

## Promoting Peace Education Through Arts and Literature in Pakistani Universities

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### Abstract

Peace education plays a fundamental role in promoting justice, equality and non-violence. However, the question of propagating peace education through arts and literature in Pakistani universities remains deeply unexplored and untouched due to socio-political challenges. The prime objective of this study is to investigate the role of Pakistani universities in promoting peace education specifically through arts and literature. The research focuses on the Greene-Nussbaum Model which highlights the transformative power of arts and literature in promoting moral imagination and empathy. Using a qualitative research approach, data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 100 respondents from ten universities across Pakistan. The findings indicated clear regional disparities with Punjab and Sindh showing more active engagement through cultural festivals and artistic initiatives, while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan face significant socio-political constraints which limits their efforts to mere symbolic gestures. Despite these challenges, arts and literature offer promising avenues for promotion of peace but it requires structural and policy-level reforms for sustainability. This study highlights the realities of peace education in Pakistan thus, inviting for further investigation into its untapped potential.

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## Introduction

Peace education has gained substantial importance in the modern times. It aims to promote peace, justice and non-violence. UNESCO states that peace education not only focuses on conflict resolution but also addresses the broader goals like promotion of justice, equality and a sustainable environment (UNESCO, 2024). Peace education can be studied through two lenses i.e. positive peace (prevention of conflict and promotion of social justice, equality and cooperation) and negative peace (absence of direct violence) as developed by Johan Galtung. This approach stresses that peace can be achieved by peace resolution and also by creating a just and equitable society (Galtung, 1996).

The world is facing intricate conflicts which has engulfed the peace in the world. Hence, peace education provides a constructive way to prepare individuals to deal and respond with the conflicts positively. In post-conflict societies like Rwanda, peace education has proved to play a crucial role in reconciliation efforts and building a socially cohesive society. Promotion of peace education provides the world with an opportunity to create resilient communities where social justice, equality and sustainable environment will prevail. It equips individuals with the knowledge, skills and values needed to deal with conflicts and also contributes to the creation a just and sustainable world.

Peace education intersects deeply with literature and arts. The creative and profound ways of arts and literature helps to understand conflicts and their relation to human beings. Famous scholars like Galtung, Friere, Greene, Lederach, Haris and Morrison have explained the relation of arts and literature with peace education and how they can provide grounds to promote the integral values

Maxine Greene explained in her book *“Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts and Social Change”* that arts allow people to explore the world through different lens other than their own. This essential act of ‘*imaginative empathy*’ provides them with an opportunity to understand the experiences of those who are afflicted by conflicts. She argues that arts can help the individuals to build their power of imagination through arts. It allows people to experience the realities of world through different spectrum thus, promoting empathy and social awareness. Greene contends that through arts individuals can connect more deeply with human condition. So, arts can morally and emotionally awaken the students and make them familiar to the issues of justice and social change. It helps them to play their role towards peacebuilding (Greene, 1995, p. 39). Peace education through arts call for active participation of individuals and encourages reflective inquiry which leads to social transformation (Greene, 1995, p. 156).

Galtung’s concept of negative and positive peace has deep connection with the transformative power of arts. He views ‘art’ as a medium which provides space to people for expressing their differences, questioning the social injustices and finding better versions of society (Galtung, Violence, Peace and Peace Research, 1969). Paul Lederach also agrees with Galtung that artistic practices bring in the ‘moral imagination’ which is capacity of individuals to envision peace in the midst of chaos and conflicts (Lederach, 2005, p. 29). He stresses the importance of imagination in finding peaceful options to conflicts. He believes that artistic expression through music, visual arts and story-telling enables the people to process emotions unlike the traditional conflict resolution methods. Therefore, it opens door to long-term peacebuilding and reconciliation (Lederach, 2005, p. 57). Arts also play a healing role in the reconciliation processes as Marshall describes that art therapy and community art projects can have a positive affect and helps to process trauma and promotes conflict resolution and social cohesion. So, peace education can be promoted through arts which actively contributes to peace building processes (Marshall, 2014).

Like visual and performing arts, literature also plays a fundamental role in peace education by helping the reader to understand the concepts of conflict, empathy and justice. Paulo Freire highlighted the importance of ‘critical consciousness’ in his works. He denotes it as an awareness of one’s socio-political and economic contradictions and enables individuals to take action against oppression in reality. Literature provides lenses to its reader to critically engage with stories that matches their own reality and issues of oppression. By reading stories relating to themes of violence, injustices and inequalities, students get to question their own societal structures and evolve a deeper understanding of the concepts of peace and conflict (Freire, 1970, p. 34)

Galtung also views literature as a means to promote peace. Literature offers an imaginative space for exploring alternative futures, much like the arts. Johan Galtung (2010) argues that literature, by presenting fictional or historical narratives of peace and conflict, allow its readers to envision what a peaceful world might look like. Literature invites its readers to reflect on human behavior, moral choices and the possibility of nonviolent resolution to conflicts. By presenting narratives that deal with human suffering, literature can develop empathy which is essential for peace education. Stories of war not only recounts violence but also highlights the human cost of conflict, prompting readers to reflect on the value of peace (Galtung, Peace studies and conflict resolution: The need for transdisciplinarity, 2010).

Morrison argues that poetry and story-telling has the capacity to act as a pedagogical tool in peace education. Poetry has the power to develop a deep connection with the reader and through the lens of poetry, one can feel the deep emotional truths. The use of symbols and metaphors in poetry aids the individuals to understand the emotions related to conflict, violence and loss. It paves new ways of understanding the nature of violence. The creative language in literature helps its readers to understand the concept of conflict and injustices in the society. This provides them with an opinion that they might not have found otherwise (Morrison, 2009).

Nussbaum in her work *“Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities”* penned down the role of literature in understanding peace education through ‘*narrative imagination*’ (Nussbaum, 2010, p. 95). She explained that literature allows people to step into shoes of others’ and understand their experiences and different social and cultural viewpoints. The ability to empathize with others is central to peace education because it discourages stereotypes and encourages mutual understanding. She believes that literature produces the cognitive and emotional tools which are required for peaceful coexistence and democratic citizenship. Thus, individuals learn to deal with conflicts with reason rather than violence.

Peace education cannot be disseminated among students without the active role of universities in it. Arts and literature can provide a framework for the promotion of peace education in universities. The central purpose of this research is to investigate the role of Pakistani universities in promoting peace education through arts and literature.

## Theoretical Framework

The current study introduces the Greene-Nussbaum Model which combines the working of Maxine Greene and Martha Nussbaum to study peace education and its promotion through arts and literature in Pakistani universities. This model has the capacity to promote empathy, critical thinking and moral imagination which are necessary milestones for promoting peace culture, justice and non-violence.

Greene’s idea (1995) of using arts as a medium for ‘*imaginative empathy*’ forms the basis of this model. She explains that how arts help people to perceive the world through different lens and create an empathetic understanding of different experiences and situations which shapes the conflict and inequality. She explains that art provides a participatory environment to people for exploring the human conditions which ultimately promotes social and moral awareness. Thus, it not only transforms people individually but also create space for collective commitment to the ideals of peace and justice.

In contrast, Martha Nussbaum’s (2010) concept of ‘*narrative imagination*’ underlines the role of literature in formulating empathy and critical consciousness in the minds of people. He argues that literature can help people to step into shoes of others and experience their realities and socio-cultural diversities. She

believes that literature produces the cognitive and emotional tools which are required for peaceful coexistence and democratic citizenship.

So, the Greene-Nussbaum Model states that arts and literature can play a critical role to promote peace education which also aligns with the Glatung's (1969) theory of negative and positive peace. By allowing individuals to question the social injustices and move towards non-violent solutions to conflicts, arts and literature can act as a vehicle to prevent violence and promote social justice. Through this holistic model, peace education can be re-conceptualized as an interdisciplinary approach which bridges together the artistic and literary practices which cultivates the empathy, critical reasoning and social justice. The model provides an inclusive framework to promote peace education through the creative potential of art and thoughtful potential of literature.

## Research Methodology

This study involves a qualitative research approach and the snowball sampling method was used which targeted different universities from all provinces of Pakistan to ensure representation of vast academic and cultural backgrounds. Primary data was collected through semi structured interviews. Initially, twenty universities were selected but due to hesitation and reluctance of individuals to answer the questions, the researcher had to stick to those ten universities from where respondents agreed to respond to the interview questions. The respondents from those universities who did not answer the questions told that they do not want to part of any study because they believed that their responses could be molded for some specific political agendas. Despite assurance of anonymity and a promise to keep responses solely for academic purpose, dozens of respondents denied answering the questions. So, only ten universities from all the four provinces were included in the study. Ten respondents from each university were interviewed and a total of 100 responses were gathered from ten universities of Pakistan (N=100). Government College University, Lahore (GCU), Punjab University (PU), Beaconhouse National University (BNU) from Punjab, Ghulam Ishaq Khan University (GIKI), University of Peshawar from KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, University of Loralai, University of Balochistan and University of Turbat from Balochistan and University of Sindh and Iqra University from Sindh were included in the study. All the respondents were informed about the nature and purpose of the study and were asked to respond the questions in honesty. The consent of all the individuals was taken and all the ethical standards were followed while collecting, storing and evaluation of collected data.

The semi structured interview questions aimed to understand the role of Pakistani universities in creating awareness about peace culture, knowledge about peace programs offered in universities, role of arts and literature in promoting peace education in Pakistani universities and what kind of challenges are faced by universities in promotion of peace education. For a better and practical understanding of these questions, Greene-Nussbaum model is applied as a theoretical framework to analyze the findings. This model combines Greene's concept of 'imaginative empathy' through arts and Nussbaum's idea of 'narrative imagination' through literature. This framework helps to understand the role of arts and literature towards cultivation of equality, social justice and non-violent conflict resolution. It will also help to access the role of Pakistani universities in promotion of peace education through arts and literature.

## Result and Findings

### i. Promoting Peace Culture in Pakistani Universities

Propagation of peace education is impossible without creating awareness about the culture of peace in the universities of Pakistan. The culture of peace should bloom in the universities so young minds can learn the focal values of peace like empathy, social equality, justice, mutual coexistence and conflict resolution. Without understanding the central concept of “*peace*”, it is an uphill task to propagate the peace education in universities.

- **Punjab**

The respondents believed that peace culture is promoted in universities of Punjab through different means. Firstly, many courses indirectly teaches about the core aspects of peace and mutual coexistence in universities. Secondly, workshops and seminars are held which revolves around the themes of peace, social justice, equality, empathy and mutual coexistence. Universities are playing a pivotal role in providing opportunities to students for promoting the culture of peace. Peace is also propagated through literary festivals which focuses on inclusivity, accepting diversity and creating harmonious environment for everyone.

- **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the universities try to create awareness about the peace culture through different channels. In some universities, different societies arrange seminars and workshops to highlight the importance of peace. The fundamental values of peace are propagated through literary drama, festivals and seminars. Contrary to that, respondents told that all the efforts to promote peace culture are covert and universities try to play its role in promoting peace through dialogues and informal discussions. One pattern is observed in universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that private universities are more openly propagating the culture of peace than the government ones. Also, the role of universities also varies from area to area. In conservative and traditional areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the activities of universities to promote peace are either limited or done in a secretive fashion. It is mostly due to the fear of political pressures and the fear of enmities and terrorism.

- **Balochistan**

The respondents told that the efforts to promote peace culture are very limited in the universities of Balochistan. The responses showed a relatively bleak and unfortunate picture. Majority of the respondents agreed to the fact that role of universities is minimal in promoting the culture of peace due to external pressures. Some others also stated that peace awareness campaigns are avoided due to the fear to political implications. So, majority universities remain passive in promoting peace awareness campaigns as to minimize the risk of confrontation with the state authorities.

- **Sindh**

The universities in Sindh are playing a positive role in creating awareness about peace culture. The respondents told that their universities are playing an important role in propagation of peace culture by encouraging the students to participate in cultural festivals, literary dramas and also doing different community service projects. These activities help students to interact with people from different backgrounds and develop the feelings of mutual respect, tolerance, empathy and non-violent behaviors.

## ii. **University Programs on Peace Education**

Peace education can only be promoted if efforts are done to include peace education programs formally in the courses offered at the universities.

- **Punjab**

In universities of Punjab, there are wide range of subjects which covers the theme of peace, equality, social justice, conflict resolution but no specific programs and courses are offered on the subject of peace education or conflict resolution. Courses like community media, climate change & sustainability, human rights and international communication are taught to the students. The respondents agreed to the fact that theme of peace and its core values like social justice, empathy, conflict resolution, human rights, mutual coexistence and non-violence are taught in their universities but no courses directly dealing with peace education or conflict resolution are offered to the students.

- **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

Likely in Punjab, respondents from different universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa explained that the themes of peace are sporadically covered in general courses. No specialized programs focusing on peace education are offered to the students in universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The core values of peace are taught to the students in other different subjects.

- **Balochistan**

The situation in Balochistan is no different than Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Some respondents said that guest lectures are occasionally conducted by their universities on the themes of peace as to equip the students with the concepts of peace, social justice, equality, mutual coexistence and conflict resolution. No specific courses on the subject of peace education is offered in any university of Balochistan.

- **Sindh**

The respondents from the universities of Sindh said that some courses and activities in their universities are conducted which indirectly promote peace such as panel discussions, cultural exchange programs and workshops which encourages students from all backgrounds to take part in it and work together. These activities help the students to learn about tolerance, team work, collaboration, empathy and mutual coexistence. It also teaches them that if any disagreements happen, they have to find a way to end their differences peacefully and work together. Respondents said that peace education programs are not taught directly in their universities but a lot of effort is put to make students understand the importance of peace and its fundamental values by engaging students in different activities.

### iii. **Arta as A Medium for Peace Education**

Arts is a creative way to promote peace education in the universities. through the lens of arts, students can be taught about the importance of peace in the world. As Greene contends that arts allow people to explore the world through different lens other than their own. This essential act of 'imaginative empathy' provides them with an opportunity to understand the experiences of those who are afflicted by conflicts

- **Punjab**

Arts is used as a medium to promote peace education in the universities of Punjab. The respondents from Punjab told the experiences and ways adopted by their universities to promote peace. Arts exhibitions are a common practice found in universities of Punjab, through which the contemporary issues facing the world are portrayed. Students are encouraged to display their art projects on the themes of peace, equality, humanity and social justice. Also, music clubs and dramatic societies play an active role in promotion of peace culture. Annual dramas and music

festivals are held which focuses on promoting harmony, peace, respect to people from all cultural backgrounds.

- **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it is observed that some private universities do take initiatives to promote peace education through arts in different ways but in government universities, such practices are not encouraged by the state authorities. Some respondents explained that such arts initiatives are prohibited in their university and if any such programs are to take place, prior approval from authorities is mandatory. However, other respondents said that peace is propagated through exhibitions, dramas, tableaux and different music festivals.

- **Balochistan**

The respondents from universities of Balochistan reported that peace and arts festivals are strictly prohibited in the universities by the authorities. Arts is sidelined due to perceived political undertones. So, almost all the respondents had the same stance on the question. Arts is not allowed as medium to promote peace culture in the provincial universities.

- **Sindh**

Peace education is indirectly promoted through arts in many universities of Sindh. The respondents said that events like cultural festivals, arts festivals and art exhibitions are conducted in their respective universities to promote unity, respect for diversities and peaceful coexistence but no special initiatives are taken which solely focus on the promotion of peace education through arts. Different respondents talked about multiple activities which happens in their universities around the year to promote the message of peace and harmony.

#### iv. **Literature's Role in Promoting Peace Education in The Universities**

Literature provides a prism to its readers to be able to see and understand the world from the perspective of writer. As Galtung rightly explains that literature provides fictional or historical narratives of conflict and peace to its readers thus, allowing the readers to imagine what a peaceful world would look like. Also, Nussbaum asserts that literature produces the cognitive and emotional tools which are required for peaceful coexistence. So, it is vital for the educational institutions to provide an atmosphere in universities where peace education can be promoted through literature.

- **Punjab**

The respondents from Punjab said that their universities conduct annual peace centric plays which are usually themed on the message of tolerance, harmony, peaceful coexistence and humanity. Their universities also hold scholarly sessions by inviting poets, novelists and literary scholars for discussion on the message of peace and it also lays stress on social issues. Faculty-led seminars are also conducted in which words of classic and modern poets and writers are discussed and the importance of peace, empathy, justice and peaceful resolution of conflicts is lime lighted.

- **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, respondents told that although literature is a safer medium for propagating peace education but such activities by universities are still limited as they are monitored by authorities. The activities related to peace promotion are seen by suspicion as authority's fear that there might be some undercover different moto behind such activities. Some others told that their university plays no concrete role in promotion of peace education through literature as the purpose of university is to produce candidates to fit in corporate sectors. Working for peace education through literature is not among their objectives.

- **Balochistan**

Literature can play a crucial role in promotion of peace education but its potential remains untapped due to censorship. Some others believe that peaceful narratives in literature courses are occasionally explored but lack depth. The respondents said that peace education through literature is limited to isolated seminars, which often face bureaucratic hurdles in their university.

- **Sindh**

The respondents told that very few programs, events and projects are held in which the central aim is to promote peace education through literature. However, some literature departments in universities encourage the students to study texts and authors that highlight the themes of social justice, harmony and empathy. The course of literature is not entirely designed to promote the message of peace but there are some topics which indirectly covers the theme of peace, conflict resolution and social justice.

#### v. **Integrating Arts and Literature for Peace Education**

Unlike first world countries, promoting peace education through arts and literature in Pakistani universities is an uphill task. When asked about the role of Pakistani universities in propagation of peace education through arts and literature, all the respondents from four provinces highlighted different aspects.

- **Punjab**

The respondents from Punjab said that peace education is promoted through arts and literature in Pakistani universities, as these mediums have a unique ability to inspire understanding, tolerance and harmony. By incorporating peace narratives into creative expression, universities encourage students to explore complex social issues, challenge prejudices and foster empathy. Universities in Pakistan host various initiatives, including art exhibitions, poetry recitals and literary festivals, to advance the values of peace. For instance, exhibitions often highlight themes of interfaith harmony and cultural diversity, demonstrating the role of visual arts in bridging divides. Similarly, poetry and literature events celebrate the shared cultural heritage of the region, with students.

- **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

Respondents believe that military sees such initiatives of promoting peace education as a threat, especially when tied to dissenting narratives in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Efforts to promote peace education through arts and literature are often symbolic rather than practical. Pakistani universities do not prioritize propagating peace education.

- **Balochistan**

Peace education in universities is not promoted through arts and literature in the majority of provinces of Pakistan. The universities in Punjab are trying to do a little better than other provinces as they have more freedom and autonomy. Promoting peace education in Balochistan seems like a nightmare because of the involvement of armed forces who perceive peace promoting efforts as politically-driven.

- **Sindh**

Peace education is not explicitly promoted through arts and literature on a larger scale in universities. While some universities incorporate arts and literature in cultural events, exhibitions and seminars, the focus is often on the showcasing of talent of students rather than directly focusing on the promotion of peace through literature and arts. Other respondents contended



the claim by saying that universities in Pakistan are promoting the message of peace through arts and literature in one way or the other. Although, the sole focus is not to promote peace education through arts and literature.

#### vi. **Barriers to Peace Education Via Arts and Literature in Pakistani Universities**

- **Punjab**

Peacebuilding themes are often confined to extracurricular activities, leaving them peripheral to the academic experience. This absence from the formal curriculum means that peace education does not reach all students thus, limiting its impact and sustainability. So, universities should find a way to make students engage in finding the solutions to social problems and teach them the importance of their role in peace building. Another challenge, highlighted by respondents is that universities are not free to formulate their own policies and thus, they cannot formulate their own curriculums. The constraints on universities in this domain become a hurdle to promote peace education through arts and literature. Also, teachers do not have freedom to teach such values to the students as Pakistani universities base their teaching style on state building ideas rather than nation building ideas.

- **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

The respondents reckon that one gigantic challenge in KP is the militarized environment which stifles any peace-promoting initiatives. Also, the lack of interest shown by students towards such activities in their universities is alarming.

- **Balochistan**

The main hurdle in propagating peace education in Balochistan is the role of army which limits the freedom of expression in peace-building efforts. The environment is not suitable for peace education as the strict rules hinders the genuine efforts by the universities. The efforts to promote peace education are seen as politically-driven by the army in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

- **Sindh**

Pakistan face several challenges in promoting peace education through arts and literature in Pakistani universities. one major challenge is the lack of structured programs or dedicated platforms that focus on peace education through creative fields. Arts and literature are often seen as extracurricular or secondary academic subjects which limits their role in addressing issues like tolerance, conflict resolution and social harmony.

#### **Discourse Analysis of Peace Education in Pakistani Universities**

- **Punjab**

In Punjab, universities are seen as comparatively active in promoting peace culture through various initiatives including courses that indirectly address the values of peace, social justice, empathy and mutual coexistence. While there is no specific course dedicated solely to peace education or conflict resolution, the university curriculum does include any themes related to these values. The respondents from Punjab highlighted the role of workshops, seminars and literary festivals which provide platforms for students to engage with discussions on peace, equality and diversity. This environment stimulates a sense of inclusivity in students as they belong from diverse backgrounds and collaborate in these forums to learn about peaceful coexistence. Arts and literature play an essential role in the province's promotion of peace education. The respondents highlighted art exhibitions, music festivals and dramatic

performances as key initiatives used to propagate the peace values. The use of arts as a tool for peace education is considered as a creative and effective means to reach students emotionally. It offers them opportunities to see the world through different lenses and gain a deeper understanding of conflict and resolution. However, the promotion of peace remains largely informal which brings into question its sustainability and outreach. Undoubtedly, the province's relatively more liberal and diverse environment allows the universities to engage with peace-building themes to a greater extent.

- **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the promotion of peace education faces multifarious challenges due to the province's unique socio-political system. The militarized environment in KP has affected peace promoting initiatives and respondents said that peace education is often perceived with suspicion. Universities are more thoughtful in addressing peace education through arts and literature especially when such initiatives challenge the status quo or hint at political dissent. This shows the tension between the aspiration to promote peace but the prevalent influence of military and political powers limits such high hopes. There are some attempts to promote peace education through arts such as exhibitions and drama performances but these events need prior approval from authorities. So, universities are less inclined to support such activities because they fear the political consequences of advocating for peace. As a result, peace education in KP remains largely symbolic. Although human rights, social justice and conflict resolution are addressed in various subjects but there are no specific programs dedicated to peace education.

- **Balochistan**

Balochistan presents the most daunting environment for the promotion of peace education through arts and literature. Respondents from universities in Balochistan expressed doubts about the severe limitations placed on peace-building activities due to external pressures, particularly from the military. The military's presence and control in the province limits the freedom of universities to engage with peace education openly. The arts festivals, exhibitions and peace-oriented events are often banned or controlled. This suppression of creative expression severely hinders the ability of universities to promote peace education through arts. Literature which is a relatively safer medium is also controlled by censorship. Peace education through literature is largely restricted to seminars and guest lectures. The lack of a structured curriculum dedicated to peace education in Balochistan means that students have limited exposure and the province's universities play a nominal role in promoting peace culture.

- **Sindh**

Sindh is a province where universities are more engaged in promoting peace education through extracurricular activities. The universities in Sindh seems to incorporate arts and literature into their peace education initiatives via cultural festivals, art exhibitions and literary events which serves as platforms for promoting peace, tolerance and understanding. These activities are not clearly labelled as peace education programs but they do encourage students to engage with the core values of empathy, social justice and non-violence. Cultural exchange programs and community service initiatives provide students with opportunities to interact with people from the different backgrounds. These interactions help the students to develop an understanding of peaceful coexistence. However, the lack of dedicated peace education programs remains a significant challenge in Sindh. Peace-building themes are often treated as peripheral to the academic experience and confined to extracurricular activities. Peace education through arts and

literature is promoted in Sindh but the focus of these activities is to showcase the talent of students rather than teaching the values of peace. In spite of challenges, Sindh's universities have made progress in creating a more inclusive and peace-oriented environment through cultural events and community engagement.

## Recommendations

For the promotion of peace education through arts and literature in Pakistani universities, several actionable steps must be undertaken.

- Firstly, an integrated approach is compulsory for the development of structured curricula in universities. Integrating peace-building themes into existing courses and formulating programs on conflict resolution, justice and empathy will provide a comprehensive framework for students. Universities should also establish partnerships with local and international peace education organizations to promote collaboration, access resources and share best practices of the developed world.
- Secondly, providing a conducive environment for artistic and literary expression is necessary. This includes organizing regular arts festivals, literary events and exhibitions that focuses on the themes of social justice and peace. Encouraging student participation in these activities can enhance their understanding of conflict dynamics and empathy. It must be ensured that these initiatives are not hindered by external pressures or censorship, particularly in provinces like Balochistan and KP where freedom of expression is severely restricted.
- Thirdly, capacity-building programs for faculty members should be prioritized to equip educators with the skills required for enabling discussions on peace and conflict. Training in applying theoretical models such as the Greene-Nussbaum Model can empower educators to use arts and literature as transformative tools in their teaching practices.
- As Maxine Greene underlined that "Imagination is the key to empathy". The developed nations have included peace education into their academic frameworks. Countries like Finland and Norway have included arts and humanities into peace education which results into more inclusive societies and conflict resolution skills. Pakistani universities can also imitate such models by amending them according to our own socio-cultural contexts. Undoubtedly, arts and literature can promote peace education in universities which in turn has the potential to transform the individuals and build a society based on non-violence, empathy and justice which are pre-requisites for the sustainable development.

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