THE ROLE OF PEACE EDUCATION IN THE RESTORATION OF COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE IN TERRORISM AFFECTED AREAS OF MARAWI CITY

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Abstract

This paper aimed to examine peace education initiatives in restoring confidence of the communities in the wake of terrorist violence. The terror plot destructed many building such as; schools, churches, hospital and business establishments in the area. This situation rendered the communities of Marawi helpless to provide education to their children in an environment of terror, volatility and insecurity. Many innocent children and their parents suffered psychological and socially. Still the danger is looming large. To grapple with the situation, various national and international philanthropic organizations in collaboration with the government of the Philippines started community sensitization programmes in order to restore peace and development in the area. Findings of this study revealed that peace education initiatives have led to restoration of peace in the area. Students have started going to schools have slowly come out of the psychological stress and strain. Parents now confidently are sending their children to schools. School-home communication has strengthened. Parents also coordinated with teachers to ward off any untoward future situation.

Keywords: Peace Education, Community Confidence, Terrorism, Peace and Development, Marawi City

Background the Study

Education is the primary source to shape the attitudes of individuals. It equips the people with significant knowledge and skills to effectively handle and grapple with various challenges of life. There are many cost effective methods and approaches to empower people with knowledge, skills and resources to promote peace and development. Education enables people to resolve problems and conflicts by generating conditions that engender peace and development. Education is a source of peace and progress, because it promotes harmony and tranquility. The role of education in development of peace is an undisputable fact. It brings about a positive change in the attitudes and

behaviors of people. Peace and progress are the ultimate results of effective education. Individuals get awareness about their roles and responsibilities through education and training. They find mutually interactive opportunities of learning new behaviors and acquiring new knowledge. This helps them to co-exist peacefully with others and to work for sustainable peace and development of their societies. Integration of peace education in the classroom curriculum and school activities is the best way to achieve this goal. Schools are learning communities where future citizens are trained, educated and prepared. Another way is to train the teachers and other volunteers as educators to promote the causes of peace and development. Teachers may perform this through their teaching practices in schools. This provides an evolutionary foundation to integrate the concept of peace versus conflict among the young generations. For this purpose the role of teacher educators is very crucial, because they create awareness among the communities about the importance of peace and development. This unexpected catastrophic development completely changed the socio-economic and geo-politico position of the district and its adjacent areas. In the aftermath of the situation, the condition of education became maimed. Social life of the people of the area came to stand still. Children and adult equally suffered psychologically and socially. The result was psychosocial terror phobia prevailing among the school children. This condition broke down the confidence of the people of the area. Consequently, school children were stopped from going to schools and business activities closed down due to fear of abduction, killing, and bomb and blast. To restore the shattered confidence of the communities, many awareness programmes were launched by public and private agencies. To achieve this goal training programmes were designed and implemented. For this purpose school teachers and students in different areas were intensively trained to deal with unexpected emergencies, to work closely with schools and to protect and guide children to grow socially and gain confidence. The programmes having various durations such as two weeks, one month and three days were aimed at presenting the role of teachers as change agents, promotion of non-violence and positive changes in the behavior of the community towards peace, education and development in Marawi. The trainings sensitized the teachers, students and community members about the importance of peace and to promote a culture of tolerance, non-violence and harmony. These training programmes were implemented in the government elementary and secondary schools where teachers and students were trained through interactive sessions in order to promote critical thinking skills of students and teachers. The training sessions of the aforesaid training programmes were characterized by activity based

approach through which the participants (teachers and students) were involved in the sessions through discussions, presenting and accepting difference of views, presentations, role plays and conflict handling demonstrations. This training provided wider interactive opportunities to teachers and students to understand the importance of peace and education in the area. The immediate effects of the peace education are prominently evident from the facts that in many places of the district, schools have been reconstructed, teaching and learning process in schools has been restored, parental attitude has changed positively towards schools, and students' own behaviors have improved about schooling. The children and parents and other community people are coming out of the terror phobia slowly. This is a positive development which could be taken into future by instilling into the minds of the parents and communities strong sense of personal and collective commitment and unity of purpose. This will contribute towards encouragement of parents and communities for nonviolent conflict resolution and peaceful society in the long run.

Peace Education

Peace education aims to resist and confront violence and terror to transform a society from state of disturbance to a state of peace and harmony. The main focus of peace education is restoration of peace and development through educational means. Peace education is an evolutionary step towards changing people's perception and behaviors to nurture a culture of peace. Peace educators transform the minds of people which ultimately culminate in changing of knowledge, values, skills and behaviors. This process of transformation is essential to provide a firm foundation to the terror or violence affected cultures and societies. Marawi being a terror affected area is facing enormous challenges of peace and development. Many areas have been grossly affected by the recent terrorist attacks and violence. This situation rendered children and adult both psychologically depressed, socially disintegrated, economically shattered and morally discouraged. In the wake of the terrorist waves of violence and disturbance, many peace restoration and reconstruction efforts were undertaken to bring the abnormal situation back to normalcy. For this purpose, peace education initiatives were started to enable the people restore their confidence and courage to live peacefully. Teachers and volunteers' teams were constituted to educate people and to guide them to help restore their shattered confidence and remove fear from their minds. Under these activities many parental and community workshops were conducted in many places of the district in which parents, community members and children participated equally. The basic purpose of these training and

educational endeavors were to restore the confidence of the communities and to enable them to re-continue their lives peacefully. This was a gigantic task and it still continues with more strong social and political support. This study therefore aims to explore the concept and importance of peace education in the teaching community.

Literature Review

Peace education is not a new phenomenon. It has existed in human history in one form or another since antiquity. Its roots can be found in the classical Greek period as well. Plato and Aristotle have also emphasized on the importance of peace and development in their theories. It is also attributed to Maria Montessori, john Dewey and even Erasmus. They all worked for peace and development through their ideas and theories. Peace education is a problem solving practice. It is an attempt to build peace and tranquility through educational means by promoting universal values. The basic aim of peace education is to enable the violence affected people to share exercises, to own peace, to avoid terror and to work together to realize a shared and peaceful future for humanity irrespective of cast, color and creed on the planet earth. The Peace education means educating the people about the importance of peace and its benefits. It is the process of transforming the thinking of people positively and shaping their behaviors by providing them with knowledge, values, and skills. Peace education also means training the people to resolve their conflicts, interpersonal disputes through dialogue, negotiations and mediations. According to Jenkins (2008) peace education is a method to alter beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of people from negative to positive attitudes so that conflict is resolved and violence is prevented. Thus it is used as a basis for prevention of violence and resolution of conflicts. Oslo Institute of International Peace and Research (PRIO) writes that peace education is promotion of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to bring about positive behavioral changes in order to enable children, adult and youth to avoid conflict and violence and to develop sense of care, love and respect for each other on earth as global citizens. Kester (2007) elaborates that the content of peace education includes knowledge about peace movement, peacemakers, direct and indirect violence, peace as an active process, nurturing culture of peace, human rights and responsibilities, worldviews and

ideologies, nonviolent communication, community and dialogue. The method of peace is collaborative, cooperative, participatory and active. The structure of the teaching learning process in peace education includes storytelling, case studies, role plays, empathy activities, negotiations, discussions, mediation practice, journaling, reflection circles and alternative future exercises. In view of Danesh and Danesh the main purpose of peace education is to transform the minds of people from conflict to peace through dialogue and non-violence means. The second objective of peace education is to transform the beliefs of general public especially youth about peace across generations. Hence, peace education is the attainment of knowledge, acquisition of values and developing skills, attitudes, and behaviors about living in harmony and peace with others and with others in the society. It is also an ability of co-existence with all living creatures in the ultimate natural environment. Kester in one his paper writes that the importance of peace for tranquillity and development is self-explanatory. Peace is essential for world progress. United Nations (UN) has passed numerous declarations and conventions on peace and development. Ex-Director General of United Nation Educational Social and Cultural Organization, Kiochiro Matsuura is said to have remarked that peace education is one of the fundamental aims of the UNESCO mission as well as of the UN. GcGlynn (2004) argues that survival and progress of peaceful society depends on peaceful, positive and educated minds. Schools are the best places where the youth could be educated and trained in the best possible manner. Therefore, schools, teachers and parents of the present day have enormous responsibilities on their shoulders regarding the achievement of this goal. It is observed that a culture of violence and terror is increasing day by day everywhere. This trend has paced the world peace and progress at a stake. Danesh highlights that humanity needs a secure and safe culture to prosper. Peace education is the means through which this goal could be materialized. It has been observed that everywhere people are affected by violence, social problems and lack of respect for each other. Through peace education the difference among the people could turn into agreements and cooperation. Sara writes that peace is a global need. It could be promoted through care, love, respect and by avoiding conflict and violence. Parents and community members could be trained to deal with conflicts, unexpected dangers, threads and violence effectively. For this purpose a mass scale awareness programmes could be initiated in such areas where conflict exists or there is an imminent threat to peace and tranquility. The ultimate results of such activities would be creation of a culture of trust, collaboration, peace and equity. Schools could also be used for dissemination of the message of peace education. For the

achievement of this aim, at lager scales, peace education could be integrated in the school curriculum. This would help in inculcating into the minds of the young generation the concept of peace and its importance for development of human society. Apart from theoretical knowledge, attention must be paid to skills, values and attitude development. This will help in sustainable growth of positive behaviors, which is the foremost requirement for developing a sense of care, love, cooperation and unity .The aim of peace education is to restore the disturbed communities socially, economically, politically and morally. This is a common responsibility which can be shouldered by all such as parents, community workers, philanthropists, teachers and students together. Halting the issue individually would not be effective. It needs an environment of trust, education and mutual actual ownership of the problem and its consequences. Education is the only tool to bring about sustainable peace and to make the reconstruction activities successful. Through education the behaviors and minds of people could be positively shaped and reshaped. This leads to ultimate harmony and extension of cooperation to other parts of society where conflicts and terror exists. Mayor writes that peace education may be used as a panacea for the treatment of psychological and social pressures of terror affected communities on following three grounds. First, it can be used as Conflict Resolution Training (CRT). Through training the minds of the affected communities could be properly directed and moulded to restore their confidence. This is called mind moulding or mind shaping. It is performed through negotiation and peer mediation. This approach is usually used in those situations where people suffer huge destructions both socially and economically. In the wake of world war two, this mechanism was used to educate the war affected communities in Eastern Europe. This technique had helped in terms of restoring the shattered psyche of the people. Learning to manage fight, resist anger, spread care and love, listening, turn-taking, identifying needs and separating facts from emotions constitute the main elements of this programme. Second is the technique of peace education through Democracy Training (DT). This mechanism is based on the idea that man is peaceful by nature. It typically focuses on political processes such as participation, sharing, decision making, opinion-formations and discussion. This training proposes that human society needs the ultimate commitment from all people around who constitute the society to accept the presence of conflict and the determination to work for tolerance and mutual peaceful co-existence. The basic aim of this type of training is to attempt to foster conflict-free and positive attitudes among the people and to enable them to understand and explore the causes of conflicts in the society and view conflicts as a plate form for

creativity and growth rather than a problem. This type of training enhances peoples' critical thinking skills, reflective skills and a strong consciousness about the existence and extermination of the forces of terror and violence. The end result of such programmes is production of responsible citizens who will follow standards of peace and development rather conflict and enmity. It is an established fact that democracy decreases the chances of injustices and war. Hence, democracy is essential for the creation of culture of peace and development. Third is peace education through Human Rights Education (HRE). This programmes aims at creating awareness among and sensitize the communities about the policies and plans which are needed to take threatened or deprived humanities out of the scourge of conflict and terror. This will engender a solid commitment among the stakeholders to promote an atmosphere of peace where all members of the human community are able to use their personal freedoms and become safe from the dangers of fear, killing, violence, oppression and indignity. In these programmes, the participants are familiarized with the national and international movements, covenants for peace and human rights declarations for promotion of peace, justice, security, unity, solidarity, autonomy and strong affirmation for individual and collective freedoms. Peace education is a dynamic field. Harris has divided it into five categories such as, international education, development education, environmental education, human rights education and conflict education. According to Matsuura and Koichiro peace education philosophy and curriculum covers a range of topics such as history and philosophy of peace, discrimination between positive and negative peace, formation and transformation of peaceful values to present and future generations, nurturing of culture of co-existence and avoiding aggression, conflicts and war. Peace education includes cultivation of peace building skills among the people through dialogue, mediation and social artistic endeavors. Peace educators teach values of respect, understanding, love, care, non-violence and harmony. As a result, it brings various elements and communities together to form a peaceful society though democratic pedagogical means. It is a dialogical learning conducted through participation.

Methodology and Procedures

This study is based on descriptive survey method. The basic purpose of the study is to investigate the attitudes of teachers on peace education initiatives in restoration of community confidence in the wake of terrorist violence in Marawi City, Philippines.

Population and Sampling

The population of the study consisted of all the male and female secondary school teachers in Marawi City. However, teachers were randomly selected from different schools for this study with the ratio of five teachers per school.

Instrumentation

For the purpose of data collection a self-designed questionnaire was developed later administered to the randomly sampled teachers for data collection. Before distributing the questionnaire, it was piloted and refined regarding reliability and validity. The questionnaire was designed based on Five Point Likert Scale with the following ranges such as; Strongly Agreed (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagreed (DA) and Strongly Disagreed (SDA). The questionnaire consisted of various items taken from the following five main themes.

- Concept of peace education
- Importance of peace education
- Benefits of peace education
- Restoration of community confidence
- Challenges and opportunities

Findings

Table 1. Concept of Peace Education

Statements	SA %	A %	U %	DA %	SDA %
Peace education is changing of beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of people positively	40	20	10	15	05
Peace education developed peaceful minds	30	20	13	17	20
Peace education ensured harmony and extension of cooperation in violence affected areas of Swat.	55	25	05	10	05

Table 1show that 40% of the respondents strongly agreed that peace education was changing beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of people positively. Similarly, 30 % of the respondents strongly agreed that peace education was developing peaceful minds. Similarly, 55% strongly agreed that peace education ensured harmony and extension of cooperation in violence affected areas of Marawi.

Table 2.   Importance of Peace Education

Statements	SA %	A %	U %	DA %	SDA %
Peace education restored confidence of violence affected people	23	40	07	20	10
Peace education is a tool to create culture of trust and tranquility in the terror affect areas	35	21	10	19	15
Peace education promoted a conflict free environment in the terror affected area	45	15	05	15	20

Table 2 show that majority of the respondents, 40% agreed that peace education restored confidence of violence affected people. Out of the total respondents, 35% strongly agreed that peace education was a tool to create culture of trust and tranquility in the terror affected area. In view of 45% of the respondents peace education promoted a conflict free environment in the terror affected areas.

Table 3.   Benefits of Peace Education

Statements	SA %	A %	U %	DA %	SDA %
Peace education ensured peace by restoring the shattered confidence of people in the terror affected areas of Swat	30	19	07	23	21
Peace education has removed fear from the minds of the violence affected community members	45	15	10	20	10
Peace education has led to sustainable peace and development in the terror affected areas	60	20	05	05	10

Table 3 show that 30% of the respondents strongly agreed that peace education had ensured peace and tranquility in the terror affected areas of Marawi by restoring the shattered confidence of

people. Similarly, 45% of the respondents strongly agreed that peace education removed fear from the minds of the violence affected community members. Similarly, 60% of the respondents strongly agreed that peace education ensured sustainable peace and development in the terror affected areas.

Table 4. Restoration of Community Confidence

Statements	SA %	A %	U %	DA %	SDA %
Peace education has restored shattered confidence of the violence affected people in Marawi	35	30	10	10	15
Peace education initiatives have promoted feelings of togetherness among the terror violence affected communities in Marawi	40	30	15	05	10
Peace education has restored the broken confidence of terrorist violence affected communities socially	45	25	00	20	15

Table 4 show that 35% of the respondents strongly agreed that peace education initiatives had restored the shattered confidence of the violence affected people in Marawi. In the same way, 40% of the respondents strongly agreed that peace education promoted feelings of togetherness among the affected violence affected communities in Marawi. Similarly, in view of 45% of the respondents, peace education had restored the broken confidence of the terror affected communities socially.

Table 5. Challenges and Opportunities for Peace

Statements	SA	A	U	DA	SDA
	%	%	%	%	%
Communities in Marawi are generally peaceful	45	20	05	20	10
Communities in Marawi offer their social services voluntarily for peace	35	50	05	10	10
Communities in Marawi have flexible attitude towards peace	60	25	00	10	05

Table 5 shows that 45% of the respondents, communities in Marawi are generally peaceful. According to 50% of the respondents communities in Marawi offered their social services voluntarily for peace and development initiatives. In the same way, 60% of the respondents strongly agreed that communities in Marawi have flexible attitudes towards peace and development.

Discussion

Peace education initiatives have led to positive changes in the behaviors and attitudes of the communities. Examination of the data shows that the teachers who took part in the peace education process as trainers and educators understand the importance of peace education. This study provides the wisdom that peace education is a source to restore shattered confidence of the terrorist violence affected people. It means that peace education is a strong tool to create culture of trust and tranquility. Besides, this study revealed that peace education promotes a conflict free environment in the society. The study further showed that peace education initiatives have ensured peace and tranquility in Marawi by restoring the shattered confidence of people. It has removed fear from the minds of the violence affected communities and again paved the way for sustainable peace and development in the society. As a result, sense of justice, democracy, care and feelings of togetherness have developed among the violence affected communities. The study revealed that communities in Marawi are generally peaceful, by nature. It shows that the communities have positive attitude toward promotion of the goals of peace and development.

Conclusion

After analysis of the data, study concludes that peace education initiatives in Marawi have brought about positive changes among the affected communities. For example, parents confidently send their children to schools. Students have come out of the psychological stress and strain. They do not feel hesitant to go to schools now, as many security measures have been undertaken at school and community levels to abort any untoward situation. The contacts between schools and homes have better strengthened. Teachers act responsibly and actively during any emergency situations. Parents skilfully ward off any situation by coordinating with the schools. Strong communication channels have been established between schools and home to deal with any potential thread

effectively. The above discussion concludes that peace education initiatives have restored the confidence of the communities.

Recommendations

On the basis of this study the following recommendations are presented.

1. The peace education initiatives may also be initiated in other parts of the area where the communities are directly affected by terrorist activities such as the different groups of the area, Cebuanos, Maguindanaons, Maranaos, Iranuns, Ilonggos and etc.

2. Peace education may be integrated in school curriculum so that the benefits could be disseminated to the future generation of Marawi on more sustainable basis.

3. Training programmes on peace and development may also be started for women of the terror affected area. This will have far more deeper and positive impact upon the attitudes and behaviors of the young generation.

4. Peace education programmes may be evaluated continuously and results may be communicated to the people at the helm of affairs so that necessary measures could be taken to control the situations effectively in future.

5. Schools should develop closer links with homes and communities to grapple with nay untoward incident or situation future.

6. Curriculum planner may take this an opportunity to include the concept of peace education in the national education curriculum.

Future Research

This study was conducted in the affected area of Marawi. The sample was limited to produce more reliable and valid results. Hence, it is suggested that future studies could be conducted in other terrorism affected areas in the country. This would bring more comprehensive results regarding the effectiveness of the peace education initiatives.

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