

Myanmar Pre-Service Teachers' Awareness on the Role of Teachers as Leaders of Peace Education

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ABSTRACT

Peace education is the teaching of values, attitudes and competencies which are needed for resolving conflicts without violence and maintaining harmonious relationships. These skills are very essential for the citizens of Myanmar which is a diverse and multi-ethnic society in order to live harmoniously and peacefully. Since after getting independence in 1948, Myanmar has been experiencing ethnic conflicts for 70 years which are yet unresolved. Although education is not an explicit component of the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) between the government and many ethnic armed groups, it can be seen as an important aspect in peacebuilding. A new curriculum which includes the lessons about peace education is currently being implemented in Basic Education. Whereas, the role of the teachers become important as leaders of implementing peace education. The personal qualities, knowledge and skills of teachers are very important for determining the success of the implementation process. This study mainly focused on the views of Myanmar pre-service teachers in order to explore how they define peace education, and their awareness on the attitudes, knowledge and skills of a teacher who will implement Peace Education. A descriptive study and open-ended question survey method was used to collect data and thematic analysis was used for analyzing, coding and interpretation. 290 pre-service teachers of two Education Degree Colleges of Myanmar participated in the study. Data analysis was done by thematic analysis. The results of the study showed that pre-service teachers defined peace education in terms of three main themes based on peaceful learning environment, harmony among diversity and conflict resolution. Pre-service teachers viewed that a teacher should have knowledge about peace and conflict resolution, 21st century peacebuilding skills, and the attitudes which support peacebuilding process. Most of them also thought that the peace related lessons in the new curriculum would be effective for encouraging the children to value peace and promote peace education. By doing this study, it is hoped to promote Teacher Education Sector of Myanmar by encouraging pre-service teachers to have an awareness of the importance of teachers' qualities for implementing peace education successfully.

Keywords: Myanmar Pre-service Teachers' Awareness, Role of teachers, Peace Education.

INTRODUCTION

Peace education is a process of promoting the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills necessary to bring about behavioral change that enable children, youths and adults to prevent and resolve conflicts peacefully, prevent violence and create the conditions that lead to peace for oneself, between individuals, between groups, or at the national or international level (UNICEF, 2016). It is also a process which develops skills, attitudes and knowledge as well as abilities such as cooperation, conflict resolution, and problem solving. The main purpose of these skills is to create a safe and peaceful world. In violence-oriented societies, peace education is one of the most important methods to develop and promote a culture of positive peace (UNESCO, 2005).

Similarly, Sridevi (2021) also stated that there is an urgent need for peace education so that globalization problems such as violation of human rights, poverty, environmental destruction and structural violence can be alleviated and eventually eliminated. Peace education is necessary in order to resolve global issues, to preserve the environment, to safeguard human rights, and to ensure peace within and between countries. Peace

education can also assist in the development of social harmony, equity and social justice as alternatives to tensions and wars.

Conflicts cannot be denied in any society, especially in a diverse and multi-cultural society. However, the ways of solving these conflicts are very important and have a lot of impacts upon the residence of the society. Peace education is the teaching of values, attitudes and competencies which are needed for resolving conflicts without violence and maintaining harmonious relationships. These skills are very essential for the citizens of Myanmar which is a diverse and multi-ethnic society in order to live harmoniously and peacefully.

According to the level of peacefulness, the Global Peace Index (GPI) describes the ranking of the peaceful countries around the world. Myanmar is at the rank of 148 out of 163 countries in 2024. It shows that Myanmar needs to promote peace education urgently.

Actually, the demography of Myanmar is quite complicated based on ethnicity and cultural diversity. Having more than 130 ethnic groups, people spread into different States and Regions throughout the country, their language, traditions and customs, dressing styles and beliefs are totally different from each other. Since after getting independence in 1948, Myanmar has been experiencing the ethnic conflicts for 70 years which are yet unresolved. Although education is not an explicit component of the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) between the government and many ethnic armed groups, it can be seen as an important aspect in peacebuilding.

At the Basic Education Sector of Myanmar, from Grade 1 (2016-2017 Academic Year) to Grade 12 (2022-2023 Academic year), a new curriculum reform was implemented and that includes the lessons for peace education which are the new lessons compared to the previous curriculum. It aims to remove institutionalized discrimination against ethnic minorities, language and cultures in order to ensure equitable access and at the same time to build peace in the country.

(1) For implementing peace education by the new curriculum, 3 aims were inserted among the main aims of Basic Education Curriculum, which are (1) To develop “union spirit” and appreciate, maintain and disseminate languages and literatures, cultures, arts and traditional customs of all national groups, (2) To apply their civic and democratic in daily lives and abide by laws, and (3) To become global citizens with awareness and appreciation of human diversity and abilities to practice basic knowledge of peace in their daily lives. (*Myanmar National Curriculum Framework, 5th Draft*)

In order to realize the above-mentioned aims, thirteen guiding principles were employed in the design and development of Basic Education Curriculum in Myanmar. Especially, three guiding principles were designed to emphasize the implementation of peace education, which are

(2) Appreciation of All Cultures, Customs and Traditions_ Students must be nurtured to develop an appreciation of all cultures, customs, and traditions of all national groups at the national level and all other nations at the global level.

(3) Peaceful Coexistence and Living in Harmony _The notion of Peaceful Coexistence and Living in Harmony and Conflict Resolution Skills must be developed in students at all levels of society – community, national and global.

(4) Promoting Equality_ The curriculum, textbooks and other teaching learning materials must be one that promotes students’ learning environment should be provided. (*Myanmar National Curriculum Framework, 5th Draft*)

Moreover, Moral and Civics Curriculum aims for students to develop basic knowledge, skills, attitudes, aesthetic appreciation and behavior which are assumed to be the basic characteristics of a good citizen, and which are supportive to democracy and civic practices, to appreciate languages, cultures and customs of all national groups in Myanmar. For achieving these aims, moral and civics subject is taught to students 2 periods per week (48 hours per year) at the primary school level, 2 periods per week (54 hours per year) at the middle school level and 1 period per week (27 hours per year) at the high school level.

In regard to the basic education curriculum reform and the role of peace education in Myanmar, the three authors, Kinsa San Yi, Naw Sah Blute, and Radka Antalikova (2022) appraised that Myanmar's internal conflicts are long lasting and complex, so a specific and context- appropriate curriculum could help students understand the underlying causes of the current conflicts, learn non-violent ways of responding to conflict and contribute to social transformation. Since Myanmar is a diverse country, the curriculum reform should reflect the local context and promote the values of social cohesion and peaceful coexistence. In other words, the curriculum needs to be adapted not only to reflect Myanmar's ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity, but also to preserve it. One of the ways to achieve this is by integrating peace education into the national curriculum.

Whereas, the role of teachers become important as the main leaders of peace education. The personal qualities, knowledge and skills of a teacher are extremely important for determining the success of implementation process. When qualities of teachers are addressed, it is impossible to highlight in-service teachers only, the qualities of pre-service teachers are also essential since they are the human resources who will shape the future education system. Thus, curriculum reform in Myanmar was done not only in basic education sector but also in teacher education by upgrading 2-year Education Colleges into 4-year Education Degree Colleges.

The 4-year degree course curriculum is designed and structured to prepare prospective teachers to be effective, professional practitioners, equipped with the appropriate competencies (knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, and their successful use in teaching-learning situations) required to teach effectively in primary and middle school classrooms (*Curriculum Framework for education degree colleges in Myanmar, Draft, 2019*). So, this study aimed to investigate the pre-service teachers' views on peace education and encourage them to have an awareness of the importance of the teachers' qualities for implementing peace education successfully.

On the other hand, in Myanmar, there are a few studies investigating peace education related to the new curriculum and researches investigating pre-service teachers' views on peace education. Exploring the pre-service teachers' views on the qualities of teachers as leaders of peace education may be applicable to a certain extent for teacher education and basic education fields. By conducting this study, it is hoped that the results can be contributed to the benefits of Myanmar Education system to some extent. Moreover, this study may have some contributions to international contexts since peace education in teacher training is globally important in equipping pre-service teachers with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to foster a culture of peace and non-violence, and create just and peaceful communities as well as empowering them to become active and responsible global citizens.

Aim and objectives of the study

The main aim of this study is to promote Myanmar pre-service teachers' awareness on the role of teachers as leaders of Peace Education.

The specific objectives are –

- (1) To explore how Myanmar pre-service teachers define peace education and view on the knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers who perform as leaders of peace education,
- (2) To identify Myanmar pre-service teachers' perception on the role of teachers and their teaching methods in promoting peace education.
- (3) To find out how Myanmar pre-service teachers view on the effectiveness of the peace related lessons in the new curriculum.

Research Questions

Based on the above aims and objectives of the study, the following research questions were conducted.

- (1) How do Myanmar pre-service teachers define peace education?

- (2) What are the qualities of teachers as leaders of peace education according to Myanmar pre-service teachers' views?
- (3) How do Myanmar pre-service teachers perceive on the role of teachers and their teaching methods in promoting peace education?
- (4) How do Myanmar pre-service teachers view on the effectiveness of the peace related lessons in the new curriculum?

Significance of the study

In order to promote a culture of peace in society, peace education is very important for every citizen as peace education indicates skills, abilities and knowledge among them. Thus, our society needs to inculcate peace education in our education system especially in teacher education. Nowadays, in our education system, peace education is an emerging component of the national curriculum. It is very important to deliver effective peace education in each and every level of teacher education, especially to bring peace in society and create awareness among the people towards peace education (Sufi Amin, Nabi Bux Jumanji & Samina Malik, 2019).

According to Baldo and Fumiss (1998), teachers must be able to foster positive social interactions among children, and establish and maintain positive collaborative relationships with families and the larger community to support students' learning and well-being. Teachers should be prepared with universal values, such as freedom, justice, human rights, gender equality, tolerance, and respect for the right to live. They should also develop an understanding of peace and a desire for an internalized peaceful culture. In order to achieve the objectives of Peace Education, a school system has to be prepared for drastic changes including setting new educational objectives, preparing new curricula, rewriting of school textbooks, developing instructional material, and training teachers to create a school climate that is conducive to Peace Education.

In peace education, teachers play an important role in creating a peaceful classroom environment by encouraging students to work in groups whereas students can become more connected to each other, accept their differences including their ethnicity, gender, ability. By working in groups, they are likely to generate more solutions to a problem with greater diversity and as a consequence, they improve their problem-solving skills (Fountain, 1999, cited in Kinsa San Yi, Naw Sah Blute, and Radka Antalikova, 2022).

According to Green Paper on Teacher Education in Europe (2000), when compared to previous years, teachers' competencies have differed, and it can be seen that it is not enough for a teacher to know his or her subject area well, planning and applying teaching process or to know his or her country and the world, to be counted as a qualified teacher. In 21st century, it is expected from a teacher to continue lifelong learning, to be competent for sexual education, peace education, environmental studies and using information technologies.

Harris and Morrison (2003) claimed that the nations all over the world must spend money and resources to educate teachers for peace education for the development of peaceful minds of the youths. Training for peace is a long investment for establishing peace in societies.

Ruhan Karadag (2008) described that those students who participate in peace education generally adapt themselves to various situations including critical thinking, decision-making, interactions, negotiations, resolving conflicts, encouraging peace and preventing violence. Undoubtedly, teachers are key in furnishing students with these skills. Identifying pre-service teachers' opinions, attitudes and behaviors may shed light on the right direction for those who prepare and develop curricula for teacher training programs.

The role of the teachers is crucial in order to achieve the key purpose of peace education. When the teachers are trained in the field of peace education, they would be able to address all those problems related to them and the society in which they live (Mayton, 2009).

A research study conducted based on peace education practices by Bartlett (2009) further stated that when teachers skilled and well prepared in the field of peace education, they can establish and build peace in their schools as well as in their societies and communities.

Paul (2010) stated that teachers are the role models for their students at every level from primary to higher level education and they provide positive improvement in the field of education. Teachers as peace educators play a key role in promoting reconciliation, peace, and mutual respect. According to Paul (2010), it is very important to provide effective training to the teachers in peace education because teachers are the basic foundations of any country, and it needs to empower pre-service teachers to build the knowledge, understanding and morals of their students in the field of peace education.

An effective teacher is not just born; they are made over time through training and experience. Teacher education is crucial in the training process (Thompson & Power, 2015, cited in Nilar Moe and Su Lae Yi, 2020). So, it is extremely important to educate the prospective teachers in order to have an awareness of peace education and the qualities teachers should have for effective implementation of it.

Similarly, according to Polat (2016), in order to cultivate children to become individuals who value peace, they should be trained with peace education since early ages. The quality and effectiveness of peace education are closely related with the teachers. Teachers' competencies in terms of peace education should be improved during pre-service and in-service training. In order for peace education to reach its aims, there is a need for teachers who have a wide knowledge, a positive attitude and sufficient competencies.

Sridevi (2021) also said that teachers play an important role in creating a world where peace, equality, diversity, and unity prevail. The teacher should develop qualities such as tolerance, respect, and appreciation of others, being fair and open-minded, and being able and willing to consider other points of view looking beyond his or her own self-interest.

According to the previous conducted researches and their findings, it is obvious that teacher education sector is extremely important in building peace and promoting peace education in terms of training teachers to be able to acquire competencies, skills and positive attitudes and consequently to become leaders of peace education.

Theoretical Framework

This study was mainly based on the theoretical Peace Learning Framework designed for teachers, trainers, facilitators and peace educators in the Great Lake Region. The purpose and function of education in general and peace education specially is not only to convey the necessary knowledge (what), and the required skills (how), but most importantly it needs to teach the values (why). (*Peace Education Handbook for the Great Lakes Region, 2021*).



Figure (1). ASK Model (The Peace Training Handbook by PeaceTraining.eu)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

In order to investigate the Pre-service teachers' views on Peace Education, descriptive study and open-ended question survey method was used to collect data. The participants were 290 pre-service teachers of two

Education Degree Colleges of Myanmar who are from different ethnic groups of different regions. The data was collected by using cluster sampling method. Demographic questions and 7 questions were used to explore how the pre-service teachers define peace education, how they view on the attitudes, knowledge and skills of a teacher who will perform as a leader of peace education and what kind of teaching methods would they choose for implementing the new curriculum effectively. The questions used in the survey were:

1. How do you understand the term “Peace Education” as a pre-service teacher? Answer your opinion freely.
2. What should a teacher know as a leader in order to implement Peace Education successfully? Answer your opinion freely.
3. What kind of skills should a teacher possess for implementing Peace Education successfully? Answer your opinion freely.
4. What kind of attitudes should a teacher have in order to implement Peace Education successfully? Answer your opinion freely.
5. Choose the degree of importance of teachers in promoting peace education from 1 to 10.
6. Do you think the lesson of the new curriculum like “Living in Harmony Peacefully” is effective for peace education? If you think it is effective, then why do you think that? If you think it is ineffective, then why do you think that?
7. If you become a teacher, which teaching methods will you use in teaching that lesson? You can choose more than one.
 - Using Teaching Aids and Resources,
 - Story Telling, Discussion,
 - Role Play,
 - Group Cooperation Method,
 - Project Based Method,
 - Inquiry Based Method,
 - Others

Data Analysis

For data analysis, thematic analysis was used for analyzing, coding and interpretation. Data were analyzed in accordance with the six steps developed by *Braun and Clarke (2006)* _ Familiarization, Coding, Generating Themes, Reviewing Themes, Defining and Naming Themes and Writing Up.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings of this research were presented by two sections. The first section included demographic comparisons of the pre-service teachers according to their gender, age, academic year, their ethnic groups and peacefulness level of their hometowns. The results of the 7 questions were presented in the second section which consisted of (1) three definitions of peace education according to pre-service teachers, (2) their views on the knowledge, (3) skills and (4) attitudes of teachers as leaders of peace education, (5) the role of the teachers in promoting peace education as well as (6) effectiveness of the peace lessons of the new curriculum and (7) effective teaching methods for peace related lessons.

Demographic Comparisons of pre-service teachers

The participants of the survey were 290 pre-service teachers of two Education Degree Colleges of Myanmar who are from different ethnic groups of different regions. The pre-service teachers' demographic factors and results of the data were presented in the form of tabular summaries.

Table (1) Comparison of pre-service teachers by gender

Gender	Number of Pre-service teachers	Percentage
Male	55	18.9
Female	235	81.1
Total	290	100.0

The comparison of pre-service teachers by gender was described in Table (1) which showed that 18.9% of the participants were male and 81.1% were female pre-service teachers.

Table (2) Comparison of pre-service teachers by their Age

Age	Number of Pre-service teachers	Percentage
19 Years old	26	8.9
20 Years old	128	44.1
21 Years old	97	33.5
22 Years old	39	13.5
Total	290	100.0

According to Table (2), pre-service teachers were from the age of 19 to 22 years old and 8.9% was 19 years old, 44.1% was 20 years old, 33.5% was 21 years old and 22 years old pre-service teachers were 13.5% of the participants.

Table (3) Comparison of pre-service teachers by their Academic Year

Academic Year	Number of Pre-service teachers	Percentage
First Year	26	9.0
Second Year	128	44.1
Third Year (1 st Sem)	97	33.4
Third Year (2 nd Sem)	39	13.4
Total	290	100.0

Table (3) showed the comparison of pre-service teachers according to their academic year, which were from First year to Third year. The reason why there were two grades in the third year was that universities experienced delays due to the Covid pandemic. When they reopened, the two academic years had only a six-month gap, despite being intended for students one year apart in age.

Table (4) Comparison of pre-service teachers by their Ethnic Groups

Ethnic Groups	Number of Pre-service teachers	Percentage
Bamar	77	26.6
Pao	72	24.8
Danu	49	16.9
Shan	25	8.6
Inthar	21	7.2
Kayan	10	3.4
Taungyoe	6	2.1
Kachin	2	0.7
Kayin	1	0.3
Kayar	1	0.3
Rakhine	1	0.3
Half-breed	25	8.6
Total	290	100.0

Table (4) described the comparison of pre-service teachers according to their ethnic groups. Although there are over 130 ethnic groups in Myanmar, the pre-service teachers were allocated to join the nearest Education Degree Colleges in their regions. The participants of the study were from eastern part of Myanmar and their ethnic groups were Bamar, Pao, Danu, Shan, Inthar, Kayan, Taungyoe, Kachin, Kayin, Kayar, Rakhine and some were half-breed of the two ethnic groups. The majority of the participants were Bamar (26.6%), Pao (24.8%) and Danu (16.9%).

Table (5) Comparison of Peacefulness level in Pre-service teachers' hometowns

Peacefulness level	Number of Pre-service teachers	Percentage
Not peaceful	30	10.3
Mid peaceful	102	35.2
Peaceful	158	54.5
Total	290	100.0

Although the pre-service teachers came from (34) townships of (10) Regions, the study intended to divide their hometowns into three groups according to the peacefulness; the towns which are not peaceful (civil wars happening), the towns which were between peaceful and not peaceful (civil wars are happening at the nearest regions), and the towns which are peaceful (no civil wars happening). Table (5) showed that 54.5% of pre-service teachers were from peaceful regions, 35.2% were from the regions between peaceful and not peaceful and 10.3% of the pre-service teachers were from the regions with civil wars.

Findings of the main questions of the survey

Three Definitions of Peace Education by Pre-service Teachers

The first question was intended to explore how the pre-service teachers understand the meaning of peace education and how would they define it. The question let them freely give the definition of peace education without limiting the number of words. It was found that pre-service teachers gave responses enthusiastically from different perspectives. According to similar themes, some of them defined peace education in terms of the inclusive education which can provide students equal opportunities and a peaceful learning environment; some defined peace education in terms of an education approach which can promote living harmony among diversity and some defined peace education as an approach which emphasizes conflict resolution and peace building techniques. These are summarized in Table (6) as follows.

Table (6) Three Definitions of Peace Education by Pre-service Teachers

Themes	Definitions
Peaceful learning Environment based	Peace Education is an inclusive education that provides equal opportunities for all students by fostering a secure environment that assures both their physical and emotional well-being, ensuring a peaceful learning environment.
Harmony among diversity based	Peace Education is an educational approach that encourages a habit of living in harmony by mutual respect, understanding and cooperation, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, background and disability.
Conflict resolution based	Peace Education is an educational approach which emphasizes understanding of impacts of wars and violence, teaching conflict resolution strategies and fostering skills needed to build a just and peaceful society.

Pre-service Teachers' Views on the Qualities of Teachers as Leaders of Peace Education

The qualities of teachers as leaders of peace education were divided into three main areas which are Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes as stated in research methodology. According to the thematic analysis of the data, it was found that there were 6 main themes in Knowledge area and 4 main themes in both Skills and Attitudes areas, which were summarized in Figure (1) as follows.

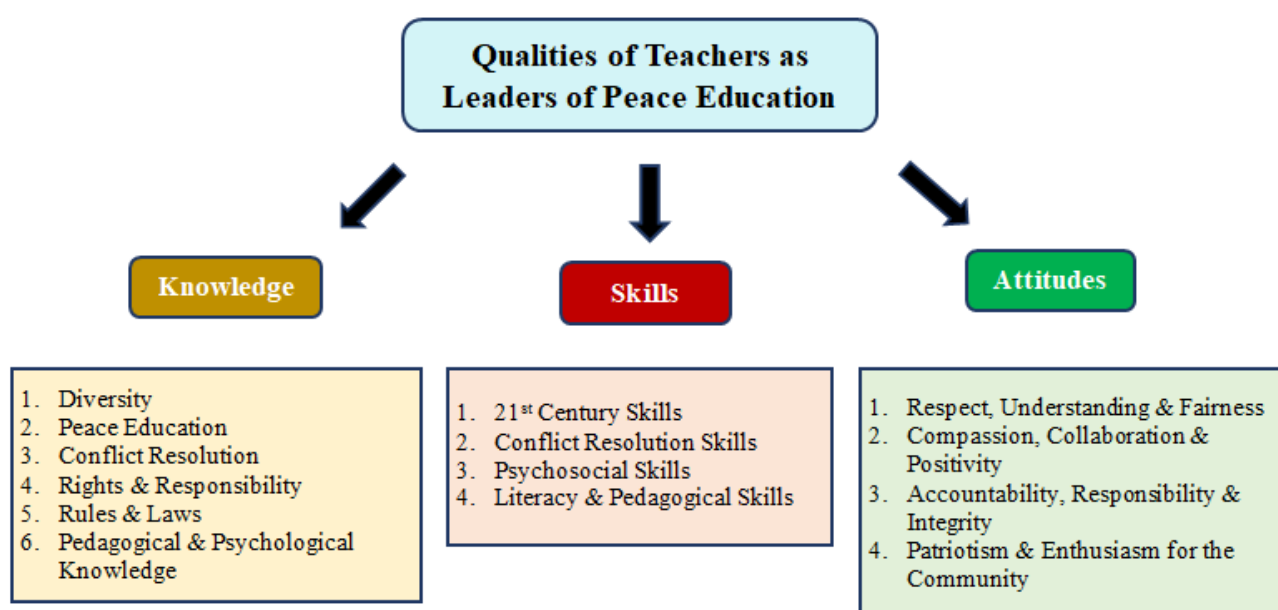


Figure (2) Pre-service Teachers' Views on the Qualities of Teachers as Leaders of Peace Education

Pre-service Teachers' Views on the Knowledge of Teachers as Leaders of Peace Education

The views of pre-service teachers on the question, “what should teachers know as leaders of peace education?” were divided into 6 main themes according to similar contents; which were knowledge on Diversity, Peace Education, Conflict Resolution, Rights and Responsibilities, Rules and Laws and Pedagogical and Psychological Knowledge. These 6 elements were described with the descriptors in Table (7) as follows.

Table (7) Elements of Knowledge as Qualities of Teachers and descriptors

Elements of Knowledge	Descriptors
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different views - Culture, beliefs and values of different ethnic groups - History of the country with diversity - Students' different backgrounds - Individuality - How to communicate and adjust with others effectively
Peace Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic rules and principles of peace education - Advantages and positive outcomes of peace - International movements on peace education - International peace builders - Ways to live together peacefully
Conflict Resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disadvantages and consequences of wars and conflicts - Sources of conflicts and wars - Causes of political and social conflicts - Conflict resolution theories - Problem solving techniques - Ways to reduce violence
Rights and Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social justice - Equality and equity - Rights and responsibility of a citizen
Rules and Laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political concepts - Ethics of a citizen - Rules and regulations of the country
Pedagogical and Psychological Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational psychology and child psychology - Pedagogy

Pre-service Teachers' Views on the Skills of Teachers as Leaders of Peace Education

According to the pre-service teachers' views, it was found that there were 4 main themes in the Skills area which teachers should possess as leaders of peace education. These skills included 21st Century Skills, Conflict Resolution Skills, Psychosocial Skills and Literacy and Pedagogical Skills which were listed together with their descriptors in Table (8) as follows.

Table (8) Elements of Skills as Qualities of Teachers and descriptors

Elements of Skills	Descriptors
21 st Century Skills	Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Citizenship and Community Engagement
Conflict Resolution Skills	Problem solving skills, Negotiation, Acceptance on diversity, Ethical and cultural awareness
Psychosocial Skills	Leadership, Adjustment, Reflective practice, Empathy and Sympathy, Patience, Self-confidence, Coping with stress and emotions
Literacy and Pedagogical Skills	ICT skills, Linguistics, Competency on teaching methods, Management and organizing skills

Pre-service Teachers' Views on the Attitudes of Teachers as Leaders of Peace Education

Pre-service teachers emphasized that teachers as peace education leaders should have positive attitudes. According to their views, there were 4 main themes which included Respect, Understanding and Fairness; Compassion, Collaboration and Positivity; Accountability, Responsibility and Integrity; and Patriotism, Enthusiasm for the Community. These were also stated with their descriptors in Table (9).

Table (9) Elements of Attitudes as Qualities of Teachers and descriptors

Elements of Attitudes	Descriptors
Respect, Understanding and Fairness	Respect for cultural and social diversity, Free from bias, Understanding, Justice, Free from racism, Neutrality, Open mindedness
Compassion, Collaboration and Positivity	Love and willingness for peace, Empathy and Sympathy, Collaboration, Helpfulness, Positive attitudes, Patience and tolerance, Flexibility
Accountability, Responsibility and Integrity	Accountability and responsibility, Honesty, Perseverance, Leadership, Self-confidence
Patriotism and Enthusiasm for the Community	Patriotism and desire for the country's welfares, Enthusiasm for Community

Pre-service Teachers' Views on the importance of teachers in promoting Peace Education

When the pre-service teachers were asked to choose the level of importance of teachers in promoting peace education from 1 to 10, it was found that the largest numbers of pre-service teachers (122) chose number 10 as the importance-level. If it is considered that level (1-5) is unimportant and level (6-10) as important, 242 pre-service teachers (83.5%) thought that teachers are important for promoting peace education and 48 (16.5%) thought that the role of the teachers is unimportant or less important, which were described in Table (10) as follows.

Table (10) Pre-service teachers' views on the importance of teachers in promoting Peace Education

Level of Importance	Number of Pre-service teachers	Percentage
10	122	42.1
9	37	12.8
8	56	19.3
7	19	6.6
6	8	2.8
5	21	7.2
4	3	1.0
3	11	3.8
2	7	2.4
1	6	2.1
Total	290	100.0

Pre-service Teachers' Views on the effectiveness of the lesson about peace in the new curriculum

Since the peace-related lessons are the new lessons of the new Basic Education Curriculum, the study also intended to explore the pre-service teachers' views on the effectiveness of the lessons. According to the results, 281 pre-service teachers (96.9%) thought that the lessons are effective and 9 of them (3.1%) thought that the lessons are not effective or less effective (shown in Table 11).

Table (11) Pre-service teachers' views on the effectiveness of the lesson about peace in the new curriculum

Effectiveness of the lesson	Number of Pre-service teachers	Percentage
Effective	281	96.9
Ineffective or less effective	9	3.1
Total	290	100.0

It was found that 96.9% of the pre-service teachers thought that the lessons about peace education are effective. According to the similarities, some of the reasons why they agree on the effectiveness of the lessons were shown as follows.

"The lessons are effective because students should learn the essence of peace and how to build peace in their daily lives from their childhood, and only when they have such skills, they will be able to become peace builders in their future."

"These lessons encourage students to understand the value of peace, and the benefits of living in harmony peacefully in our society and consequently, make them to build peaceful relationship with each other."

"These lessons are the very first beginning of creating positive relations among people, ethnic groups and even the countries by eliminating discrimination, bullying and the terrible violent and conflicts."

“The lessons are effective because in such a diverse society like Myanmar which constitutes of more than 130 ethnic groups, it would be possible to live in harmony peacefully only if we accept differences and individuality. These lessons teach students to accept the differences, to have mutual respect and to solve the problems and conflicts without violence.”

On the other hand, some of the reasons why 9 pre-service teachers thought the lessons are ineffective or less effective were presented below:

“The lessons are not effective or less effective because these cannot be related to the practice.”

“The lessons are ineffective because of the teaching methods of the teachers. The teachers should be well-trained with peace education and the lesson should be taught beyond the text-books with the methods of discussion or role play and so on.”

“The lessons are ineffective because schools cannot be opened in some areas and children don’t have opportunity to learn. Even we are facing many difficulties to continue to study here.”

Pre-service Teachers’ Views on Teaching Methods for Peace Related Lessons

The study also aims to explore the pre-service teachers’ views on the teaching methods for the peace related lessons in order to implement them effectively. Pre-service teachers were asked to choose more than one teaching methods given in Table (12) if they become teachers who have to teach peace related lessons. According to the results, it was found that 179 (61.7%) of them chose Discussion method, 157 (54.1%) chose Group Cooperation method and 120 (41.4%) chose Inquiry Based method as the most three effective teaching methods (shown in Table 12).

Table (12) Teaching Methods for Peace Related Lessons chosen by Pre-service Teachers

Teaching Methods	Number of Pre-service teachers	Percentage
Discussion	179	61.7%
Group Cooperation	157	54.1%
Inquiry Based Method	120	41.4%
Role Play	114	39.3%
Teaching Learning Materials	109	37.6%
Project Based Method	73	25.2%
Storytelling	67	23.1%
Others	42	14.5%

DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to highlight how Myanmar pre-service teachers define peace education and how they view on the qualities and role of teachers as well as effective teaching methods for peace related lessons in the new curriculum.

According to the definitions of peace education by the pre-service teachers of Education Degree Colleges of Myanmar, peace education can be defined as an educational approach which not only provides equal opportunities for all students by ensuring a peaceful learning environment, but encourages a habit of living in harmony peacefully regardless of gender, race, ethnicity and religion, as well as emphasizes teaching the essence of peace and conflict resolution skills. These definitions are similar to the definitions of peace

education which were made in the study carried out in Turkey by researchers such as Soner Polat, Yaser Arslan and Gizem Guncavdi (2016) who investigated the qualities of teachers who instruct peace education and the views of prospective teachers who attended peace education program.

In this study, it aimed to explore the qualities of teachers as leaders of peace education which include three parts; knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers.

Firstly, by looking at pre-service teachers' views on the knowledge section, it was found that pre-service teachers thought a teacher as a leader of peace education should have six main themes of knowledge which were knowledge about diversity, peace education, conflict resolution, rights and responsibility, rules and laws, pedagogical and psychological knowledge. This means that a teacher should have knowledge about the basic rules and principles of peace education and ways to live together peacefully, knowledge about culture, beliefs and values of different ethnic groups, as well as conflict resolution theories and problem-solving techniques. And at the same time, a teacher should know rights and responsibilities of a citizen, rules and regulations of the country as well as pedagogical and psychological knowledge for implementing peace education.

Secondly, for skills section, pre-service teachers viewed that a teacher should have four main themes of skills in order to implement peace education successfully, which were 21st century skills, conflict resolution skills, psychosocial skills and literacy and pedagogical skills. Pre-service teachers thought that a teacher should possess 21st century skills like communication, collaboration, creativity and conflict resolution skills like negotiation and problem-solving skills. Similarly, a teacher should have psychosocial skills like leadership, reflective practice and coping with stress and emotions, as well as literacy and pedagogical skills like ICT skills, Linguistics and competency on teaching methods.

Thirdly, pre-service teachers emphasized on the four main themes by regarding with the attitudes of a teacher as a peace builder. First, a teacher should have not only respect for cultural and social diversity but also understanding, open-mindedness and neutrality. He or she should also be free from bias and racism. Second, a teacher should have positive attitudes like empathy and sympathy, patience, tolerance and flexibility. Third, a teacher should have integrity like accountability, responsibility, perseverance and honesty. Finally, a teacher should possess patriotism and enthusiasm for the community in order to perform as a leader of peace education.

Then, by concerning about the importance of the role of teachers for implementing peace education, 83.5% of pre-service teachers thought that teachers are important for the success of the implementation process. Similarly, the study also aimed to explore the pre-service teachers' view of the effectiveness of the peace lessons of the new curriculum. As a result, 96.9% of pre-service teachers thought that the peace lessons in the new curriculum are effective. By contrast, 3.1% of them thought that the lessons are ineffective or less effective.

Despite of different reasons, there were some common reasons for both agreement and disagreement of the effectiveness of the lessons. The most common reason of the pre-service teachers who thought that the lessons are effective was that students should learn the essence of peace and how to solve their daily problems without violence from their childhood, and only when they have such kinds of conflict resolution skills, they will be able live in harmony peacefully in their society. On the other hand, the reason for ineffectiveness of the lessons was because of the gap between theory and practice and the weakness of the teaching methods of the teachers. Nevertheless, it can be said that most of the pre-service teachers have positive attitude about the new curriculum and they seem to believe it will be implemented successfully.

According to the results of the study about the effective teaching methods, it was found that the pre-service teachers thought discussion method is the most effective method for teaching peace lessons, and group cooperation method as the second effective method and inquiry- based method as the third effective one. They would use these three methods when they become teachers who have to teach peace lessons. This result supported to the views of Sridevi (2021) who believed that teaching methods for peace lessons should be used deliberately to support learning aims which relate the knowledge, skills and attitudes of peace education and the methods should be helpful in making peace lessons, concern and action both in classroom and beyond. She

also mentioned cooperative learning, group discussion and inquiry- based learning and teaching as the effective methods for peace education.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has been conducted to investigate Myanmar pre-service teachers' views on the qualities of teachers as leaders of peace education. In the light of thematic analysis and findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Pre-service teachers defined peace education on the focus of a peaceful learning environment, living in harmony peacefully regardless of gender, race, ethnicity and religion, as well as teaching the essence of peace and conflict resolution skills. However, they didn't use the term 'democracy' or 'human rights' or 'sustainable development' in their definitions although peace education covers a broad range of interconnected areas. It can be concluded that the current conflicts and political situations in the country may have some influence on their definitions.
2. Pre-service teachers had a comprehensive and captivating view or detailed and engaging view on the knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers as leaders of peace education as they could describe a broad range of teachers' qualities which are essential for implementing peace education.
3. For the effectiveness of the peace-related lessons in the new curriculum, although there were both agreement and disagreement, they thought that peace related lessons are important and the teaching methods of teachers are in crucial role in determining the effectiveness of the lessons.
4. Instead of traditional teaching methods and teacher-centered teaching methods used in the previous eras and previous curriculum, it was found that pre-service teachers were eager to use learner-centered methods as discussion, group cooperation and inquiry-based methods.

We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and there is no peace without sustainable development (United Nations, 2015). It is sad that violence and conflicts continue unabated in many parts of the world including Myanmar thereby, slowing down the development process in many countries. Because of the civil wars and conflicts throughout the country, children are losing opportunities to learn. Although it is not easy to build peace urgently, education is one of the solutions for reducing violence and conflicts and promoting peacebuilding.

Through the peace lessons of the new curriculum, it is hoped to encourage the young generations of Myanmar to become the citizens who accept diversity and differences among ethnic groups, value peace and try to seek ways to solve the conflicts without violence. And teachers are one of the most important agents for implementing peace education and they need to be the active leaders who understand the essence of peace and peace building techniques, as well as they need to possess the necessary skills, attitudes and competencies as peace builders. So, the study aims to promote the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the prospective teachers who will become active teachers for implementing the new curriculum.

However, this study also has some limitations as it is just a qualitative study exploring the pre-service teachers' views. More quantitative studies should be conducted in order to explore whether there are any differences among the views of the pre-service teachers in terms of their ethnic groups, religions or their hometowns and so on. And the future researches should also emphasize on the teacher education curriculum regarding peace education.

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