

Resolve Conflicts for a Harmonious Living Together

Suja K.

Counsellor (Freelance), Bangalore.

Email - ksuja305@gmail.com)

Abstract: *Jaques Delor's report (1996) titled as "Learning: The Treasure Within" to UNESCO emphasized the need of value education. The four pillars of education suggested by the report are, 'learning to know', 'learning to do', 'learning to live together' and 'learning to be'. Among those four pillars, learning to live together and learning to be are related to peaceful living. The present study is based on one of the four pillars mentioned in the report namely learning to live together. This is an experimental study conducted with the objectives to develop a value education material for helping secondary level students to acquire the skills and values needed for a successful living together by resolving conflicts and also to study the effectiveness of the material. The sample of the study consisted of 30 students studying in secondary level in one of the schools in south Delhi. The tools used for the study were value education material and also relevant inventories for pre and post-tests. The study proves that the value education material is effective in helping the secondary school students to acquire the skills and values needed to resolve conflicts for a peaceful and harmonious living together.*

Key Words: *value education, resolve, conflict, harmonious, living together.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Conflicts are natural and are inevitable in human life. These are realities in life. Conflicts are there at intra-personal and inter-personal levels. Resolving conflict in its right time and in the right way is of great significance. If we are not able to deal it in the appropriate way in its appropriate time, more often it ends up in violence. According to Anderson et al. (2003) studies both longitudinal and cross-sectional have revealed that children and adolescents who are exposed regularly to violence, behave aggressively in their immediate future and also in the later part of their lives. According to Slutkin (2013) violence is a contagious disease and its transmission happens mainly through visual observation, direct victimization and intentional training. According to Global Status Report on 'violence prevention' (2014), *Interpersonal Violence- A Universal Challenge*, indicates that "Since 2000, about 6 million people globally have been killed in acts of interpersonal violence, making homicide a more frequent cause of death than all wars combined during this period." Non-fatal interpersonal violence is more common among adolescents and young adults. Violence is the fourth leading cause of death for 15 to 44 years of age group. The report reveals that 1.3 million die in each year because of violence that is 2.5% of global mortality and it may be self-directed, interpersonal and collective. One of the root causes of violence is conflict and it can be intra-personal or inter-personal. School violence increases day by day. This study is a search to find out whether conflicts, which later lead to violence could be prevented by equipping adolescents by providing conflict resolution training, especially those who are in the early adolescence.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Phyllis and Michael (2019) conducted a study to determine causes of conflict in public secondary schools in Kenya special focus in Mukaa Sub County in Makueni County. Structured and unstructured questionnaires were used for data collection. The study used descriptive method with both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Conflicts were high among the teaching staff and between teaching and administration staff and moderate between union and teaching staff. Causes of the conflicts are problems in perceptions, attitude, communication and authority structures. Factors that influence are conflicting needs, role and pressures, perceptions, unpredictable policies styles, goal and values.

Angela, Petra & Christi (2019) studied to examine nurse managers' conflict management experiences in diverse workplace, in a military hospital, in South Africa in order to facilitate healthy work. Qualitative phenomenological design and purposive sampling with unstructured individual interviews were used for the study and the data collected were analysed by using content analysis. Result of the study indicated that programs in conflict management skills are beneficial and can be arranged and taught among nurses and nurse managers as an intra and inter-personal process.

Deborah & Jessica (2018) presented empirical and theoretical support for the inference that training and practice for conflict resolution education have a positive impact on emotional well-being of the mediator.

Ceyda & Gonul (2016) conducted a cross sectional descriptive study to analyse the emotional intelligence levels and strategies of conflict management among nurses and the correlation between these two. Sample of the study consisted of 277 nurses and stratified random sampling was used for that. Study revealed that emotional intelligence affects

conflict management strategies among nurses. Trainings sessions on conflict management and emotional intelligence are necessary to improve conflict management skills among all staff in healthcare system.

Chitkalamba (2011) conducted a study on conflict negotiation through process curriculum approach among early adolescents. It revealed a significant difference among participants and the intervention was very effective.

Malm & Lofgren (2007) conducted an action research with an objective to improve conflict handling skills among adolescents by using educational drama. They developed a programme by integrating theory and practice of conflict management by considering drama as the pedagogy. The result of the study was promising in empowering students to handle their own conflicts. It also indicated that peer teaching is an effective method in teaching conflict management.

James & Owens (2004) conducted a study on peer victimization and conflict resolution among adolescent girls in single sex school setting. Girls of all levels experienced victimization, indirect and verbal more than physical. Older girls were more indirect and verbally aggressive behaviors than younger ones. The general response of the girls were not 'overt anger' instead compromise, avoidance, social support or obliging.

Borbely et al. (2005) conducted a study on conflict resolution among students of sixth grade by using role play vignettes and self-report surveys. Vignettes were based on three social contexts such as conflicts with peers, parents and teachers. The study indicated that sixth grade students were more effective in conflict resolution with peers than with their parents. Assertiveness and absence of violence were noted in conflict resolution role play vignettes with peers.

Vera et. al. (2004) in their study on conflict resolution among urban seventh and eighth grade students showed that girls were more frequently rely on verbal assertion and aggressiveness than boys. Significant predictors of conflicts resolution style in the present study were self-efficacy and self-control. School based preventive intervention were also discussed in the study.

From studies mentioned above, it is clear that 'Training for Conflict Resolution' has got a great significance in education and especially in value education. Conflicts are unavoidable in human life at different levels and everybody experience conflicts both internal and external. If we handle them skillfully with positive attitude it will become constructive and will contribute to the development of a sound personality. Conflicts will become destructive if we lack the skill to resolve them in the early stage and will lead to violence. Conflict resolution education and training equips a person to resolve them peacefully. Even though conflicts are unavoidable, violence is avoidable. Schools have become the places, where conflicts sprout due to some sort of 'personal complexes' or due to adjustment/ acceptance problems between adolescents in the peer group. Some fights may occur in the school itself, which then develop and continue even after they leave school and the fight may continue outside.

Whenever a conflict occurs that means there is a dispute between the concerned beings. To resolve a conflict there are different possibilities, they are:

- One person wins and other loses, the person who wins may force the other person to accept the solution/ remedy suggested by him or her or threaten that person (win – lose).
- Both the parties lose (lose – lose).
- Both the parties win (win – win).

In conflict resolution training the students become aware about the various possibilities and through reflective practices. The students are equipped to select best and healthy options to resolve the conflict without harming anybody. A conscious effort through co-operative conflict resolution has to be made to solve or eliminate disputes in joint operation with other members of a team or community. It refers to any activity, aimed at keeping inter-personal and inter-organizational conflicts, constructive rather than allowing them to become destructive (Madhu Raj, 1996). Attempts are to be made here to resolve problems and conflicts in association with the persons involved in it by analyzing the conflict in terms of the needs and life situations of both the parties involved and thus resolve by themselves. People accept solutions to their conflicts only if they satisfy their needs. Thus, understanding the other and responding by considering their needs will resolve the conflict. Conflict resolution skills include the ability to analyze problems in connection with both the parties and find out alternatives which could satisfy the needs of both the parties or even negotiate between the parties. The training also helps the students to get those skills which are necessary to help others in solving their problems through a process of mediation. Mediation is the arbitration between two or more disputants (Arthur S. Reber, 1985). It is an action by a third person intervening in a process of conflict resolution. The mediator should be an impartial person and acceptable to both the parties.

Jaques Delor's report (1996 to UNESCO, *Learning: The Treasure Within*, emphasized the need of value education. The report also suggested four pillars of education they are, 'learning to know', 'learning to do', 'learning to live together' and 'learning to be'. Among those four pillars, learning to live together and learning to be are related to peaceful living. The present study is based on one of the four pillars mentioned in the report namely 'learning to live together'. The study adopted experimental method (single group, pre-test, post-test design) with the objectives to develop a value education material for helping secondary level students to acquire the skills and values needed for a successful living together by resolving conflicts and also to study the effectiveness of the material. The 'value education material was developed by incorporating 5 values, considered to be necessary for a harmonious living. They are 'co-

operative conflict resolution’, ‘understanding others’ needs’, ‘mediation’, ‘group building’ and ‘co-operation’. The sample of the study consisted of 30 students studying in secondary level in one of the schools in south Delhi. The tools used for the study were value education material and relevant inventories for pre and post-tests. The study proves that the value education material is effective in helping the secondary school students to acquire the skills and values needed to resolve conflicts for a peaceful and harmonious living together. The objectives of the present study are i) to develop a value education material to help secondary level students to acquire the skills and values needed for a successful living together by resolving conflicts and ii) to study the effectiveness of the material in helping secondary school students to acquire the skills and values required for resolving conflicts and a harmonious living together. The Hypothesis of the study is that there is no significant difference between the pre and post test scores regarding the values on ‘resolve conflicts for a harmonious living together’ among secondary school students before and after the intervention through the ‘value education material’.

3. METHODOLOGY:

In the first phase of the study a sample of 30 students were selected from a secondary school. The researcher conducted a pre-test to the sample in order to get the pretest score before introducing ‘the value education material’. In the second phase, the researcher developed a value education material to help the Secondary School students to acquire the core values such as, co-operative conflict resolution, non-violence, understanding others’ needs, mediation, co-operation and group building among them. After conducting the pre-test the students were exposed to the ‘value education material’. After a period of four weeks a post-test was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the new value education material by administering a questionnaire developed by the researcher. In addition to the questionnaire, the investigator included an open ended question to collect the feedback of the sample regarding the effectiveness of the module in their own choice of words. The tools used for the study are Value education material, developed by the researcher, to help secondary level students to acquire the skills and values needed for a successful living together by resolving conflicts and a questionnaire, developed by the researcher, on the values included in the Value education material. The sample of the study consisted of 30 secondary school students from one of the schools in South Delhi.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA:

The data collected were organised and analyzed in both qualitative and quantitative terms which helped the investigator to obtain an overall understanding about the effectiveness of the ‘value education material’.

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation, and t-Value Scores obtained in different Core Values

CORE VALUES	MEAN		STANDARD DEVIATION		T-VALUE
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	
Cooperative conflict resolution	17.45	20.29	3.31	1.74	5.66
Understanding others’ needs	17	19.58	3.22	2.19	5.6
Mediation	15.68	18.39	2.98	2.23	5.42
Group building	17.23	19.71	3.23	2.75	3.39
Co-operation	16.97	18.74	3.39	2.46	2.56

From the above table it is clear that, the calculated t-values are 5.66, 5.6, 5.42 and 3.39 on ‘co-operative conflict resolution’, ‘understanding others’ needs’, ‘mediation’, and ‘group building’ respectively are higher than the table values of t (1.96 at 0.05 level and 2.57 at 0.01 level of significance) and the calculated t-value of ‘cooperation’ 2.56 is higher than the table value of t (1.96 at 0.05 level of significance). From this it can be inferred that the value education material developed for helping secondary level students to acquire the skills and values needed for a successful living together by resolving conflicts has significant effect on secondary school students to develop peace related sensitivity on the selected values such as ‘co-operative conflict resolution’, ‘understanding others’ needs’, ‘mediation’, ‘group building’ and ‘co-operation’.

Table 2: Testing the hypothesis

Test	Mean	S.D	t- value
Pre-test	84.32	12.90	6.12
Post- test	96.71	6.82	

According to table 2, the calculated t-value is 6.12. The value of t (6.12) is higher than the table value of t (1.96 at 0.05 level and 2.57 at 0.01 level of significance). Thus, the hypothesis – there is no significant difference between the pre and post test scores regarding the values on ‘resolve conflicts for a harmonious living together’ among secondary school students before and after the intervention through the ‘value education material’ - is rejected. From the result it is concluded that ‘the value education material’ has a significant effect on secondary school students to develop sensitivity towards the values selected such as: ‘co-operative conflict resolution’, ‘understanding others’ needs’, ‘mediation’, ‘group building’ and ‘co-operation’. In response to the open ended question to collect the opinion of the sample, regarding the effectiveness of the material, 98% of the participants were very positive about the new value education material. Thus, it indicated that the value education material, prepared by the researcher is highly effective and beneficial for the secondary level students for acquiring the selected valued for a harmonious living together.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- An activity oriented learner centered teaching-learning method is very effective to motivate children to acquire values.
- Role play, discussions various life situations etc. are very useful in this regard. Use of audio-visual aids help the learner to understand issues clearly.
- Schools should take deliberate efforts to provide conflict management training to the students to make sure that enough opportunity to grow with required values for a harmonious living together.
- The root causes of the conflicts are to be well understood and dealt with right method at right time.
- Mediatory roles for conflict resolution can be deployed in schools and work places.

6. CONCLUSION:

From the result of the study it can be concluded that the value education material developed to help the secondary level students to acquire values needed for a peaceful living together is beneficial for them. Along with the previous studies related to this field such as Malm & Lofgren (2007), Borbely et al. (2005) and Chitkalamba (2011) the present study shows the potential to help all learners to acquire values for a peaceful living together. Along with Vera, Shin, Montgomery, Mildner & Speight (2004) and Angela, Petra & Christi (2019) the present study also recommends the need of conflict management trainings in school, colleges and workplaces as preventive measures for conflict resolution. As Phyllis K.K and Michael M.I (2019) the present study also recommends that root causes of the conflicts are to be well understood and dealt with right method at right time. Value education has the potential to equip the next generation for a successful living by handling the conflicts skillfully, so that the society will be able to live in harmony with oneself, with fellow beings and with the nature.

REFERENCES:

1. Anderson, C.A. & Huesmann, L.R. (2003). Human aggression: A social- cognitive view. In M.A. Hogg & J. Cooper (Eds), *Handbook of social psychology* (pp. 296-323) London: sage.
2. Basogul, C. & Ozgur, G. (2016) Role of Emotional Intelligence in Conflict Management Strategies of Nurses. *Asian Nurs Res (Korean Soc Nurs Sci)*. 2016; 10(3):228-233.
3. Borbely, C.J., Graber, J.A., Nicholas, T., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Botyin, G.J. (2005). Sixth Graders’ Conflict Resolution in Role Plays with a Peer, Parent and Teacher. *Journal of Youth and Adolescents*. 34(4), 279-91).
4. James, V.H., Owens, L.D. (2004). Peer Victimization and Conflict Resolution among Adolescent Girls in a Single sex South Australian School. *International Education Journal*, 5(1), 37-49.
5. Kilonzo P.K. & Ivita, M.M. (2019). Causes of Conflict in Public Secondary Schools in Mukaa Sub County, Makueni County. *IOSR Journal on Research & Methods in Education*, Vol. 9, issue 4 Ser.I. (Jul.-Aug.2019), PP0-15. www.iosrjournals.org

6. Koesnell, A., Bester, P. & Niesing, C., (2019). Conflict pressure cooker: Nurse Managers' Conflict Management Experiences in a Diverse South African Workplace. *Health SA Gesondheid* 24(0), a1128. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hsas.V24i0.1128>.
7. Malizia, Deborah A. & Jameson, Jessica Katz, Hidden in Plain view: The Impact of Meditation on the Mediator and Implications of Conflict Resolution Education, *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 2018 35:3 Pages 301-318. DOI:10.1002/crq.21212. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3134800>
8. Malm & Lofgren. (2007). Empowering Students to Handle Conflicts through the Use of Drama, *Journal of peace education* 4(1), 1-20.
9. Slutkin, G (2013). Violence is a Contagious Disease, In *Contagion of Violence*. Washington, DC: Institute of National academy press.
10. Vera, E.M, Shin, R. Q, Montgomery, G.P., Mildner, C. Speight, S.L. (2004). Conflict Resolution Styles, Self-Efficacy, Self-Control and Future Orientation of Urban Adolescents. *Professional School Counselling*, 8(1), 73-80.

Authors' Biography:

Dr. Suja K, M.Sc. (Guidance and Counselling), M.Ed., Ph.D., is presently a freelance Counsellor and Researcher. She completed Ph.D. in Education from Jamia Millia Islamia. She has been working as a counsellor since 2006 and has served as teacher cum counsellor in schools in Kerala and Delhi. She has published the book *Television and Academic Behaviour of Adolescents*, five articles in edited books and two papers in international journals and presented seven research papers in International conferences. She is UGC-NET qualified and has served as faculty (Hon), Department of Counselling, Dharma Jyoti Vidya Peeth, Faridabad. She has guided two project works for postgraduate diploma in Counselling.