



Community-Based Peace Education Framework for Sustainable and Transformative Peacebuilding

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Abstract

The study explores the gap between Western peace education, which emphasizes universal principles such as human rights, democracy, and non-violent conflict resolution, and the cultural realities of the Philippines, where these models often do not resonate. Western peace education approaches are based on the premise of universal values and methods, which may not align with the unique cultural, social, and historical contexts of non-Western societies. Through a systematic review of both international and local literature, this paper highlights the necessity for peace education to be culturally sensitive and contextually relevant. The study introduces a Contextualized Peace Education Framework that is specifically tailored to Filipino values and societal norms, incorporating indigenous knowledge, community-driven solutions, and non-intrusive conflict resolution techniques. This framework emphasizes transformative education that fosters empowerment, integrates local histories, and respects the cultural importance of privacy in conflict resolution, providing a more appropriate and effective approach. The findings underscore the need for peace education to be adapted to local contexts, where a one-size-fits-all approach proves to be ineffective. This context-specific approach not only encourages social responsibility and sustainable peace but also promotes critical thinking towards sustainable peace and stronger community cohesion in the Philippine context.

Keywords: Community-Based, Peace Education Framework, Transformative, Sustainable Peace

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Introduction

The UNESCO Constitution states, “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defense must be constructed,” underscoring the role of education in fostering a culture of peace. This recognized peace education as an essential approach to fostering understanding, cooperation, and conflict resolution in both local and global contexts. The goal of peace education is to cultivate a culture of peace by addressing the root causes of violence and promoting non-violent alternatives. Peace education teaches individuals and communities how to resolve conflicts peacefully, understand human rights, and embrace diversity, while also emphasizing

the importance of social justice and environmental sustainability [1].

However, much of the peace education frameworks developed and implemented globally have been influenced by Western models, which, while influential, may not always be directly suited to local conflict dynamics. Western peace education tends to emphasize universal values and approaches that may not fully align with the unique historical, cultural, and socio-political contexts of different regions [2]. The adoption of such frameworks in regions with distinct forms of violence, such as structural violence or ethno-political conflict, often leads to a gap in effectiveness [3]. This misalignment calls for a more contextualized approach to peace

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education, one that is deeply rooted in the local experiences, values, and realities of the community it serves. By adapting peace education to address the specific conflicts and challenges faced by local communities, more relevant and impactful outcomes can be achieved, fostering sustainable peace on the community level [4].

Peace education frameworks have traditionally been shaped by Western scholarship and international agencies, emphasizing universal values such as human rights, democracy, and nonviolence. Foundational texts like *Peace Education: The Concept, Principles, and Practices Around the World* demonstrate how these approaches have been articulated in literature [5]. Betty Reardon's *Education for a Culture of Peace in a Gender Perspective* further situates peace education within broader global initiatives, while highlighting the integration of social justice, gender equality, and intercultural understanding in educational practice [6]. However, these frameworks often reflect Western academic priorities and may not fully engage with local narratives of structural violence or community based conflict resolution. This gap underscores the need for contextualized peace education that draws from grassroots experiences while building on established theoretical foundations.

The current global crisis

The current global crisis was a result of existing structural violence in the society. The ongoing global crisis is a consequence of entrenched structural violence within society. Unjust government policies and systems have prioritized personal interests over the well-being of the people. The widespread human suffering, death, and harm, while cultural violence involves societal norms and practices that perpetuate discrimination, injustice, and inequality [8]. These forms of violence are not isolated to specific regions but represent a global crisis, manifesting in various forms of social, economic, and political oppression

worldwide. Brantmeier [9] emphasized the importance of peace education, incorporating a critical analysis of power dynamics in the context of place, particularly in efforts aimed at achieving social and environmental sustainability. Instead of merely reinforcing the status quo, peace education for sustainability should aim to reveal and challenge the power structures that underpin both structural and cultural violence. In addition, The researcher explains the significance of a peace education as a conscious effort to teach both children and adults about the complexities and realities of peace and violence in the local context [7].

The study by Floro [10] developed a peace education framework that is not based on Western models but instead tailored to the needs of the local community. This framework was contextualized by incorporating the narratives of grassroots communities about the structural violence they experience. It also included non-violent conflict resolution strategies aimed at addressing local conflicts, ensuring the approach was both relevant and effective within the specific context of the community. The context-specific concept, human security acknowledges that insecurities vary considerably across different settings and as such advances contextualized solutions that are responsive to the particular situations they seek to address. Finally, in addressing risks and root causes of insecurities, human security is prevention-oriented and introduces a dual focus on protection and empowerment. Ardizzone [11] argues that peace education has long focused on safeguarding human rights, emphasizing that issues such as deprivation, discrimination, and social injustice have become normalized. This underscores the critical need for educational approaches that bring about transformation. Peace education has always focused on identifying the underlying causes of various forms of violence and working towards their elimination.

Central to this approach are the values of democracy, human rights, and peace, which are

essential to both the practice and objectives of education. Peace education equips learners with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to resolve conflicts nonviolently and promote social justice, human dignity, cultural diversity, and environmental responsibility. Harris et.al. [12] As defined by UNICEF, it develops behaviors and competencies that prevent violence and support peaceful relationships at all levels. In the Philippines, the limitations of generalized and Western-based peace education models have led to the development of a contextualized framework. Ongoing challenges, including stalled peace processes involving the CPP-NPA-NDFP, highlight the need for approaches grounded in local realities. Contextualized peace education responds by aligning content with the political, economic, and sociocultural conditions of specific communities.

This study proposes a contextualized peace education framework tailored to the local context of Bataan. It does not reject existing theories but adapts them to better address local conflicts and experiences. By integrating community perspectives, the framework enables learners to understand the root causes of violence and develop nonviolent, culturally relevant solutions. Inspired by the ideas of Maria Montessori, the framework emphasizes education as a pathway to peace. It adopts a learner-centered approach that actively involves students in peacebuilding, strengthens critical thinking, and empowers them to become responsible citizens committed to promoting a culture of peace.

Transformative Education

The contextualized peace education framework is a form of transformative education because of its primary objective to inculcate a culture of peace among learners through teaching significant peace values that support and sustain peacebuilding in the school and community [13]. It seeks to change the mindset and behavior of individuals from the

tendency of violent conflict resolution to cultivating skills, knowledge, and attitudes that support and promote peacebuilding by resolving conflicts through peaceful means. According to the UN Secretary-General, education should provide people with the knowledge, skills, and values they need to take part in resolving the interconnected challenges of the 21st century [14]. The contextualized peace education framework presents a local perspective and offers an education that potentially leads to individual and social transformation through the different domains of the contextualized peace education framework, such as empowerment and social action through human rights education, dismantling discrimination and prejudice through promoting understanding and tolerance, ecological preservation and just distribution of the earth's resources, understanding direct and structural violence in the community, historical analysis of local conflicts and violence, nurturing inner and structural peace, resolving conflicts through peaceful resolution, reconciling different beliefs and ideologies, and the development of school-community peace programs [13]. This means that the contextualized peace education framework invites learners into the teaching-learning process that is progressive and enlightened, enabling them to understand the underlying root causes of conflict in their locality or community. In addition, learners will be sensitized regarding the direct and structural or hidden violence that has become normalized in their daily lives. The knowledge gained will serve as the foundation for transforming mindsets, attitudes, and behaviors to make constructive solutions based on the principle of peace education. The learning process on contextualized peace education will lead to social action toward the transformation of society, which includes becoming an agent of peace, a human rights defender, and a mediator for non-violent conflict resolution [15].

Ecological Preservation and Just Distribution of Resources

Ecological preservation is essential for achieving peace, as it fosters a sustainable relationship between humans and the environment. In an era marked by significant ecological disruption, understanding and enhancing ecological integrity is crucial. Currently, our world is facing numerous ecological problems, such as air pollution, water, and soil contamination brought by industrialization and economic development. Under the domain of ecological preservation, students will be able to understand the impact of environmental degradation, such as global warming, on the violation of human rights. Global warming, deforestation, pollution, and other ecological issues are not merely environmental problems but rather are fundamentally human rights crises. The adverse effects of climate change disproportionately impact vulnerable populations, exacerbating existing inequalities and threatening fundamental human rights [16]. It is important to incorporate environmental education into a contextualized peace education framework. The integration of ecological preservation into the contextualized peace education framework ensures that students clearly understand the significant effect of the environment on the basic right of an individual to food, health, and a healthy environment. In addition, students will be able to understand that calamities brought by climate change affect the basic human rights of individuals to life, property, and dignity. Global warming also impedes our rights to access good health and security. The continuous degradation of the environment increases temperature, causes unpredictable weather, and results in super typhoons that cause damage to property, community, displacement, and loss of lives (Rolnik, 2009). It is important to recognize that peace education, human rights, and the environment are interconnected; the human rights of an individual cannot be fully maximized or

enjoyed without a safe, clean, and healthy environment, and the role of peace education equips our learners with knowledge and skills to defend and assert their basic rights and protect the earth by peaceful means."

Understanding Direct and Structural Violence

Understanding direct and structural violence is significant to the contextualized peace education framework because it tends to reveal the visible and invisible types of violence embedded in societal structures. The goal of peace education is to expose hidden oppression and injustices such as uneven resource distribution, lack of political will, government transparency and corruption, ineffective justice system, stalled economic programs and development, poverty and hunger, and the destruction of cultural heritage and IP communities. Galtung [3] explained that the manifestation of structural acts of violence is the highly uneven distribution of wealth and the unequal distribution of power over the distribution of resources. The structural violence strand of the peace education framework emphasizes a concrete understanding of the historical, sociopolitical, socioeconomic, and sociocultural underlying forces that shape inequity, suffering, and injustice in society. It also intends to highlight the marginalization of classes, genders, and social hierarchy. Furthermore, structural violence in the CPE framework might help explain the hidden and complex mechanisms that maintain inequality at various levels. The strand of structural violence also emphasized the historical roots of class struggle, colonialism, and imperialism as the causes

of modern injustices and inequality [10]. The root cause of violence can only be revealed through a critical analysis of the social context and a thorough examination of the lengthy history of institutional violence. The contextualized peace education framework will provide a crucial context for understanding the

underlying structural violence and its relationship to the continuous violence and insurgency in the country.

Historical Analysis of Local Conflicts

Historical analysis of local conflicts is essential in contextualized peace education because it sheds light on the underlying root cause of societal problems and issues by examining past conflicts, students will be able to identify patterns, motivations, and consequences that inform present-day issues. Bergman [17] stated that understanding how students perceive historical significance can illuminate how they connect past events to current realities. This connection is important for developing learners' critical thinking skills that empower them to analyze existing conflict by utilizing a historical lens. One of the major objectives of contextualized peace education is for students to have historical awareness of their locality and to avoid the same mistakes that have been previously committed or made. In addition, historical analysis of conflicts capacitates our learners to be aware of the consequences of the root cause of conflicts. Also, it is expected that they were able to develop a way of thinking for creating peaceful solutions to problems as well as fostering attitudes that value peace and critical thinking. This is significant in teaching and learning because considering history in the CPE, students will be able to recognize the injustices, struggles, and violence that were fought in the past, so it will not be repeated in the future. Susanto [19] mentioned that the goal of history is to mold our learners to equip them with better personal characteristics, attitudes, and values supporting the value of unity, oneness, and peace, and avoiding conflict and violence amid our differences in opposite beliefs and perceptions.

Nurturing Inner and Structural Peace

A key domain of contextualized peace education is the cultivation of inner peace, understood as a sense of harmony within oneself and in relation to others. Participants associated peace with positive relationships, self-respect, human dignity, and freedom from fear and insecurity. Inner peace enables individuals to respond to conflict constructively and maintain a positive outlook despite challenges. Peace education aims to promote both personal and social transformation. It strengthens values such as tolerance, empathy, respect, and social responsibility, which are essential for nonviolent conflict resolution. Inner peace serves as the foundation for building healthy relationships and reduces the likelihood of resorting to violence. Nario-Galace [19] It also fosters awareness of social realities, linking personal transformation to broader societal change. Inner peace is closely connected to structural peace, or "positive peace," [20]. Positive peace goes beyond the absence of war and emphasizes the presence of social justice, equality, human rights, and equitable resource distribution. Achieving structural peace requires conditions such as good governance, social equity, cultural tolerance, and access to basic services. The framework highlights key indicators of structural peace, including respect for human rights, reconciliation,

Resolving Conflict through Non-Violent Resolution

Contextualized Peace Education aims to develop learners' skills, knowledge, and attitudes to address occurring conflicts and resolve conflicts peacefully. on-violence conflict resolution is crucial in fostering a culture of peace, particularly within educational settings. Johnson and Johnson, (2014) mentioned the distinction between imposed peace achieved through coercion and consensual peace, which is rooted in mutual understanding and cooperation. By integrating

conflict resolution strategies into educational curricula, we can cultivate environments where students learn to navigate disputes constructively rather than resort to violence. This focus on non-violent methods not only addresses immediate conflicts but also contributes to long-term relational harmony. Contextualized peace education is a type of education that dwells in the value of cooperation, respect, tolerance, justice, and nonviolent conflict resolution. In addition, it is important that in the teaching-learning process, students can be confronted with the truth by raising significant facts about societal issues and providing alternative solutions that uphold social justice, peace, and reconciliation. Webb et al. [20] mentioned social reconstructionism in education as having a significant role in encouraging students to be “agents of change” by challenging the norms and injustices to make society a better place for everyone. In the CPE students were asked to look for social injustices and inequalities in their community and try to look for alternative nonviolent solutions to address the particular issues [21]. Reconstructive-Empowering approach underscores the necessity of promoting critical thinking and ethical development within peace education frameworks. This method encourages students to envision creative solutions that transcend traditional violent responses to conflict. Ultimately, embracing non-violent conflict resolution through comprehensive peace education can lead to transformative societal changes that prioritize collaboration over confrontation.

Empowerment and Social Action through Human Rights Education

Human Rights Education is one of the core values of contextualized peace education because it seeks to uphold human dignity. In contextualized peace education, the primary concern of learning is to promote and uphold human dignity and the well-being of an individual because that is the very foundation of peace. Human Rights Education (HRE) is an

essential component of contextualized peace education that empowers students to understand and advocate for their rights and the rights of others. Integrating HRE into school curricula not only fosters a culture of respect and tolerance but also equips students with the critical skills needed to recognize and address human rights violations in their lives and communities [23]. In a community in which discrimination, prejudice, violence, and injustices are present in the structure of society, integrating human rights education, students will be able to understand and take necessary action against these challenges by cultivating individuals capable of engaging in constructive dialogue and peaceful solutions. Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace [19] stated the impact of human rights education towards addressing nonviolent social order and reducing the causes of armed conflict. Inculcating human rights education in the curriculum is essential for fostering a culture of peace, tolerance, and understanding among the diversity in their respective communities. In addition, human rights education empowers our learners to engage in social issues and problems critically and equips them with the set of skills that is needed to challenge human rights violations and injustices in the locality. By integrating human rights education into the curriculum, we educators could develop citizens who advocate, uphold, and defend their rights and the rights of others.

Reconciling Diverse and Contrasting Ideologies and Beliefs

Throughout the history of mankind, our political, economic, psychological, and sociocultural orientation and world views have been guided by ideological beliefs, norms, ideas, and philosophies that are commonly associated with power relations. There is a period in our history when two great political-economy ideologies, which are communism and capitalism, seek to assert their dominance in shaping political and economic structures globally. The contradiction of ideologies

marked significant events in our history, like the Cold War, the Fall of the Berlin Wall, and the insurgency of the CPP-NPA in the Philippines, which is identified as the longest-withstanding armed conflict in Asia. In contextualized peace education, understanding the contrasting beliefs and ideologies is a significant part of teaching a culture of peace among the students. Reconciling opposite views and beliefs through peace education is essential for fostering understanding in increasingly diverse societies. The implementation of a comprehensive peace education curriculum. Contextualized peace education aims to motivate the reconciliation of contradictions among ideologies and beliefs of diverse groups of people through intercultural dialogue, mediation, and positive communication, which aim to break barriers and misunderstandings. The goal of intercultural dialogue and reconciliation is to instill values such as respect for differences and national identity, which are foundational for peaceful coexistence. By emphasizing knowledge over mere skill development, this approach aligns with the United Nations' goal of promoting a culture of peace through education. Contextualized peace education is more focused on understanding the contradiction among ideologies and beliefs that cause conflict and violence and actively participating in resolving such conflicts rather than merely absorbing theoretical concepts.

Challenging Discrimination and Prejudice by Promoting Understanding and Tolerance

Discrimination and prejudice remain major sources of conflict and violence in contemporary society. Contextualized Peace Education (CPE) addresses these issues by challenging biases against Indigenous peoples, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other cultural groups. A key component of the framework is dismantling stereotypes through experiential learning that exposes students to diverse perspectives and histories. This helps break notions of cultural superiority based on

appearance, identity, or background. CPE promotes core peace values understanding, tolerance, and empathy by encouraging respect for diversity and recognition of individual differences. According to UNESCO, teaching tolerance enables learners to respect and appreciate cultural diversity and human expression. Empathy further strengthens this by helping students relate to others' experiences and perspectives. Through critical engagement with issues of discrimination, peace education fosters inclusive mindsets and supports the development of more equitable and harmonious communities.

Development of School-Community Localized Peace Partnership Programs

School-community partnerships play a vital role in promoting a culture of peace. By integrating formal education with community-based learning, schools can serve as active agents of peacebuilding. Collaboration among educators, local stakeholders, and communities strengthens relationships and enriches learning experiences grounded in real-world contexts. The Contextualized Peace Education Framework (CPEF) in Bataan aligns curriculum content, teaching materials, and learning strategies with the province's sociocultural, political, and historical realities. This ensures that education is relevant, culturally responsive, and focused on local peace and conflict issues. It also promotes critical thinking by integrating topics such as human rights, social justice, and conflict resolution into the curriculum. CPEF supports local peacebuilding by enabling deeper analysis of the root causes of conflict beyond generalized national approaches. Through strong school-community collaboration and localized programming, it contributes to sustainable peace, social cohesion, and community development.

Contextualized Peace Education

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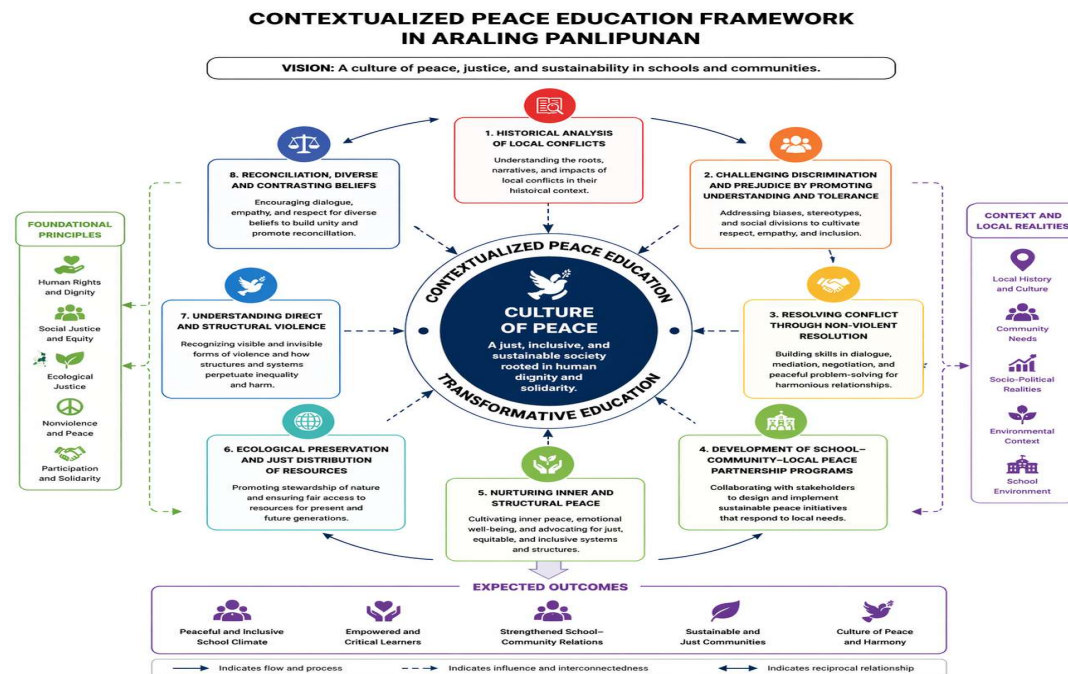


Figure 1. Elements of the Green Office Management System

Conclusion

The study highlights the significance of Contextualizing Peace Education (CPE), which is grounded in the sociocultural, political, economic, and historical realities of local contexts, as it is crucial for promoting transformative and sustainable peace. Unlike Western peace education, the contextualized peace education framework directly addresses the particular challenges and conflict dynamics

of the community that are exemplified in the province of Bataan. The CPEF framework empowers learners to critically analyze and understand the existing direct and structural violence, contextual historical conflicts, and the socio-environmental impacts affecting peace. The core of this framework is the learner-centered transformative pedagogy that nurtures values of human rights, social justice, tolerance, empathy, and ecological preservation. The learners primarily acquire valuable peace

values, knowledge, and skills that are essential for nonviolent conflict resolution, intercultural dialogue, and social action. In addition, the CPEF recognizes the link between the inner peace of an individual and structural peace in society, which highlights the notion that peace is not merely the absence of war or direct violence but the presence of positive peace that emanates from the existence of justice, equity, and human dignity in society's structures. Through capacitating teachers with peace knowledge that is grounded on CPE, it empowers them as agents of peace and fosters strong school-community partnerships, ensuring that peace education is locally relevant, culturally embedded, and institutionally supported. Incorporating indigenous knowledge systems and community-based peace practices further enriches the educational process.

Finally, the contextualized peace education framework aims to develop learners who are responsible, critical, and engaged citizens capable of fostering inclusive social transformation and sustainable peace. This comprehensive approach holds promise not only for educational institutions in conflict-affected settings but also as a model for peacebuilding that is adaptive, participatory, and culturally resonant, helping break cycles of violence and nurturing cultures of peace within local and broader communities.

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