overcome the outdated and malice ones.

Without educating young generations gradually and devotedly about the peaceful means leading to peaceful solutions and eventual resolutions, no deeper change is to occur, both systematically and psychologically. Unfortunately, it had become evident that the violent paradigms had been repeating themselves and by such pertaining the vicious cycle of conflicts. When it comes to schooling, the dominant evidence is that "the hegemonic model globally, with some exceptions, is authoritarian rather than democratic."[6]

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[1] Harvey N. Oueijan, "Educating for Peace in Higher Education" *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 6(9), (2018): 1916 - 1920.
[2] Nevo, B. and I. Brem, Peace education programs and the evaluation of their effectiveness. (NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates,2002)
[3] David Johnson and RogerJohnson, *Theory into Practice*, (Taylor & Francis, Ltd. 2005), 280-292
[4] Johan Galtung, *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization.* (International Peace Research Institute Oslo; Sage Publications, Inc.1996)
[5] ibid
[6] Harber and Sakade,"Schooling for violence and peace: how does peace education differ from 'normal' schooling*," Journal of Peace Education, 6:2,*(2009):171-187

The lack of empathy, insubstantial time spent on students' mental health and unpreparedness to deal with the deeply rooted inner conflicts triggers violent patterns and enables the repetition of the violence. Negative emotions "steer their focus elsewhere, and their progress and acquisition are in danger."[7]

By respecting children and evaluating their opinion educators create a new platform based on mutual respect and mutual goals. If the children are not a part of the creation of the curricula, especially when dealing with new programs, they will lose their interest.[8] As Reardon states the imperative of the Peace Education, is to "promote the authenticity and consciously observe and participate in the shifts of structures and pre-established patterns."[9]

This appears to be crucial in particular for the countries of the Western Balkans. Due to its instability, aggressive rhetoric and perpetuated violent paradigms, the Western Balkans, has so far deprived our youngest of the possibility to become authentic and conscious observers. Be that as it may, the shifts are possible and should be done through education. The students of the Western Balkans should be empowered through active participation in Peace Studies education.

Conducting and sustaining peace education out of the University level is and will remain to be a challenging task. However, its complexity, relatively recent applicability should not prevent educators from establishing it once and for all within the educational systems. Let us be reminded of the part of then UNESCO's Declaration on Culture of Peace (1999, Article 1) and the following words: "Ensure that children, from an early age, benefit from education"[10]

The author is approaching the topic from the pedagogical viewpoint due to the first hand involvement in the educational system and would like to contribute to future educational programs and initiatives thus the interest in the topic. The question why Peace Studies and its implications should be tackled, not only at the University level, but also in primary and secondary educational institutions will be the author's guide and focus while writing the paper.

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[7] Daniel Goleman, *Emotional intelligence*, (Bantam Books 1995),78-79,
[8] Harber and Sakade, "Schooling for violence and peace: how does peace education differ from 'normal' schooling?," *Journal of Peace Education, 6:2,*(2009):171-187
[9] Betty A. Reardon,*Comprehensive Peace Education for Global Responsibility*,(New York and London, Teachers College, Columbia University 1988):9-10
[10] "Culture of Peace and Non-violence," UNESCO, accessed September 1, 2020, https://en.unesco.org/themes/building-peace-programmes

Peace Education is a term relatively unknown and unused in the countries of the Western Balkans. The paper will provide a historical overview of Peace Education and the importance of the Culture of Peace and peaceful conflict resolutions. Most of the initiatives in the Western Balkans so far have not managed to instigate the implementation of the Peace Studies as a subject in primary and secondary schools' curricula. The projects and initiatives conducted by the Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia[11](e.g. Lillehammer and Bujanovac school cooperation, School Mediation in Vojvodina) and the Quaker Council's for European Affairs [12]educational initiatives and projects along side with the Nansen Dialogue Centre Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina (AVP and NCD Mostar) will be tackled in the paper. The author will demonstrate the programs and initiatives which had been tested in practice.

The outcomes (e.g. acquisition of the peacebuilding skills, peaceful conflict resolutions, improvement of the intrapersonal and interpersonal understanding) will be stated as a springboard for the implementation of prospective Peace Studies subjects (as separate or within others) in Serbian primary and secondary schools. Theoretical pillars and rationale for Peace Education in primary and secondary schools will be stated.

Peaceful classroom is not a new term and its benefits for the overall given society could have been seen even in the 20th century in the developed countries. (e.g. Maria Montessori's schools and methods)[13] Finally, the future of the Peace Education is in our hands, and hopefully this paper will give a minute contribution to its actual realization in the primary and secondary schools of Serbia.

The first chapter of this paper starts with the historical background of the Peace Studies. It further focuses on competencies gained through Peace Education. Inevitably, the physical environment of the classrooms where Peace is being taught and examined shall be exemplified. The aim of this chapter is to contexualise Peace Studies as a field and school subject.

The second chapter tackles the theoretical pillars and rationale for Peace Education. It presents the social interdependence, integrate negotiations, constructive controversy theories, as well as the children's development and conflict resolution. Also, one of the objectives of this chapter is to present children and mediation and its benefits.

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[11]NCD Serbia, accessed August 13, 2020,
https://www.nansen-dialogue.net/ndcserbia/index.php/en/?start=136
[12]Quaker Council for European Affairs,(Peace Education making the case pamphlet, 2019)
[13] Maria Montessori,*Fifth Lecture, in Education and Peace Chicago,*(Henry Regnery Company1949), 81

The third chapter focuses on the examples of the Western Balkans' countries and their programmes and implementation of the Peace Studies in schools. Projects, seminars, mediations and initiatives shall be stated along side with the testimonials in the forms of photographs. Hopefully, this chapter will enable further initiatives to introduce Peace Studies in primary and secondary schools.

Finally, the ultimate chapter will give a framework to the future of the Peace Education and serve as a reminder of the importance of the matter to the future and prospective Peace educators.

1. Pedagogy and Peace Education

1.1. The historical overview of Peace Education

"Democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife,"

[14]

The times we live in call on educators' willingness, creativity and empathy. How is one to solve the violent paradigms permeating all the aspects of life? As Danesh writes, there should be "a fundamental shift in the philosophy of education."[15]The culture of war and violence has to be transformed into the culture of peace and nonviolence, which is in alignment with the peace education. Education is the focal factor affecting the way we perceive the world. Children spend most of their time is schools. It appears that at one point, they start seeing their educators more than their families. It is educators' responsibility to join forces and by using the skills and knowledge work on the formal introduction of the Peace Studies in the curricula.

Peace has been contemplated and pondered over since the ancient times. However, its scientific implications are relatively new notions.[16]Peace has to be nurtured and constantly

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[14] John Dewey,*The Need of an Industrial Education in an Industrial Democracy* (Southern Illinois University Press 1916)
[15] H. B. Danesh. "Towards an integrative theory of peace education", Journal of Peace EducationVolume 3, (2006): 55-78
[16] Peter Lawler, *Peace Studies,* (Routledge, January 2013)

promoted and reciprocated among the youngest by the older members of the community in order to be perpetuated, thus the importance of Peace Education.[17]Peace Education's main objectives are peaceful conflict resolutions and overcoming issues by peaceful means, as well as preventions and empowerment of all parties included, while gaining victory for all. The notion of peace is not a new topic but its implementation in practice among the students is.

As Harris says peace education is "the process of teaching people about the threats of violence and strategies for peace."[18]Peace Education has often been emerged within the Culture of Peace.[19]UNESCO set a definition of the Culture of Peace: "a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behavior and ways of life based on, among others, respect for life."[20]

Phrases such as "culture of peace" and "structural violence" were coined by Johan Galtung, a Norwegian sociologist is by some called "Father of Peace Studies".[21]Galtung founded the International Peace Research Institute (PRIO) in 1959.The first academic journal dedicated to peace studies - the Journal of Peace Research was established in 1964. The International Peace Research Association (IPRA) was also co-established by Johan Galtung. Distinguished Journal of Peace Education and Peace Education Commission are today within its authority. His theory of "structural violence" is also widely used by practitioners, academics and educators.[22]The Seville Statement on Violence is a vital document for the Culture of Peace.[23]It is a document which testifies the innately good nature of humans and artificial acquisition of malice patterns.

Education in terms of prevention was regarded as pivotal in the beginning of the 19th century. More and more people tried to persuade each other and their governments to use mediation as a mean of conflict resolution. The American educator and theorist John Dewey spread his progressive approaches and numerous teachers started following him.[24]

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[17] Josh Gabbatiss, "Nasty Brutish and Short, Are Humans DNA Wired to kill,"Scientificamerican, July 19, 2017, https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/nasty-brutish-and-short-are-humans-dna-wired-to-kill/

[18]Harris, I. 2008. "History of Peace Education" in Monisha Bajaj, ed.,*Encyclopedia of Peace Education.* Charlotte, (NC: Information, 2008)

[19] D. Adams,"The Seville statement on violence and why it is important," Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 29(3), (1989):328-337

[20]"Building a Culture of Peace","U.N. International Day of Peace,*2009,* https://internationaldayofpeace.org/culture-of-peace/#:~:text=As%20defined%20by%20the%20United,founding%20over%2060%20years%20ago%2C.

[21]Galtung, J., "Cultural Violence," Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 27, No. 3. (Aug., 1990): 291-305

[22]ibid

[23]D. Adams, "The Seville statement on violence and why it is important," Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 29(3), (1989): 328-337

[24]J. Dewey, "The Schools as a Means of Developing a Social Consciousness and Social Ideals in Children*," Journal of Social Forces* I.(1923).

John Dewey believed that the children's perception of the wars and its atrocities could be changed though active education, i.e. the implementation of the Peace Education in curricula.[25] Children should be actively involved in the analysis of previous hate crime and should have meaningful reconciliatory roles. Adults should help them benefit from the curriculum. One might think that this means lack of control and complete freedom for kids. However, it is the opposite. Educators are invested in getting to know students and their hobbies and passions. By this type of cooperation and mutual efforts curricula are personalized.[26]

Before the First World War came Peace Movement. Peace organisations were established in almost all European nations during the 19th century. Educators and students gathered around societies to warn the general public of war threats. They were loud about the importance of peace and uselessness of wars. Even though they did not intercept the War, they managed to be there open for public after its disastrous ending.

Sociology paved the way for the Peace Studies as a scientific field in the second half of the 20th century. Bertha von Stuttner, was of an opinion that "the pacifism has become an applied science."[27] Stuttner was all for The Hague Conventions which were "of great help to political visibility and emerging of peace movement."[28] The activism of the mentioned figures, contributed to the creation of "the League of the Nations."[29] For Maria Montessori, "human interactions and physical environment were of such importance."[30] The United Nations were supporters of Peace Education from the very beginnings as "a catalyst for international respect and human rights." [31]

Peace Studies emerged as a serious subject almost immediately after the World War II. During the entire Cold War, immediate danger of the nuclear war was noticeable. Hence the educators' urge to establish, and maintain long-lasting peace. After the World War II peace

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[25]J. Dewey, "The Schools as a Means of Developing a Social Consciousness and Social Ideals in Children*," Journal of Social Forces* I. (1923).

[26]Hansen, D. T. John Dewey on Education and Quality of Life. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2007): 21-34.

[27] Peter van den Dungen, "Varieties of Peace Science: An Historical Note", School of Peace Studies University if Bradford(1977): 239–249.

[28]JostDulffer, "Efforts to Reform the International System and Peace Movements Before 1914", Peace & Change, 14(1), (1989): 34

[29] Louis Kriesberg and Robert A. Denemark, "Conflict Analysis and Resolution as a Field,"Wiley-Blackwell (January 2017)

[30]Cossentino, J., and Whitcomb, J. Peace as a Premise for Learning: Maria Montessori's Educational Philosophy. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2007), 111---125.

[31]"Universal Declaration of Human Rights,"United Nations1948. https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/.

research and conflict resolution through peaceful means took off. Private and/or official enterprises helped the institutionalization.[32]The Manchester College in Indiana, the United States of America, in 1948 started with the Peace Studies programme. Bradford University in England followed the lead in 1973. Various peace research centres were then to be found around the globe such as Prio in Oslo in 1959; Uppsala University in Sweden, Department of Peace and Conflict Research; the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute SIPRI.[33]

The resolution 35/55 by the United Nations General Assembly was adopted on December 5th 1980, for "the founding of a higher education institution dedicated solely to the study and pursuit of sustainable global peace."[34] Consequently the United Nations University for Peace (UPEACE) Graduate School of Peace and Conflict Studies, with its headquarters in San Jose, Costa Rica was established.[35]

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989 endorsed Peace Education's importance for children's benefit. [36] People engaged in formal education felt obliged to distribute Peace Education to everyone. International organizations became increasingly aware of its importance.

Peace educators and scholars have been tackling since the 1990s the circumstances of Peace Education programmes. UNSECO declared the years from 2001 to 2010 as "a Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for Children of the World".[37] The Peace Studies objectives and their implementations among the youngest have been and still are UNESCO's responsibility.[38]

Most of the educators in the field are focusing on "the enduring social impact of peace education."[39]Anne Goodman writes that "cultures of peace encompass diverse and integrally connected projects and actions as well as the principles that underscore the work of

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[32] Peter van den Dungen and Lawrence S. Wittner, "Peace History: An Introduction," Journal of Peace Research (July 2003): 363-375

[33] ibid

[34]"UPEACE",accessed on Sep 2, 2020,
https://www.upeace.org/

[35]ibid

[36]"Convention on the Rights of the Child," United Nations Human Rights, accessed on Sep 2, 2020,
https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx

[37] UNESCO, accessed on Sep 2, 2020,
https://en.unesco.org/

[38] ibid

[39]GavrielSalomon"FourMajorChallengesFacingPeaceEducationinRegionsof IntractableConflict." London & New York: Routledge (2012): 25–35.

peacemakers." [40]As Carolyn M. Stephenson specifies, Peace Studies are "multi-disciplinary, layered and orientated towards the discovery of the war's causes."[41]For the results to emerge on surface the time is crucial. However, this should not be discouraging for the educators. The prerequisite for the successful implementation of Peace Studies as a subject in primary and secondary schools is "endurance, awareness and it takes time for the peaceful means and democracy to be inculcated in the young learners."[42]
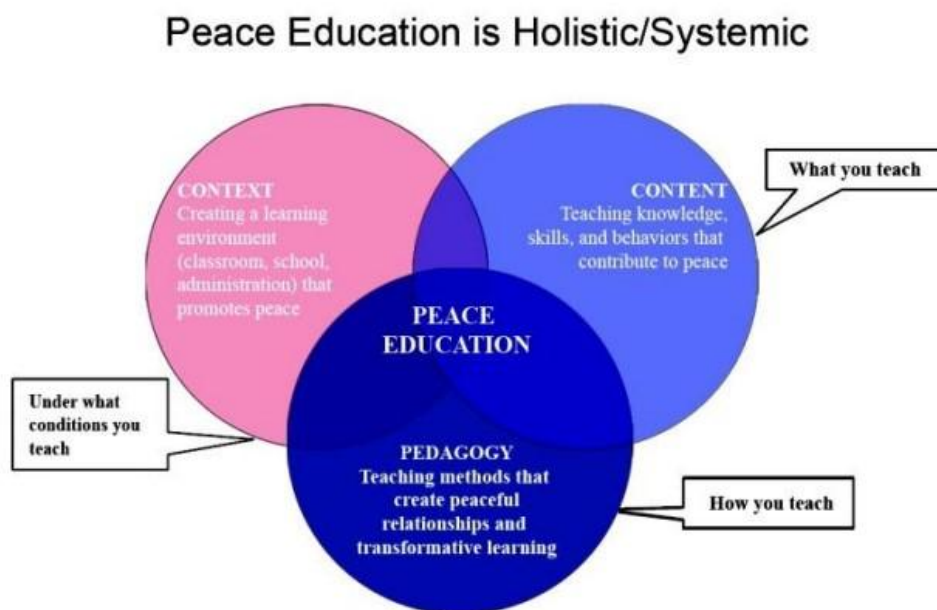

Figure 1 Systematic Framework for Peace Education taken from http://www.thabyay.org/

The unison and applicable to all countries educational programmes cannot exist due to context-sensitive implication and criteria. The method of teaching has to be well suited for the group's age and level of maturity. (Figure 1)

Also, the material which is being used has to support "the interactive exchange of ideas and should be enhanced by the use of the audio-visual materials. "[43]Arie Nadler extracts following criteria as crucial for a beneficial peace education programme "deliberately designed equality, interpersonal trust, awareness and respect for the various cultural beliefs and practices present

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[40] Goodman, A. Transformative learning and cultures of peace. (New York, NY: Palgrave.2002), 185-198

[41] Carolyn M.Stephenson, Peace Studies Overview. (Encyclopedia of Violence Peace and Conflict, Vol2, 1990), 809-810

[42] Castro, Loreta Navaro and Galace Nario Jasmine. Peace Education: A Pathway to a Culture of Peace, (Center for Peace Education, Miriam College, Quezon City, Philippines, 2010)

[43] ibid

in the training, and addressing real, pressing, and common problems."[44] Authentic and actual issues should be included in the agenda.

In regard to the Western Balkans, The Regional Master's Program in Peace Studies at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Political Sciences [45]is the most prominent educational programme at the higher level devoted to the Peace Education and Peace Studies located in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia. Besides the aforementioned programme one of the organizations which have been educating pedagogical workers in regard to the Peace Studies and Peace Education has been the Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia.[46] In the third chapter of the paper more will stated in regard to the Nansen and its projects and initiatives which have empowered pedagogical workers and their students in the pursuit of the necessary peacebuilding skills, in and out of the classroom. So far none of the primary or secondary schools has introduced Peace as a subject in any forms.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Peace is also being studied at the University level. There are BA, MA and PhD programmes for Security and Peace Studies, at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo.[47] Also, the Balkan Institute for Conflict Resolution, Responsibility and Reconciliation is a prominent organisation dealing with Peace. It is located in Sarajevo. Educators in the institute are of the opinion that "the development of theory, research, and practice that explains and analyses processes of conflict resolution and reconciliation, with a particular focus on the Balkan region" is crucial for the peace education programmes. [48]Centre for Peace Studies in the Republic of Croatia is "an NGO which is actively promoting peace and Peace Education through various activities."[49] In Montenegro Peace Education is being promoted through the activities of the NCD Montenegro. [50] North Macedonia also promotes its peace affirmative values through NCD Skopje. [51] Albania has been promoting

[44] Nadler, A. *Post-resolution processes: Instrumental and socio-emotional routes to reconciliation,* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2002), 127-141

[45]"Regional Master's Program in Peace Studies," University of Belgrade, Faculty of Political Sciences, accessed on July 23, 2020,
http://www.fpn.bg.ac.rs/en/regional-master%E2%80%99s-program-in-peace-studies/

[46]"Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia," Peace Portal, accessed on August 15, 2020,
https://peaceportal.org/node/203

[47]"Security and Peace Studies,"Erasmus, accessed on August 15, 2020,
http://www.erasmus.unsa.ba/11-2-security-and-peace-studies/

[48]"Balkan Institute for Conflict Resolution, Responsibility and Reconciliation," Sarajevo School of Science and Technology, accessed on August 15, 2020,
https://ssst.edu.ba/page/181/balkan-institute-for-conflict-resolution--responsibility-and-reconciliation

[49] CMS, accessed on August 15, 2020,
https://www.cms.hr/en

[50] Nansen Dialogue Centre Montenegro, accessed on August 15, 2020,
http://www.nansen-dialogue.net/ndcmontenegro/index.php/en/about-ndc-montenegro

[51] Nansen Dialogue Centre Skopje, accessed on August 15, 2020,https://ndc.org.mk/

peace values among school children through the activities conducted by Universal Peace Federation, a Global Network for Peacebuilders.[52]

Global issues are becoming the local ones. It might be comforting to know that we, as a region, or as a country are not lonely on this journey towards the active presence of Peace Education in primary and secondary schools. As presented in this part of the first chapter, the history of Peace Education inevitably presents the lack of Peace Education among younger population. Right now, only those lucky few, who mindfully choose this academic path, shall be granted with the benefits of it. In the continuation besides the competencies which are gained through Peace Education, some of the examples of successful Peace Education in schools in the region will be presented. The very idea behind this paper is author's humble attempt to contribute to the inclusion of Peace Education in curricula around Republic of Serbia.

1.2. Competencies gained through Peace Education

"*The most revolutionary thing anybody can do is to raise good, honest and generous children who will question the answers of people who say the answer is violence. That's what the schools should be doing.*"[53]

Peace Education can be implemented equally well within some school subjects or extra-curricular, such as sports. One such example is the S4D organization Right to play.[54] What they as organisation had presented as a good formula for the acquisition of the competencies in regard to Peace Education is the creation of "supportive learning environment, backed by engaged teachers, coaches, peers."[55] Through different sports activities kids learn how to manage stress, become resilient motivators and leaders. As in any successful learning situation," repetition is the key."[56]Thus the importance of allowing kids to make mistakes, yet try again and while doing that learn. Kids are taught how to develop self-respect and boost their own confidence in a healthy non-arrogant way. Finally, children discover "the agendas

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[52] Universal Peace Federation , accessed on August 15, 2020,
http://www.upf.org/chapters/albania
[53]"Former reporter pushes peace studies,"CNN, accessed on August 16, 2020,
https://edition.cnn.com/2002/EDUCATION/12/19/peace.teacher.reut/index.html
[54] Sport for Development, accessed on Sep 3, 2020
https://www.sport-for-development.com/about-us
[55] ibid
[56] ibid

behind the well-established stigmas and learn about controversial issues such as HIV, wars etc."[57]

As Patrick Hiller states "the core competencies procured via Peace Education sprawl from critical thinking and analysis to conflict transformation skills."[58]When the conflict emerges it is the educators' responsibility to "dissect the causes and effects and in modularized way transcend the knowledge and prevent further similar occurrences."[59]

The bedrock for successful acquisition of the needed competencies is the constant monitoring and repetition of the well-accepted activities among students. The attitudes and behaviour of appreciation, co-operation, belongingness, trust and spirit of learning are fragile and can be easily disrupted if not regularly checked up on. Children are fond of patterns and routines; they represent a safe net, an anchor in the learning environment. This is why the idea of repetitive actions which enable the accretion of Peace Competencies is mandatory. The Peace Alliance recommends one such example: "restorative circle and dialogue."[60]This is where the vulnerability is presented as strength and not a weakness. The teachers also have to be willing to be vulnerable. The idea is to sit in a circle, share the news with the rest of the group and be willing to listen back in return. Through this activity the students are taught to be empathetic. These circles are good solutions for solving the direct conflicts between the victim and offender. Both parties must be willing to participate and find the common ground, guided by the experienced facilitator. Meditation or mindfulness activities might also come in handy as prevention of decision making processes in the heat of the moment. Students will become empowered citizens and community participants if these methods and activities are regularly applied.[61]

In peace education both students and teachers are change oriented; Peace Education contributes to peaceful behavior and it enhances the accommodating trait in a person. Peace education and peaceful pedagogy go hand in hand, and the content is made up of "cooperative learning, democratic society, moral sensitivity, critical thinking, and tolerance."[62]The

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[57] ibid

[58]"Core Competencies for Critical Peace Educators and Learners" Peace Science Digest, accessed on August 25, 2020,
https://peacesciencedigest.org/core-competencies-for-critical-peace-educators-and-learners/

[59] ibid

[60]"Teaching Peace in Schools- Statement of Purpose," Peace Alliance, accessed on August 25, 2020,
https://peacealliance.org/teachpeace/#collapse_0_empowering-strategies

[61] ibid

[62] Harris, M., I. Conceptual underpinnings of peace education (Mahwah: NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 2002), 15-25.

competencies overpass the local needs for peaceful communities. They present the pillars of a modern and peaceful society. Students are motivated to express their thoughts and feelings in meaningful and not defensive manner. Numerous psychological issues or traumas in the household, classroom etc are impediments towards faster and better acquisition of the pivotal competencies that Peace Education provides.

As Harris states "individuals' aggression tendencies and psychological problems decrease, their constructive conflict solution skills improve, and they have more positive attitudes towards being isolated from violence with the help of peace education." [63]Therefore, peace education is seen as one of the most effective ways to create positive, peace culture oriented societies.[64]

One cannot teach and transcend the competencies crucial for a peaceful and well-equipped individual if one is not at peace him/herself.

1.3. Physical environment of a peaceful classroom

"Have you ever traveled far away to another town?
Did you feel like a stranger when you were there?
It's just a state of mind. You can feel at home anywhere.
Anywhere you go, there are kids who care.
There are no towns full of bad people.
In every town there are good people.
And just like you and me
They wish we all were friends."[65]

The verses above are the nice reminder of how much kids actually care. Not only do they care but also perceive quite intently. Their young brains are stimulated by the immediate environments and any embellishment that can occur in the classroom in order to make it more peaceful, alluring and learning-friendly should happen. In order for magic to happen the

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[63] ibid
[64] UNESCO. Framework for teacher education. (India: New Delhi.2005)
[65]A song by Jonathan Sprout, 2007

classroom does not have to look like the following Figures 2 and 3.It truly is just a state of mind. Learners can feel at peace and at home anywhere for a limited amount of money.[66]

What is an educator to do in order to manage the peaceful physical environment and thus create and establish a peaceful classroom? The resources in a typical Serbian primary and secondary schools are limited and teachers are not in charge of budget. This is why when teachers' own resources, which had previously been generously invested in the classrooms, come to an end, the aesthetical magic often vanishes. So, what is to be done in order to overcome this impediment? Educators should enhance students' independence in creation of the arts and crafts that can be used in the classroom.

Figure 2the Montessori Classroom Inspired Design

Taken from: https://montessoriacademy.com.au/montessori-classroom-design/

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[66] ibid

Figure 3 Preschool of the Arts

Taken from: https://preschoolofthearts.com/current-families/our-classrooms/

Ian Harris encourages teachers to be learners as well. It happens that the students have rather meaningful and useful ideas, but they have to be asked to share them. Cooperative attitudes and activities build knowledge, thus the importance of the students' involvement in setting peaceful culture in the classroom.[67] In order to feel the attachment and responsibility over the classroom students should be a part of the creative making process. Asked for their opinions on where to hang which poster, what colours should be predominant, what music to play in the background, where to place the plants, might seem as a trivial point on the agenda. However, any experienced educator, mindful of the peacefulness in his/her classroom would beg to differ.[68]

Maria Montessori[69]stipulates the importance of "an aesthetically pleasing environment of a classroom."[70]Montessori was an advocate of a colorful yet organized and filled with elements of nature classroom. Up to this day the educators within Montessori's schools have been

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[67] Ian M Harris. "Peace Education,"(McFarland Publishing; 2nd Edition, 2002)
[68]Dinn Wahyudin,"Peace Education Curriculum in the Context of Education Sustainable Development" Journal of Sustainable Development Education and Research | JSDER Vol. 2, No.1, (2018): 21-32
[69]Maria Montessori was an Italian physician and educator best known for the philosophy of education that bears her name, and her writing on scientific pedagogy
[70] Maria Montessori, Fifth Lecture, (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1949), 81.

working "in accordance to this tradition of colours natural light, animals, plants and with meticulously arranged materials."[71] The promotion of peace among children is ameliorated in such a manner. The ascetically pleasing and peaceful images displayed throughout the room. As stated by the Montessori educators "a waterfall, a dove, or a peace sign are subtle and gentle, yet effective reminder of the values promoted and enhanced in a classroom. "[72] Kids are not to be perceived as passive recipient of the pieces of information but to be actively engaged in the learning process.

Students, just as teachers, love and appreciate being valued and recognised in the classroom community. Assigning certain roles, such as "a Peace Maker" of the week and then asking other students to write down what went well that week and how the student in question had helped the rest would be beneficial as well. [73]

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[71] ibid

[72] MSB,accessed on August 30, 2020,
https://msb.org/discovering/mission/

[73] Maria Montessori, "The Form Education Must Take to Be Able to Help the World in Our Present Circumstance," in Education and Peace (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1949), 66.

2. Theoretical pillars and rationale for Peace Education

2.1. Theories: social interdependence, integrate negotiations, constructive controversy

Establishing and preserving respectful and harmonious relationships in a classroom indeed is a stretching task. Demanding as it might be, it is imperative educators and students be informed and empowered with the theory behind it. In Johnsons' words "peace education programmes must be based on theories validated by research that can be operationalised into practical procedures."[74]

In this part of the second chapter three interrelated theories for effective Peace Education will be presented in the following order: "social interdependence theory, constructive controversy theory and integrative negotiations theory."[75]

2.1.1. Social interdependence theory

If not founded on social theory that is supported by research and operationalised in practical processes Peace Education programme has lower chances for success.[76] Before proceeding

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[74] Johnson W. David and Johnson T. Roger. Theory into Practise, (Peace Education Vol44, No4,.2005),280-292
[75] ibid

with the aforementioned theory, it is important to establish the difference between the imposed and consensual approach to Peace and Peace Education, as they will turn out to be an integral part of the theory. The durability of a programme introduced in schools depends on the choice of approaches. In this regard, the author is presenting the imposed peace "based on domination, power and enforcement. Students can be physically separated due to a conflict, but this will not solve a conflict in the long run. On the other hand, the consensual approach which "leads to structural liberty where social institutions promote equality, justice, and the well-being of all relevant parties"[77] promotes level playing field.

The establishment and maintenance of the long-lasting and consensual Peace Education programme should not be accompanied with the spirit of competition but rather one of cooperation. The theory underlying competition and cooperation is social interdependence theory. As Deutsch writes "social interdependence occurs when the accomplishment of each individual's goals is affected by the actions of others."[78] Obviously as two contrasting elements of cooperation and competition, the social interdependence theory is "divided into two streams: positive interdependence and negative interdependence."[79] In the positive social interdependence "the relationship between the parties is built on positive notions and both parties are willing to help the other one to gain something beneficial out of it as well. Through the process of reaching an agreement both parties engaged in conflict resolution process wish for the other one to gain something as well. Only on those grounds and with such attitudes and actions can this approach and theory be named positive social interdependence."[80]

On the other end of spectrum, the negative social interdependence will occur in situations "when the parties included have negative attitudes toward each other. Also, they are willing to overcome the conflict only if the other side loses something in return i.e. failing to obtain their goals."[81]

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[76] Merton, R. K, Social theory and social structure,(New York: Free Press, 1957)

[77] ibid

[78] Deutsch, M. Cooperation and trust: Some theoretical notes. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press1962), 275–319

[79] ibid

[80] Johnson, D. W., and Johnson, R., Instructional goal structure: Cooperative, competition, or individualistic. (Review of Educational Research, 44, 1974), 213–240.

[81] ibid

Thirdly, no interdependence results in a situation in which "individuals perceive that they can reach their goal regardless of whether other individuals in the situation attain or do not attain their goals."[82]

How is this to be taken in regard to the Peace Education programme in a classroom? The basis of the social interdependence theory lies in understanding the way interdependence is structured. The interaction among the individuals is crucial. It might be "promotive or oppositional or contrient interaction."[83] The former one being in favour of "individuals' attempts to encourage and facilitate each other's attempts to achieve and finish tasks. The latter is defined by a relationship in which individuals are discouraging and obstructing each other's efforts to complete tasks and achieve an objective."[84]Thirdly, no interdependence results in no interaction. The parties involved behave and act independently without any interchange with each other while they work to achieve their goals.

[82] ibid

[83]Deutsch, M,. Cooperation and trust: Some theoretical notes,(Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1962)

[84] ibid

The most important aspect of promotive interaction is "the open-minded discussion of opposing and different ideas. This type of a discussion should result in effective, integrative decisions and strengthened relationships."[85]
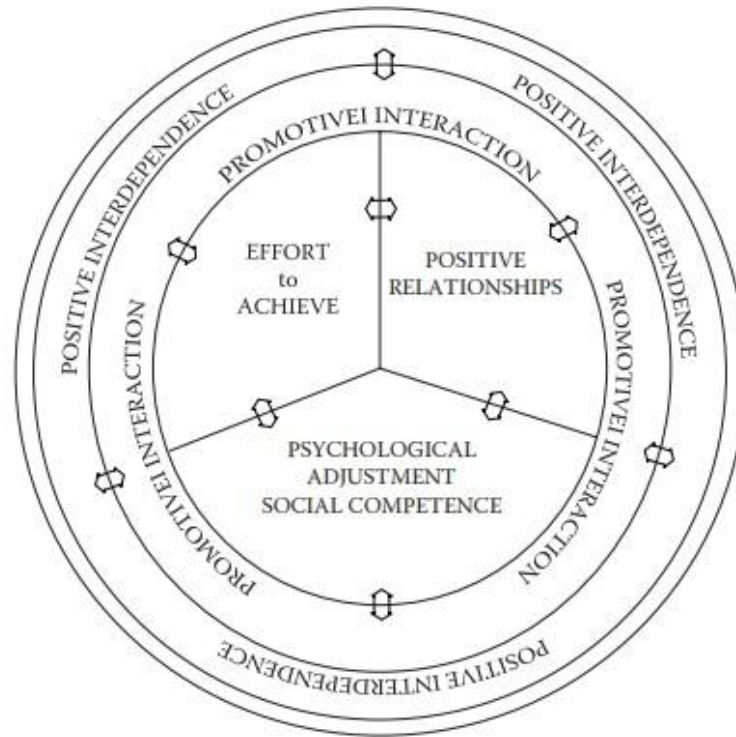

Figure 4 : Outocomes of cooperative learning. Taken from: Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. (1989) Cooperation and competition: Theory and research. Edina, MN: Interaction Book Company

The foundation of the social interdependence theory and its success within the Peace Education lies in the idea of mutual effort and realization of the importance of others' well-being and accomplishments. One party cannot succeed without the progress of the other one. As Johnsons stipulate, positive interdependence has "to be structured through mutual goals, joint rewards, divided resources, complementary roles, and a shared identity."[86]Also, everyone included must be "individually accountable for his/her part of work or conflict resolutions." [87]By helping, assisting, supporting, encouraging, and praising each other's efforts to achieve mutual agreement the students are taught the pillars of Peace Education. Skills such as leadership, decision making, trust building, communication, and conflict management are crucial for the successful Peace Education programme members. As stated in the beginning of

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[85]Alper, S., Tjosvold, D., and Law, S. A., Interdependence and controversy in group decision making: Antecedents to effective self-managing teams,(Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 74,1998), 33–52.

[86] Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. New developments in social interdependence theory,(Helderf Publications,2006), 285–358.

[87] ibid

the chapter, this theory is not be neglected if the educators want to maintain long-lasting peace in their classrooms.[88]

2.1.2.Constructive controversy theory

"He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves, and sharpens our skill.

Our antagonist is our helper." [89]

Constructive controversy theory deals with "the creative problem solving and the perception that conflicts"[90], if handled well, could be beneficial for all engaged parties regardless how controversial the attitudes might be. This theory in regard to Peace Education leads us once again to the starting point of wanting to establish and maintain the enduring programme, which would withstand different circumstances. This is where the creation and the bond on the moral level should be implemented. The bond would be crucial for surpassing the clash. Montesquieu jots in his "The Spirit of Laws" this connection "is to be seen where the individual and the needs of a society as a whole come together." [91] In the nature of the paper, the author is drawing the attention to the cultivation of this motivation to belong and be concerned for the whole community. Such empowered young citizenship leads to an endurable peaceful community surpassing any political system.[92]

As Johnsons conclude yet again, conflict as such is a positive notion if something even more positive comes out of it. In decision making process common mistakes can be corrected when the conflict arouses.[93]Thus the importance of the acknowledgment of the good decision making process. The constructions controversy theory's key is the proper, good and effective decision-making. Disagreeing with the suggestion is not enough; the alternatives have to be presented. Many theorists[94]have proposed conflicts for "diverse perspectives to be processed so that the highest–quality decision may be made and that the most effective resolution may be

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[88] ibid

[89] Edmund Burke n.d.

[90]Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. New developments in social interdependence theory, (Helderf Publications, 2006), 285–358..

[91] Charles de Montesquieu, The Spirit of Laws,(Prometheus; Revised Edition March 1, 2002)

[92] ibid

[93]"Key To Effective Decision Making: Constructive Controversy," Psychology today, accessed on Sep 3, 2020, https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/constructive-controversy/201705/key-effective-decision-making-constructive-controversy

[94]Falk and Johnson 1977, Johnson 1971a, 1971b, Johnson & Johnson 1979a, Krauss &Morsella 2000, Nemeth &Wachtler 1974, Thompson &Hrebec 1996, Thompson & Nadler 2000, Wong et al. 1992

worked out."[95]Conflicts are said to be "beneficial for all parties included."[96] Lewis Coser tackled the negative concept of conflict permeating American sociology in the 1950s. He addressed the conflict as: "a force to establish social identity and a means to maintain social mobilization and cohesion."[97]

The constructive controversy theory could be tackled through the Piaget's cognitive developmental theory, "disequiliberation". [98]

Ames, Lowry, Murray, D. W. Johnson, R. T. Johnson, Smith were of the opinion that the conceptual conflict "would provoke curiosity; by doing this it would promote better understanding, facilitate dialogues and boost performances of the involved parties."[99]To quote Tjosvolod "Positive conflict is believed to be both the end and the means."[100]
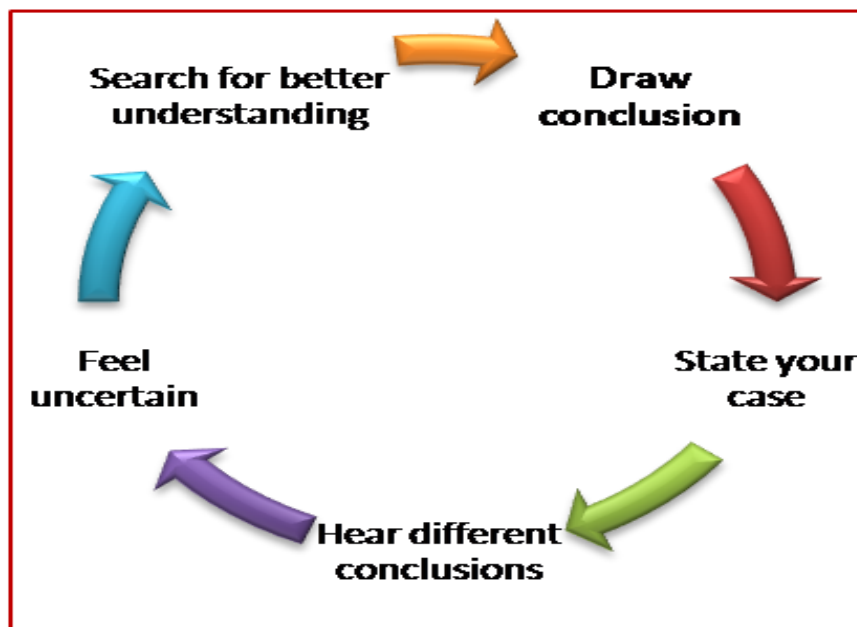

Figure 5 Constructive Controversy Cycle

Taken fromhttp://www.icreate-project.eu/index.php?t=293

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[95] Ching-ching Yi, "Potential Application of the Contstructive Controversy Theory in EFL Contexts," Taiwan Journal of TESOL Vol. 1.1, (2004): 27-57

[96] Thompson, L. and J. Nadler, Judgmental biases in conflict resolution and how to overcome them,(San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000)

[97] Schellenberg, J. A., Conflict Resolution: Theory, Research, and Practice,(Albany: State University of New York Press. 1996)

[98]Piaget, J. The Psychology of Intelligence,(New York: Harcourt, 1950)

[99]Ching-ching Yi, "Potential Application of the Contstructive Controversy Theory in EFL Contexts," Taiwan Journal of TESOL Vol. 1.1, (2004): 27-57

[100]Dean Tjosvold, Cooperative and competitive conflict management in organizations, (Annual Review2014)

It is to be concluded that the constructive controversy theory enables students to defend and articulate their thoughts and ideas. This set of skills in a modern world might come in handy when dealing with the Peace Education. Additionally, the verbal exchange and the search for further clarification from the other party during the controversy process is a fertile soil for the acquisitions of the necessary skills listed in the first chapter of the thesis.

2.1.3. Integrative negotiations theory

The third theory presented in the paper that provides necessary approaches to Peace Education is integrative negotiations theory. So, what is the integrative negotiations theory and when can it be used in practice?

The theory of integrative negotiationsis "aiming at resolving conflicts of interests. It is done in such a manner that it maximizes joint gain and mutual benefit."[101]According to Carnevale and Pruitt, negotiation is defined as "a procedure to resolve differing preferences among parties involving discussion with the aim of attaining agreement."[102] Negotiation has also been defined as "a process that involves decision making in a conflict between two parties while working together to achieve a satisfactory outcome."[103]

Distributive negotiation works "under a zero-sum condition and suggests that any gain of one party is made at the expenditure of the other and vice versa."[104] The good example of such negotiation could be the case of open market and haggling over prices.

The second type of negotiation is known as integrative negotiation, also called "win-win" negotiation.[105] In an integrative negotiation the interests of each party are not mutually exclusive. There is more than one interest or objective. An integrative negotiation "allows for the negotiators to aspire to innovative or extra value for both negotiators." [106]During these occurrences the greater feeling of appreciation and friendship is established. This leads to a plethora of creative problem-solving ideas and solutions all leading to the acquisition of the

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[101]"What is Integrative Negotiation?," Harvard Law School, accessed on Sep 3, 2020, https://www.pon.harvard.edu/tag/integrative-negotiation/

[102] Carnevale, P.J. and Pruitt, D.G. Negotiation and mediation, (Annu. Rev. Psychol. 1992), 531–582.

[103] Johnson, N.A. and Cooper, R.B. Power and concession in computer-mediated negotiations: An examination of first offers,(Mis Q. 2009), 147–170.

[104] ibid

[105]Menkel-Meadow, C. Toward another view of legal negotiation: The structure of problem solving,(UCLA Law Rev. 1983), 754.

[106] ibid

mutual gains.[107] Students are taught how to achieve mutually beneficial agreements based on fairness and equality.

In the classroom this theory would be beneficial and feasible when the parties i.e. negotiators have same objectives and are given opportunities to realize their mutual gains.

This approach takes a lot of creativity and each party has to be willing to use his/her creativity in order to provide a suitable and clever counter-argument. If children had not been motivate before to construct intelligent, fair and valid counter arguments they might be in the need of the third party. If negotiations however fail, the most advantageous alternative enters the table. As Fisher and Urystate state the acronym "BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) is party's alternative if the initial idea fails."[108]

Well-equipped children, given the necessary tools, gained through Peace Education become wake, present and active members of modern society. It cannot be done without the formal implementation of Peace Education and its implementation in national curricula. More of what had been done in Serbia in that regard will be covered in the following chapter.

Johnsons state that: "integrate school- make sure that the students are seeing other cultures and actively collaborating and are becoming habituated to them; establish positive interdependence i.e. insist on common fate; teach students how to make difficult decisions; teach them how to resolve conflicts constructively and finally empower them by implanting civic values (e.g. willingness to live in an inclusive community) in them."[109]

Students will not be able to succeed in achieving the mutual goal without building a rapport beneficial for all parties. They all have to progress and collaborate in order to overcome a conflict or a particularly troublesome situation. In social interdependence theory the key can be found in mutual and reciprocal support. Support does not have to be present from the beginning but it is gradually built and participants are willing to work on it.

When the ideas and attitudes are so contrasting and incompatible, the argument can again be resolved if the lead of the constructive controversy theory is followed. Our opponents do not necessarily have to be our worst enemies. These situations can and will challenge children i.e. participants to build up a strong argument and strengthen or challenged their own pre-established ideas.

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[107] ibid
[108] Roger Fisher and William Ury, Getting to Yes: Negotiating Without Giving In,(Penguin Group, 1981)
[109] Johnson W. David and Johnson T. Roger. Theory into Practise, (Peace Education Vol44, No4,.2005), 280-292

Integrative negotiations and mediations are crucial set of assets in the modern age. Young participants will acquire the knowledge and practical tricks of the trade by initially observing the more experienced and learning in theory about it. Eventually, they will be able to implement it themselves.

As shown, depending on the issue and the group constituents each of these theories would be a proper choice. Thus the importance of getting to know the group members and raising awareness about the importance of peaceful conflict resolution, long before it occurs.

2.2. Children's development and conflict resolution

Children learn through trial and error. Educators have to give kids chances to solve issues by themselves. Resisting the urge to do it all for them is crucial. Subtle pieces of advice and moderate help are good enough. If we provide assistance way too soon, we are actually not helping them at all.[110]

Social interaction is crucial for successful children's development. The development of conflict resolution skills has to be nurtured equally well at home as in school. When immersed in a conflict, children will lose patience and will be in need of peacebuilding skills – willingness to listen attentively, empathise, and brainstorm solutions, control emotions, identify the problem. The patterns children acquire in primary school and secondary school will be reciprocated and will define their future relationships.

Piaget proposed four major stages of cognitive development in children (see Figure6), and named them: "(1) sensorimotor intelligence, (2) preoperational thinking, (3) concrete operational thinking, and (4) formal operational thinking."[111]

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[110] Teacher's College Columbia, accessed on Sep 10, 2020, https://www.tc.columbia.edu/newsroom/
[111] Piaget, J. *The origins of intelligence in children,* (New York: International Universities Press, 1952)
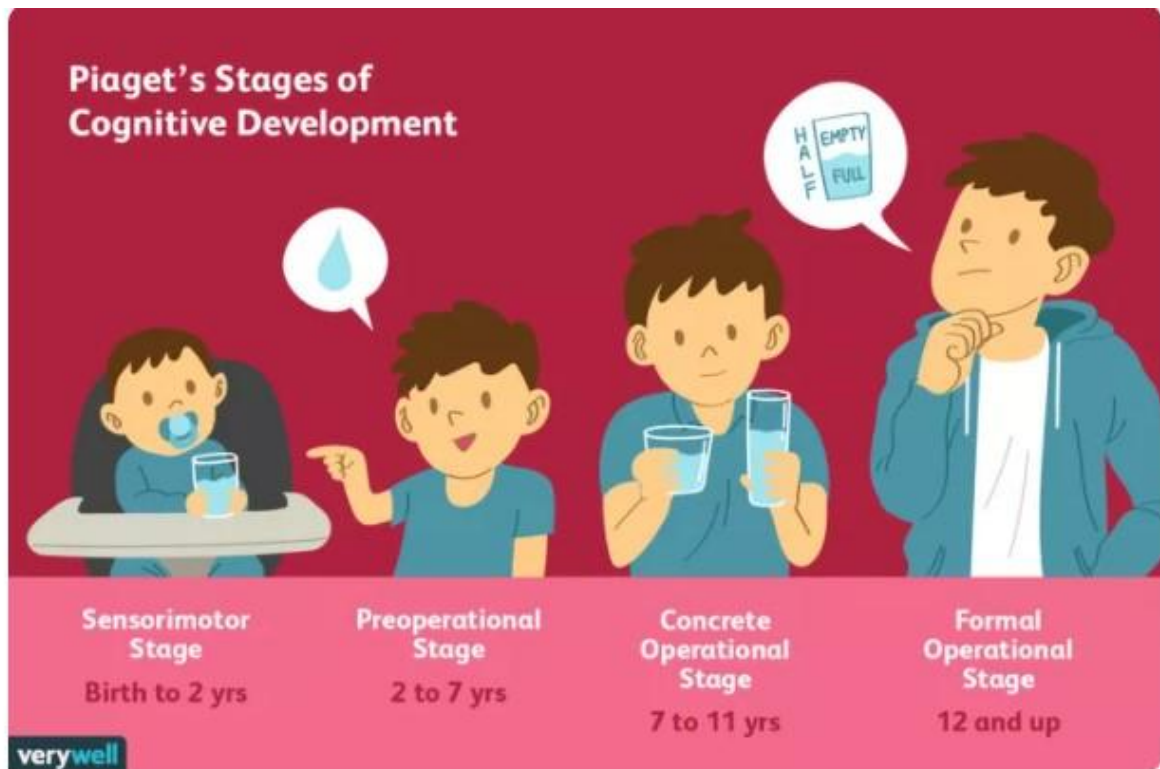
Figure 6Illustration by Joshua Seong, Verywelltaken from: https://www.joshseong.com/

Due to the paper's nature, the author focuses on the third i.e. concrete operational thinking and the fourth i.e. formal operational thinking stages and their relation toward conflict resolution. Usually conflict resolution programs for children focus: "on middle childhood or adolescence because conflict, bullying, and other forms of violence occur more frequently at these ages."[112]

The first stage i.e. sensorimotor stage, the babies/toddlers focus on their immediate surroundings. They focus on what they see and what other people are doing around them. This stage is defined by experimentation. Children are still oblivious to what reaction to have. The important milestone for this stage is so-called "object permanence" (i.e. object still exists even when it cannot be seen, smelled or sensed in any way). Due to the increased mobility through crawling or standing the kids' cognitive development is boosted. By the end of the stage the presence of language becomes rather important milestone; children can name simple objects or form basic utterances. [113]

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[112] Warner, B. S., Weist, M. D., and Krulak, A. Risk Factors for School Violence, (Urban Education, March 1999), 52–64.
[113] ibid

The second stage i.e. preoperational stage children develop their imagination and language/s. The children are now capable of differentiating past and future. The way they compose their thoughts and ideas is still "mainly focused on intuition, not on logic."[114]

During the third stage kids "become less egocentric and begin to understand that not everyone shares their thoughts, beliefs, or feelings."[115] Erikson perceived this time of life as "the period when children tackle the task of learning to be competent at activities appreciated by adults and peers; achievements in these endeavor establish a sense of industry, and failure results in a sense of inferiority."[116]

Kohlberg agrees and states that "children around the age of seven or eight enter the stage of development called "instrumental morality," or self-regulation, which includes cooperative behavior."[117] What is meant by this is mutual cooperation which leads to a common goal while one is at peace with own feelings but also respectful toward others. This cooperation is motivated by mutual affection and trust, consequently developing into the ability of putting oneself in someone's shoes.[118]

For the second order of consciousness, Kegan testifies that it, "takes off approximately between the ages of seven and ten when children are able to construct "durable categories."[119]

Shure and Spivack refer to conflict resolution as "problem-solving dialoguing, a form of questioning, similar to scaffolding, that helps a child develop an alternative solution and consequential thinking."[120] Children at this age clearly need the guidance from the third party, since they are inevitably looking for the perpetrator.

Consequently, during the fourth stage (i.e. formal operational stage) children are "able to use logic to solve problems, view the world around them, and plan for the future."[121] Despite the importance of peers in an adolescent's life, the amount of time spent with peers is influenced by how parents react to the child's developmental changes. This is why educators have to establish good bonds with parents as well.

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[114] ibid
[115] ibid
[116] Erikson, E. H. Childhood and Society. (New York: Norton, 1950)
[117] Kohlberg, L. Moral Stages and Moralization: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Socialization, , (Tex.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976)
[118] ibid
[119] Kegan, R., In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life,. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994)
[120] Shure, M. B., and Spivack, G., Problem-Solving Techniques in Childrearing,(San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978).
[121] ibid

Coser emphasizes that the conflict is "a beneficial notion if managed and handled well."[122] Unfortunately, he also agrees that the conflict often "challenges the emotions and communication capacity of most adults and children with the arousal inherent in conflict decreasing communication skills."[123] In these situations, adults and children need to have a set of strategies that will enable them to manage the situation. Children who are well-equipped with social skills react well to challenging life situations.

A road to a friendly rapport for young children will be paved with conflicts. The conflicts are inevitable and they will happen sooner or later. Since children do not have enough social experience, they consequently suffer due to the lack of skills (i.e. compromising, bargaining, sharing, or taking turns with desired possessions) for conflict resolutions.

To a trained and mindful eye, these conflicts present a meaningful cornerstone for the establishment of a proper and constructive rapport. The language is also crucial in these situations. Direct, often abrupt language is used, even when the parties included mean well due to the lack of linguistic complexity. [124]Just as Matos says language is "a mental marvel for peaceful meaning making and problem solving."[125] This definition of a language should serve as a reminder to peace educators that children, as we are, are "cognitive, communicative, creative, and (potentially) peaceful language users."[126]

The developments of emotional and social competences in children have to be educators' focal objectives. Reacting to situations as they come along in a classroom, teacher, peace educators help their students acquire reconciliation skills necessary for conflict resolution.[127] The children should learn from mistakes, no matter who made them, listen with ears and eyes and nurture positive language and cooperation.

Children are to be taught these practices gradually and with a lot of dedication and perseverance.

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[122]Coser, L. A. The functions of social conflict. (Free Press, 1956).

[123] ibid

[124]"Ages & Stages: Learning to Resolve Conflicts", Scholastic, accessed on Sep 10, 2020,
https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/ages-stages-learning-resolve-conflicts/

[125] Gomes de Matos, F., Probing the Communicative Paradigm: A Concept for Sociolinguistics,(Sociolinguistics Newsletter. Dublin: International Sociological Association, July 1993)

[126] ibid

[127]"Conflictresolutionskillsforkids",   Focus   On   The   Family,   accessed   on   Sep   10, 2020,https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/conflict-resolution-skills-for-kids/

2.2.1. Children andmediation

As one the beneficial conflict resolution processes among school-aged children, mediation will be presented in this part of the paper. In the following, third chapter, the author will be dealing with the examples of mediation projects and initiatives done in Republic of Serbia.

As once said "Where there is a wide range of people, there is a conflict."[128]In school environment a practical solution for it could be hidden in mediation. The Association for Conflict defines mediation as: "a conflict resolution process run by a specialist third party who called mediator."[129]

This conflict resolution process is led by a third party, which had not been involved in the named conflict. Both parties have a chance to express their take on conflict. Mediation is usually not done when there has been physical violence involved. [130]

The mediation process could be also led by students. By doing this, students could learn to be neutral and estimate the situation in empathic manner and gain internal control over her/his attitudes and behaviours. These interactions focused on students could enhance social harmony.[131]As Chittooran and Hoenig say "traits such as sound judgment, leadership abilities, excellent communication skills, and credibility with peers might be even more important than to have superior academic achievement."[132]

One of the prevalent issues for the educators and pedagogues in schools is a tendency among students to opt for accusing and violent language. As Haft and Weiss say "arguments, fights, rumors and partner conflicts are the most common conflicts between friends."[133]These patterns can be broken through educators' willingness to promote empathy and reconciliation.

Schools should be safe areas for children where they would love to go and return. Mediation can be done if parties included feel safe and respected. Thus the importance of incorporating

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[128] United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO]. Best Practices of Non-Violent Conflict Resolution In And Out-Of-School. (France, 2002)
[129] The Association for Conflict Resolution, accessed on Sep 10, 2020,
 www.acrnet.org.
[130]"Is Mediation suitable where there has been Domestic Violence?" Ringrose Law, accessed on Sep 10, 2020,
https://www.ringroselaw.co.uk/2014/01/21/mediation-suitable-domestic-violence/
[131] Thomas, C.O., Benefits and Key Components of Peer Mediation Programs. Master of Science Degree In Education, (University of Wisconsin –Stout, 2008)
[132]Chittooran, M.M. and Hoenig, G.A., Peer Mediation: A Guide For Educators in Helping Children at Home and School III: Interview with the Editors,(National Association of School Psychologists, 2010)
[133] Haft, W.S and Weiss, E.R. Peer Mediation in Schools: Expectations and Evaluations,(Harward Negotiation Law Review, Vol. 3, 1998), 213-319

children in these processes and making them feel welcome even before a conflict occurs. As Gauley said, "social and emotional learning need to be incorporated and the students must be involved in the process actively."[134]This simply cannot be done "without the collective efforts of all members of school."[135] Children cannot successfully acquire these skills if not stimulated by their entire environment.

Upon the completion of a mediation programme coordinated by a professional students should be enabled to: "open a session, collect information, identify problem, turn their focus to common interest, brainstorm solutions, evaluate, estimate and contemplate solutions, construct an agreement and its features and commit themselves to it."[136]

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[134] Gauley M., Evaluation of Respectful Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Program,(Community-University Institute for Social Research, Cumberland Avenue: Canada, 2006)

[135] Blum R., Best Practices: Building Blocks For Enhancing School Environment,(the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense, Military Community and Family Policy Office, 2005)

[136]Chittooran, M.M. and Hoenig, G.A., Peer Mediation: A Guide For Educators in Helping Children at Home and School III: Interview with the Editors, (National Association of School Psychologists, 2010)

3. The Case of the Western Balkans' Peace Education

3.1. Brief history of Peace Education in the Western Balkans

In divided societies such as the Western Balkans Peace Education is pivotal. Divisions and protracted conflicts among the Western Balkans' countries dating from the Yugoslav wars still have an effect on education.[137] However, one is not be an activist or get invested in meaningful and industrious endeavor such as – the implementation of Peace Education in curricula, without certain amount of optimism.

Without the effort and willingness of peace educators and peace activists, domestic and foreign non-governmental organizations, and Ministries of Education some of the existing initiatives and programmes in the Western Balkans would have been impossible (e.g. Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia, Quaker Council for European Affairs).One such example is signing of the Declaration on Joint Cooperation and Cooperation with Civil Society Organisations in the Field of Peace Education in December 2009 by Deputy Ministers of Education from

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[137]GPPAC, accessed on Sep 10, 2020,https://gppac.net/regions/balkans

Serbia and Montenegro.[138] The signing process and consultative processes were facilitated by the Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia and Nansen Dialogue Centre Montenegro.[139]

Secondly, the Berlin Process was launched by German Chancellor Angela Merkel in 2014 in order to"facilitate regional cooperation among WesternBalkan countries and to support integration intothe EU". [140]It includes Western Balkan Summits, Civil Society Forums, Business Forums and Youth Forums. The educators in the region connect and cooperate via the platforms. The Regional Youth Cooperation Office was inspired by the Berlin Process and established in 2016. It has been promoting cooperation and reconciliation among the young people in the Western Balkans.[141]

The European Commission's Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training gathers ministers of education of Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia. The gathering is an annual event and has been taking place since 2012. Not even once has the Peace Education made it to the agenda. [142]

Civic Education entered the education platform in Serbia in the school year 2001/2[143] This was the first attempt to institutionalize a subject which correlates with the values Peace Education promotes: social cohesion, democracy, equality, citizenship, civil rights.[144]Educators, pedagogues, peace activists need support. The implementation of Peace Education in primary and secondary schools' curricula is a perennial process. Peace Education is a vital tool in bridging the gap among different ethnic and religious groups of children. Through it the values of meaningful dialogue, constructive conflict resolution and social cohesion are successfully promoted among school children.[145] The initiation of the official implementation of Civic Education (i.e. a subject whose values are in alignment with

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[138] ibid

[139] Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia, accessed on Sep 10, 2020, https://www.nansen-dialogue.net/ndcserbia/index.php/en/?start=136

[140] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, accessed on Sep 10, 2020, http://www.mfa.gov.rs/en/foreign-policy/eu/regional-initiatives/berlin-process

[141] ibid

[142] Quaker Council for Eurpoean Affairs Peace Education, accessed on Sep 10, 2020, http://www.qcea.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Peace-Education-report.pdf

[143]Unicef Serbia, accessed on Sep 10, 2020, https://www.unicef.org/serbia/en/reports/civic-education-primary-and-secondary-schools-republic-serbia#:~:text=In%20November%202001%2C%20Civic%20Education,developed%20from%20existing%20NGO%20programmes.

[144]"Civic Education," Solidar, accessed on Sep 10, 2020, https://www.solidar.org/system/downloads/attachments/000/000/490/original/2015_Building_Learning_Societies_Case_Studies_Civic_Education.pdf?1470059210

[145]"Global Campaign for Peace Education,", Peace Ed Campaign, accessed on Sep 10, 2020, https://www.peace-ed-campaign.org/education-for-peace-bridging-the-divide-in-the-western-balkans/

the Peace Education values) took off in school year 2001/2. The Republic of Croatia has been offering a subject *Građanski odgoj i obrazovanje (i.e. Civic Education)* in certain schools. The experimentation with this subject started in the school year 2013/4 with the help of the NGO *Good.* [146] In Bosnia and Herzegovina Civic Education was introduced in 2005 for the 7th and 8th graders of the primary schools and 3rd and 4th year of high schools. [147] North Macedonian Ministry of Education introduced new programmes within the existing curricula in 2018 dedicated to Citizenship Educations. This programme was mainly intended for the 8th graders of the primary schools. [148] Also, a prominent NGO Macedonian Civic Education Center had been helping the implementation of the civic values in various projects regarding children. [149] In Albania Civic Education has also been supported by Council of Europe and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency through projects. [150]

In the continuation of the paper, the author will present some of the successful examples of Peace Education initiatives in the Western Balkans which are in correlation with the theories previously presented-social interdependence, integrate negotiations, constructive controversy.

3.2. Peace Education and Bosnia and Herzegovina: Quaker Council for European Affairs and Nansen Dialogue Centre

Despite fragile and sensitive contexts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, young people are being offered alternatives within the mainly mono-ethnic educational institutions.[151] So far, most of the initiatives have been a part of the informal education. However, Peace Educators, non-governmental organizations and ministries are aware of the importance of Peace Education. Peace Educators are willing to cooperate with young people and incorporate their vision into the future of education. By doing so, peace educators are able to include their ideas and vision in future educational programmes.

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[146]Good Inicijativa, accessed on Sep 10, 2020, http://goo.hr/good-inicijativa/polazista/

[147] Skolski portal, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, https://www.skolskiportal.hr/sadrzaj/zanimljivosti/stratesko-planiranje-posveceno-temama-iz-oblasti-gradanskog-obrazovanja/

[148] European Commission, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/national-reforms-school-education-42_en

[149] Macedonian Civic Education Center, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, https://www.mcgo.org.mk/our-work/

[150] Council of Europe, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/strengthening-democratic-citizenship-education-in-albania

[151]Quaker Council for European Affairs, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, http://www.qcea.org/peace/peace-education/

What a better way to foster changes than through education. The European Commission Strategy for the Western Balkans of 2018 "outlines flagship initiatives among which, two are correlated with the education: reconciliation and good neighbourly relations and socio-economic development."[152] Coherent and coordinated approach to peace education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is crucial due to the socio-economic environment. BiH has a number of projects run by civil society and schools. One of the more well-known examples *is Education for Peace* which began working in BiH in 2000 "with the aim of creating a culture of peace through education."[153]

The two examples which will follow depict how peace education in BiH might appeal more to wider audiences. One of them is the project Alternatives to Violence Project – QCA initiative (Quaker Council for European Affairs). AVP was introduced to BiH in 2004 by Quakers. It has expanded to several cities in BiH to train teachers, civil society, social workers, police, and parents. Over the years, it involved over 1000 participants. Participants reported that they gained greater respect for themselves, and adopted skills for resolving conflict through communication, dialogue, and teamwork. They felt safe while interacting with each other everywhere in school. There were no penalties introduced. There is generally a strong tendency of imposing penalties on students participating in conflicts in school settings. So, students then act properly to avoid punishment. Such oppressive attitudes undermine students' self-confidence and self-worth. So, it is not the best way to teach neither effective communication skills nor is it a desired method for academic and social development. Following the traces of social interdependence theory we witness the importance of consensual Peace whose durability is much more powerful than domination established through imposed Peace. The legacy of AVP remains in certain schools. For example, a "Madrasah or Muslim school in Tuzla has adopted the AVP training as a part of the school culture."[154]

The second beneficial for students' example are Nansen Dialogue Centers (NDC) based across the Western Balkans. The network promotes dialogue with mixed groups to foster understanding. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, NDC has offices in Sarajevo and in Mostar. The Mostar office has been working on the "two schools under one roof" phenomenon since 2008.

[152] European Commission, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/six-flagship-initiatives-support-transformation-western-balkans_en.pdf
[153] Education for Peace, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, http://efpinternational.org/efp-bih#:~:text=Education%20for%20Peace%2DBiH%20(EFP,Herzegovina%20(BiH)%20and%20worldwide.
[154] Quaker Council for Eurpoean Affairs Peace Education, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, http://www.qcea.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Peace-Education-report.pdf

is to be said that this phenomenon is "two schools under one roof" has been a "practice taking place in some schools of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina where Bosniak and Croat students attend "ethnically" separated classes located in the same building."[155]In 2015 NDC Mostar launched the Nansen Model for Integrated Education in primary and secondary in three cities: Mostar, Stolac and Prozor/ Rama.[156] The Peace Educators wanted to address the issues of segregation in a rather systematic manner.

The Nansen Model includes teacher training in experiential methods to "promote dialogue, tolerance and nonviolent conflict transformation. NDC Mostar identifies teachers who are open to the idea and provides them training."[157]

These projects were in a way pioneers in such fragile contexts, since numerous students had never before shared classrooms with students of different religions. These multi-ethnic and non-obligatory classes were run simultaneously with the regular ones from September to May.

Yet another meaningful project established and managed by NCD Mostar was the Orkdal project. Through the cooperation between the city of Mostar and Norwegian municipality of Orkdal initiatives to connect schools of East and West Mostar were established. The initiatives were aiming at primary school children through roundtables, debates, highlighting the importance of the fight against drugs. This is an impeccable example of integrative negation theory within which the mutually beneficial rapport can be build via realization of the common goal generally perceived as good and meaningful regardless of the differences between the parties. In the school years 2005-2007 children of both ethnical groups were also included in projects dealing with Ecology. The results of these initiatives are direct contacts between different ethnic groups of students, as well as the overall improvement of the atmosphere among students.[158]

Although administrations and school systems may remain divided, this model can send a powerful message that students can cooperate and find common ground. Some of the most important implication to be taken into account for future and prospective similar programmes

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[155] Alessandro Tolomelli "Two schools under one roof".The role of education in the reconciliation process in Bosniaand Herzegovina, Ricerche di Pedagogia e Didattica – Journal of Theories and Research in Education 10, 1 (2015).

[156]Peace Nexus Foundation, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, https://peacenexus.org/ndc/

[157] Nansen Dialogue Centre Mostar, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, https://www.nansen-dialogue.net/ndcmostar/index.php/en/mostar-activities/1001-nansen-model-for-integrated-education-continues-to-be-implemented-in-prozor-rama-and-stolac

[158]"Keep on Talking, Review of the Nansen Dialogue Network in the Western Balkans", CMI, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, https://issuu.com/cmi-norway/docs/3339-keep-on-talking-review-of-the-nansen-dialogue

is the ethos of integrated schools, unbiased approaches in the educational processes, positive school environment and communication in integrated school environment.

NDC Mostar has been contemplating the ways of intensifying the need for Peace Education also in mono-ethnic schools. [159]

3.3. Peace Education Initiatives in the Republic of Serbia – Cooperation between Lillehammer and Bujanovac

Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia was established in 2000. Since 2006 the NDC Belgrade started implementing its practices in specialized programmes[160]for educational institutions in the municipality of Bujanovac. The project "Cooperation between Lillehammer and Bujanovac" lasted until 2013. Two primary schools from Lillehammer and the Department of Education within the municipality of Lillehammer have collaborated with two secondary schools (i.e. Sveti Sava iSezaiSurroi) and four primary schools from the municipality of Bujanovac.[161] The phenomenon of "two schools under one roof" is also present here.

The projects of professional development designed for teachers, principals, pedagogues and psychologists working in school where Serbian language is used as well as those where Albanian is used were held. Some of the topics were: multiethnic dialogue, social skills, new methodologies in teaching, team work and leading the teams and School Mediation. In occurrences such as this project the presence of negative social interdependence, where parties have negative attitudes toward each other can be noticed. However, it is vital to remember that the accomplishment of each individual's goal is affected by the actions of others. Students have to be primarily introduced to each other. The mutual thread has to be found and established. When potential argument arises students are to be taught to seek further information or clarification from the other party. This intake should enhance more satisfactory reasoning in cognitive conflict imbalance. The program of School Mediation was accepted well by both teachers and students. Teachers and students have attended the workshops, socializing and preparing mutual plays during which they were presenting mutual

[159] Nansen Dialogue Centre Mostar, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, https://www.nansen-dialogue.net/ndcmostar/index.php/en/mostar-activities/1001-nansen-model-for-integrated-education-continues-to-be-implemented-in-prozor-rama-and-stolac
[160] The progammes are accredited by https://zuov.gov.rs/
[161] Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, http://www.nansen-dialogue.net/ndcserbia/index.php/en/?start=112

successes.[162]Mediations clubs were opened in all schools and the teams of teacher continued training students how to solve conflict though mediation. NDC Serbia members and NDC Lillehammer educators and professionals provided necessary support and were holding consultative meetings and enhanced cooperation among schools.

Students who were participating in these sessions were more than willing to cooperate with their peers.[163]Usually, they were in culturally diversified (i.e. Serbian student cooperating with an Albanian one and vice-versa). Upon completion of the mediation programme some of them became mediators which made them feel incredibly proud. On the *Election Day* they were wearing T-shirts with the mediators' emblems, which boosted the overall morale and made them feel like role models to others.[164]

The values of mutual respect, understanding and appreciation of the other culture were strengthened. This collaboration is a powerful example of constructive controversy theory due to its sensitive and fragile context. Students had to be challenged to overcome initially linguistic barriers and consequently the cultural ones. However, through the search for better understanding, while feeling uncertain of the other party's argument validity, students have learned how to interact with each other regardless of the differences and fragile contexts.

3.3.1. Mediation clubs in Vojvodina

Since 2006 Nansen Dialogue Centre has been organising workshop dedicated to mediation for teachers, educators, pedagogues and social workers.[165] In the beginning of each school year, teachers attend basic and advanced workshops dedicated to mediation. Then the plan for the education of students is realised with the collaboration with the workshop's leader. It is advised that students from third to eight grade in primary schools and students from first to third year in high schools attend workshops for peer mediation.

The workshops are conducted within the extra-curricular activities. Some of the common creative solutions are secret ballots; posters hung in schools corridors advertising mediation clubs and their benefits etc.[166]Throughout the workshop interactive, parctipatory

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[162] Figure 8

[163] Tatjana Popovic Managing Director of the NDC Serbia, phone conversation with the author, Sep 15, 2020.

[164] ibid

[165] Figure 7

[166] Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia, accessed on Sep 12, 2020, http://www.nansen-dialogue.net/ndcserbia/index.php/en/?start=112

methods[167]and real life case from the school or everyday life are actively being used as a tool for learning peaceful conflict resolution.

Figure 7 Beginning of the Mediation Seminar : The photo distributed to author by Tatjana Popovic, NCD Serbia Regional Manager

The participants mutually evaluate and analise and provide suggestions. The workshop's mediator gradually establishes a dialogue by including the participants in each part of the work, intersecting their personal and group opinion and views. The participants are working in small groups, sometimes alone, by themselves and consequenlty publicly elaborating and presenting their ideas. Profesional and life experience of the participants is of value and it is educator's job to elicit it and take on surface and use as something unique and crucial for peaceful conflict resolution.

The atmpospehere should be stimulating, profesional and colleagues should be opening up to each other, by freely exchaning ideas, opinions and experiences.Role-plays and games appear to be the crucial instrument for understaning of peaceful conflict resolution, equally successfully amnog children of all age as well as adults. This is a unique opportunity for the

[167]Participatory Methods, accessed on Sep 12, 2020https://www.participatorymethods.org/

workshop members to put themselves in mediators' shooes and by implementing acquired skills use the strategy of negotiation. [168]

The values of multi ethnicity and mutual cooperation have been the basis of the NCD projects in multi-ethnic societies. Teachers i.e. colleagues are always in a team with a colleague of different nationality and/or religion. This is done in order to establish a friendly relationship and present the importance of the rapport built on common threads among people, rather than differences such as nationality and/or religion.

3 school years: 2018/2019, 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 have been and will be marked by the accredited programmes by the Institute for the Advancement of Education for teachers called: "School Mediation in Multiethnic and Multircultural Communities". For educators this is such a motivating initiative due to the collection of points they gain upon completion of the seminars. [169]

Figure 8 Reaching an agreement Workshop Photo sent to author by Tatjana Popovic NCD Serbia Director

[168]Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia , accessed on Sep 12, 2020https://www.nansen-dialogue.net/ndcserbia/index.php/sr/pocetna/120-news-2/897-skolska-medijacija-za-nastavnike-napredni-seminar

[169] Institute for the Advancement of Education and Upbringing, accessed on Sep 12, 2020https://zuov.gov.rs/

Some of the schools which have been actively participating in school mediations are schools in Novi Sad, BačkiPetrovac, Temerin, RuskiKrstur, Gložani and Ćelarevo.[170]

Due to the confidentiality matters it is impossible to dwell into the details of certain conflicts which have emerged on the surfaces.[171]However, what could be said is that teachers have often been unaware of the ongoing conflicts. Through active participation and diligent attendance students mediators have successfully acquired necessary Peace Building skills crucial for overcoming violent conflict resolutions. Peer mediation helps students to internalize communication with people in a healthy manner. The mediation process is led by students. The interaction focused on student centered programs as these peer mediation programmes can increase social harmony.

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[170] Figure 11
[171] Tatjana Popovic NDC Serbia Director a phone conversation with the author, Sep 15, 2020.

4. Peace Education and its future

4.1. Peace Educators' Responsibilities

"Welcome to my morning, welcome to my day.

I am the one responsible; I made it just this way."[172]

In this chapter the educator's role in maintaining the sustainable peace in a classroom while understanding the protracted conflicts, trying to build up social cohesion will be tackled. What is the role of a modern educator conducting his /her lessons in the uncertain 21st century? What is an educator to do in order to empower a student?

Among other vital constituents of educational system a teacher's role is not ephemeral. The quality of educators' teaching and conducting themselves and their lectures in the fragile contexts such as the Western Balkans is vital for the overall progress of education system. [173]More seminars and workshops dedicated to the values of Peace Education and their implementation should be established.

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[172] A song "Farewell Andromeda" by John Denver
[173]"How the world's best-performing school systems come out on top", McKinsey & Company, accessed on Sep 16, 2020, https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/how-the-worlds-best-performing-school-systems-come-out-on-top#

Teachers and/or educators are oftentimes blamed for the failures of their students and only praised when students excel at official exams. Pointing fingers and blaming them for all the wrongs is not useful and serves no good. What educators should be held accountable for is the equal chance for participation.

As defined by United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Sustainable Development one of the most important goals for all of us is to: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." [174]

Since educators who are willing to participate in the implementation of Peace Education in the curricula of both primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Serbia or region, cannot and should not be the only agents of the decision making process what are they to do?

How can we, as educators, be responsible and implement some of the values of Peace Education in curricula without spending incredible amounts of money? As could have been seen, in the examples previously presented in the paper, when the core values of Peace Education are intertwined within schools' everyday life they are accepted.

What any mindful and responsible educator can do is dwell into the personal level. By dealing with the introspective, the educators are empowering young minds and boosting their overall confidence. This can be implemented into various subject, e.g. music, art, physical education etc and can be performed through meditation, mediation, dance, choir, storytelling. One such organisation, which is dealing with students' emotional literacy, is *Mindful Schools.* [175]It is educators' responsibility to establish and maintain the inner peace for all students included. What could be followed are the core values established by the *Mindful Schools. Figure 8*

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[174]United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, accessed on Sep 16, 2020, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4

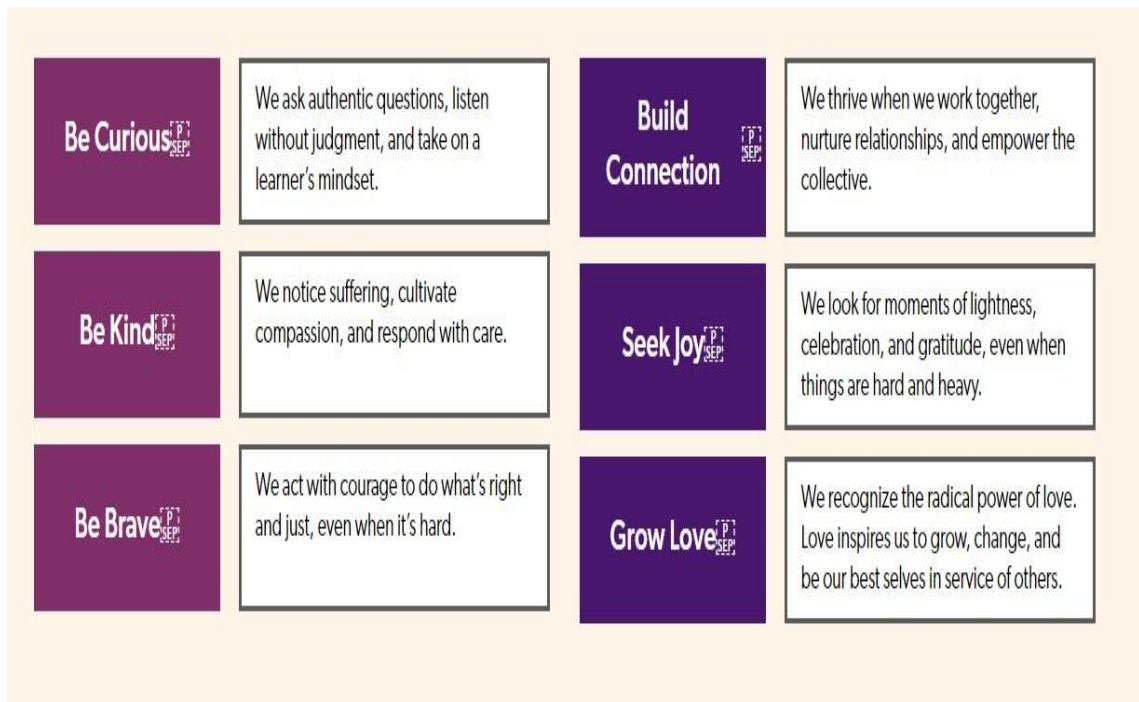[175] Mindful Schools, accessed on Sep 16, 2020, https://www.mindfulschools.org/

Figure 8 Core values in a classroom taken from: https://www.mindfulschools.org/about-mindfulness/why-is-mindfulness-needed-in-education/

Second type of literacy, perhaps equally important as the emotional literacy is the media and culture literacy. It is educators' responsibility to tackle the sub context of the pieces of news to which the majority of students is exposed. Peace Educators should be endorsing students' curiosity to do the research and examine their own confirmation biases. [176] Students are to be taught how do understand cultural implications of the given society and how to be judgmental towards what is being written or produced. Students, depending on the age, could be dealing with various historical occurrences, economical discrepancies and/or peace history. [177]

Thirdly, yet another form of literacy which should be within Peace Educators list of responsibilities is ecological literacy. Students should be talking on daily basis of the ecological implications on their lives. Just as in Montessori's classrooms, where students are surrounded by posters motivating them on daily basis, this could be implemented for the ecological literacy as well. Healthy eating routines, which lead to the overall well-being of an individual should enter the agenda and be a visual reminder for the youngest.[178]

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[176]Media Literacy, accessed on Sep 16, 2020, https://namle.net/publications/media-literacy-definitions/
[177] Zinned Projecet, accessed on Sep 16, 2020, https://www.zinnedproject.org/about/a-peoples-history-a-peoples-pedagogy
[178] Eco Literacy, accessed on Sep 16, 2020, https://www.ecoliteracy.org/download/nourishing-students-posters

As Hicks suggests, teachers should not be examining with students only the problems (be that worldwide or in the community) but also examine the probable solutions. [179] These steps are necessary for the establishment of encouraged and awakened young citizenship. If not given any ideas for the solutions of the issues, young generations can be easily secluded and can feel utterly devastated. It is Peace Educators' responsibility to boost the morale in the classroom. When dealing with the global and/or domestic issues, students and teachers will inevitably be tackling the future implications.

Luckily for the educators, students have always been curious and inclined for further researches. Optimism and the ability to envision prosperous outcomes for current issues might be hidden in the Peace Education. [180]

Educators' responsibility as well is to teach students how to perceive the issue from the immediate circumstantial and farther future. *Figure* 9
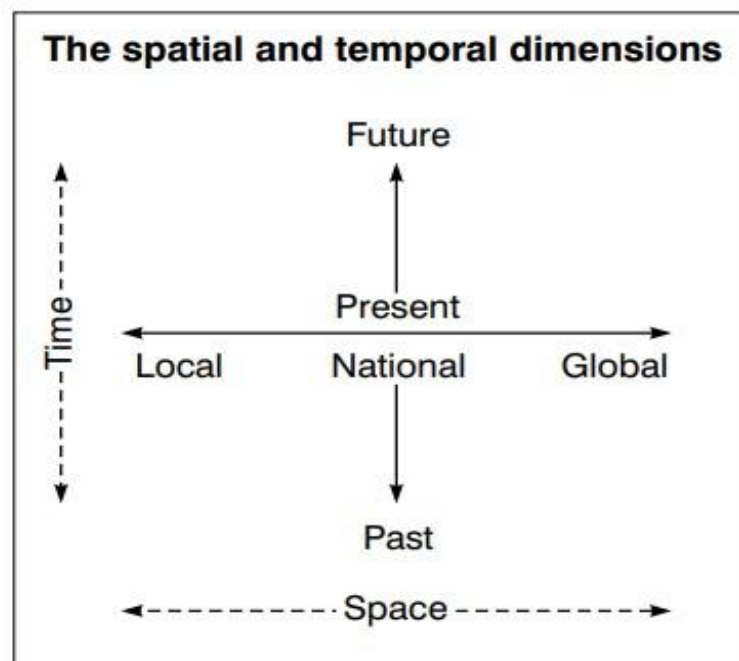

Figure 9 The spatial and temporal dimensions taken from: David Hicks 2004 Teaching for Tomorrow: how can future studies contribute to peace education? Journal of Peace Education Vol. 1, No. 2, September 2004, Carfax Publishing, Taylor and Francis Group

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[179] Hicks, D., Lessons for the future: the missing dimension in education (London, RoutledgeFalmer, 2002)
[180] David Hicks,"Teaching for Tomorrow: how can future studies contribute to peace education?," Journal of Peace Education Vol. 1, No. 2, (September 2004)

This means that it is equally important to equip students with the knowledge of today's implications as well as the long-term prospects.[181]

There will be those who will oppose the idea of optimism within the Peace Education. Some might argue that it would be challenging to imagine and therefore speculate the future. Meadows et al. had the same worries when they said: "We should say immediately for the sake of skeptics that we do not believe it is possible for the world to envision its way to a sustainable future. Vision without action is useless. But action without vision does not know where to go or why to go there. Vision is absolutely necessary to guide and motivate action. More than that, vision, when widely shared and firmly kept in sight, brings into being new systems."[182]

Schools should be promoting civic values and should enhance students' willingness to acquire the skills for the better understanding of future and peace implications. During the time of this paper's creation the crisis of COVID-19 is devastating the entire world and the educators among us all are again facing an incredibly challenging task. This unprecedented crisis is making us all re-think our teaching routines and responsibilities.

It seems that such an unprecedented crisis has emphasized what Peace Educators had already known, that the world is terribly unprepared for the sudden and obvious emergence of all forms of structural violence. [183] As Tony Jenkins says we appear to be living in the "post-truth" era. [184] And this is where the Peace Educators' responsibility lies hidden. We have to give our students necessary tools to challenge the given patterns and oppose well-established opinions and ideas globally speaking.

What has come out on the surface during the COVID-19 era is the urge for the collective reflection. Latin American Council for Peace Research established a campaign "A New Normal".[185] For the purposes of the paper this is relevant to the extent, that is every educator's responsibility to challenge students' perceptions on normalcy, be that now or prior to COVID-19 outburst.

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[181] ibid

[182] Meadows, D. H., Meadows, D. L. and Randers, J., Beyond the limits: global collapse or a sustainable future, (London, Earthscan, 1992),224

[183] "The Future is Now: A Pedagogical Imperative for Peace Education," Global Campaign for Peace Education, accessed on Sep 19, 2020, https://www.peace-ed-campaign.org/the-future-is-now-a-pedagogical-imperative-for-peace-education/

[184] ibid

[185] "Manifesto for a New Normality," Global Campaign for Peace Education,, accessed on Sep 19, 2020, https://www.peace-ed-campaign.org/manifesto-for-a-new-normality/

We are the ones who should be supporting our students' creativity. Just as Marry Lee Morrison says: "We all image. Deep within us we carry impressions, fragments, pictures, sights, sounds, smells, feelings and beliefs. Sometimes these represent real or imagined events from our past. Sometimes they might represent our hopes and dreams for the future. Sometimes these images come to us in dreams while we sleep. Sometimes in daydreams. Sometimes these images are scary. Sometimes not."[186] Children's creativity should be boosted.

Just as anyone who is engaged in Peace Education already knows, positivity and optimism are necessary if we actually want to actively engage our students in shaping of future. What appears to be a threat is the lack of practical and tangible prospective peaceful future. The implementations of Peace Education in the curricula among the region might be even more abstract now than before due to the uncertainty of the pandemic era we live in.

Be that as challenging and somber as it is, one must not despair. Now more than ever educators are in the centre of attention. Some of the children are following the lessons remotely, some of them do not have the access to them, due to the lack of technical equipment.

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[186] " Futures invention: Imaging a fossil-free world," Global Campaign for Peace Education, accessed on Sep 19, 2020, https://www.peace-ed-campaign.org/futures-invention-imaging-a-fossil-free-world/

Conclusion

The implementation of the Peace Education in both primary and secondary schools' curricula should not be an individual, but a rather systematic and mutual effort. As it has been seen in practice, when given the opportunity students are more than willing to acquire the peacebuilding skills. In a sensitive context, such as the Western Balkans, the protracted conflicts, unstable socio-economic parameters, violent language should be observed as the constant reminders of the necessity for the Peace Education.

If students have troublesome families and cannot be at peace at home, giving them an opportunity to gain a new perspective into the peaceful classroom is pivotal. Students who have been witnessing violent conflict resolutions (or their continuation, without cessation) will, without being given the alternative, subconsciously learn that that is the way to conduct themselves. This leads to the repetition of the vicious circle of the malice patterns, protracted in many generations. Since learning is an intimate and private process, and it occurs on the cognitive level, students' emotions are actively engaged in the learning process. Without any doubt, the educators should be aiming at the emotional perception while constructing the curricula.

If not currently possible for the Peace Education to be introduced as a separate subject in the national curricula, its values and traces have to be intertwined in the already existing subjects. In this way the children will be prepared for the actual implementation of the Peace Studies.

What is devastating is that even those generations in the Western Balkans which had not been the active participants of the war atrocities have been perpetuating the violent acts among each other. Most often those children or young adolescents are using the violent and abrupt language. This is to be found as well online, as in person.

Those of us actively engaged in education process, be that in private or public sector, are well acquainted with the perils of such patterns. Violence and language are perceived as norms and forms of strength. Children are reciprocating the vile patterns given in the media and public outlets. Numerous governments so far have incredibly failed our youngest. By collecting some political points and waging bigger arguments, they have completely disregarded and neglected the most vulnerable among us- children.

We have all deprived them of the bare necessity and need- and that is peace. It is impossible to negate these occurrences. Once we enter any school, these patterns can be noticed.

What numerous, previously listed NGOs and their initiatives, have done in regard to Peace Education simply cannot and should not be enough. Not enough schools and principals are interested in recruiting those NGOs to educate their staff and give them necessary tools. Just as it was done for the Civic Education, which inevitably has many traces of Peace Education values, the same should be done for the purpose of the Peace Education implementation.

More has to be done on the governmental and bureaucratic level. Those who have been actively engaged in Peace Education and their students should be employed by the government and official educational bodies, to establish once and for all the Peace Education as a separate subject in both primary and secondary schools.

Most of the children are still, naturally, driven by the external factors and easily influenced, especially in the modern, digital era; the celebrities (e.g. athletes, distinguished actors, influencers) should be employed to promote the value of Peace Education within school contexts. Like it or not, the modern school kids are spending most of their time online. For most of them, besides Serbian and/or any other language, digital is their mother tongue as well.

Their digital footprint is contaminated. It is simply because there are no precautions. School children's role models are questionable. The language they use and are exposed to is contaminated, least to say.

With all due respect to both educators and NGO participants and activists, more has to be done on the national, official level. Seminars and conferences for secluded circles of society are not enough. Peace should be talked about and pondered over, before any conflict surges on the surface. The overall quality of education has to be enhanced in order for teacher to feel motivated and appreciative of the remuneration.

For some of the students in the Western Balkans, the idea of the Peace Education is still an abstract and not comprehensive idea due to its seclusion. Peace Education as such is still mainly being taught and learned at the higher educational instances.

Students of primary and secondary school, particularly in rural areas do not have any notions of what Peace Education might be. Some of them have never even encountered the notions of Civic Education, regardless of the life in the multi-ethnic societies.

The other issue in regard to conflict resolutions is the silence surrounding it. It happens quite often that the oppressor is so well-accepted by the society that the victim cannot even

verbalise the enduring acts of violence. Those figures, despite young age can be incredibly manipulative and can use for their own advantage the flaws of the system. Violent act happens. The child rarely reports what happened. The perpetrator already knows that, but with each successful mission builds up confidence.

The victims of violence in schools have become way too passive. They have received the subliminal and subtle message that we just have to learn to live with the violence and its perpetrators. And who is to be blamed for their passivity? Parents? Teachers? Peers? The system? Some might agree that the most suitable answer would be all those listed together. However, if we want to change anything we have to start with the young generations and their educations. Peace Education should not be in possession of the victims. Perpetrators need it and the skills from it, more than anyone. Peace Education should be in possession of all of us. Every child has to be taught how to peacefully resolve conflicts, negotiate, and interact with those different from him/her. Only by the acquisition of these skills can we be sure that as educators we have empowered the new generation of confident and democratic citizenship. Raising awareness among the parents, caregivers is equally important. Those who are spending time with children at home should be taught through seminars and workshops about the importance of the Peace Education. Older students in both primary and secondary schools upon the completion of a course dedicated to Peace Education should be granted by the roles of mentors. This title would give them a sense of maturity and make them feel proud of finishing the course dedicated to Peace Education. Each of the mentors should be assigned to one of the younger students in order to help them implement these skills in practice. Perhaps, even sometimes just recognise the prospect of conflicts. Prevention can also be crucial in regard to implication of Peace Education.

While gradually working on the actual implementation of Peace Education in primary and secondary schools in the region, it is also Peace Educators' responsibility to empower and educate other colleagues about the Peace implications. It has been seen that Peace can and is implemented in virtually any subject in the curricula. The initiatives such as those mentioned the paper depict the importance of the direct contact with the other ethnic group in the given society. Direct contact humanizes people. When students are in direct touch with those who have been mainly described as others it provided them with the unique opportunity of active learning. Children of different ethnicities and religions have had chances to cooperate and work together while learning about the Peace and upgrading their skills crucial for young, empowered and democratic citizenship

Students are to be constantly stimulated to take active part in the establishment of more cohesive, socially diverse community. The importance of instances, such as Quaker and Nansen initiatives in relation to Peace Education. The findings have shown that the parties, be they in conflict or not, have to spend time together to get to know each before they are even able to peacefully resolve conflicts. Direct contact humanizes the other one and it provides an insight into others' perspectives. The candidate is extracting the lack of initiatives in regard to Peace Education coming from the official governmental institutions. Hence candidate's conclusion that regardless of the named absence of interest or scarcity of sources Peace Education calls on motivated, eager and optimistic educators willing to implement its values in their teachings.

Without being given the tools for overcoming violent conflicts and challenges on the way of their upbringing we cannot expect for the children to be ready for the leadership. Education prevention seems to be pivotal in the ages of uncertain 21st century.

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