

Schools for the Child: Child Sensitive Good Practices in Sri Lankan Schools

EIU Experiential Learning Programme 2006



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Foreword

How can we teach peace? How can the people represent the peace without experiencing it? Can the learners have an idea about peace if a teacher imposes the concept of peace on them? How many times of didactical lecture can be a success to teach it to learners? How can we teach ABOUT peace and FOR peace in a peaceful way?

From almost one hundred years ago, the psychologists and education scientists theorized that experiential learning is the most natural way of human being 's learning: Jean Piaget, John Dewey and Carl Rogers are among them. Carl Rogers, a famous humanitarian psychologist, distinguished two types of learning: one is cognitive and the other one is experiential. He argued that the experiential learning is much more significant than the cognitive one. Because only the former correspond to the learners ' needs and wants. Rogers lists these qualities of experiential learning such as personal involvement, self-initiated, evaluated by learner, and pervasive effects on learner.

In line with life long education, scholars in adult education propose the importance of perspective transformation as a way of learning a new concept. Transformation of the perspective is based upon the learner 's experience. It also recalls the Freire 's empowerment education as an opposite concept of banking education. To make learners confront social issues drawing them from desk and textbook and to make them think " why " and " how " about issues for themselves are essential components of learning.

To learn to live together, we usually emphasize the pedagogy of participatory methodology and critical way of thinking in order to change the world in conflicts into the world in peace and harmony.

The participatory learning and critical thinking can be facilitated by experiential learning. To avoid the misunderstanding, here I want to clarify that I do not mean only the first, direct experience should be confined to experiential learning. In reference to the autobiography of Leonardo da Vinci, the most extraordinary artist, scientist and philosopher, always emphasized that he was a “disciple of experience”; a man “without book learning.” Learning by experience strengthened his determination to understand the laws of nature.

The experiential learning can be understood in two ways: firstly, learning from experience by learners themselves as a natural way of learning. It is organized by learners themselves; secondly, principles of experiential learning are used to design the experiential education programme.

APCEIU has been seeking for best ways to teach/learn the international understanding toward a culture of peace in Asia-Pacific region since its launching. We believe well designed experiential education leads the learners to be exposed to the meaningful experiential learning. Asia-Pacific region has been struggling with ethnic, cultural and religious conflict for a long time. In order to enhance the culture of peace in the region, we must look into deep roots of our problems and find out the ways to transform the conflicts working in a negative way to the conflicts in a positive way. In this regard, this project of “Development of Experiential Learning Programme (ELP)” was launched in order to set the way to listen to the voices from various fields in this region on how to interplay with social and cultural context and learning experience of learners. I hope we can share the precious experiences of case studies on ELP with other educators, scholars and policy makers who are committed to enhance a culture of peace in the region. I expect this project can provide a forum to share and exchange our experience.

December 2006



Kang Dai-Geun
Director

ELP Project is...

APCEIU has been committed to the promotion of a Culture of Peace in the region with a pillar of education “Learning to live together.” From experiences of organizing teacher training and cultural exchange programmes, APCEIU believe that education for peace should not only focus on contents but also on environments where education takes place. Education for International Understanding (EIU) should be focused to increase the capacities of learners to deal with issues of day-to-day survival, to resolve community conflict and to enjoy human, political and civil rights to a greater extent.

In accordance with its mandate, APCEIU has been developing Experiential Learning Programmes (ELP) to collect Best Case Studies of ELP for Peace in the Asia-Pacific region. Through this initiative, APCEIU aims to refine the EIU pedagogy and to provide conceptual framework for optimal classroom conditions, classroom activities among students and teachers, school climate and social atmosphere towards a Culture of Peace. The theme of ELP for Peace is illustrated at four different levels as concentric circles, and they are Peaceful Classroom, Peaceful School Climate, Peaceful Community and Peaceful Society.

In selecting the Best Case Study, the following steps were conducted: first, announcement letters were distributed to all the National Commissions for UNESCO; then, the Screening Committee, which was composed by APCEIU reviewed all of the submitted applications and selected four best proposals of case studies with blinded review process. After the selection, APCEIU staffs conducted

field visits to the respective winners to confer the award to the selected applicants and at the same time conduct the field observation and interview the researcher.

The chosen best proposals were selected based on the following criteria: originality of case study; applicability and feasibility for the Asia-Pacific Region; creativeness and innovativeness; relevance to EIU; effectiveness and implications; feasibility of the programme; and personal capability to carry out the research.

ELP generally shares the five core themes of EIU namely: cultural diversity and intercultural understanding; globalization and social justice, human rights and human dignity, peace and equity, and sustainability. The research areas of concentration revolves around the classroom activities, programmes related to school climate, community based programmes, and programmes which are carried out in the society.

The favorable and overwhelming responses from the applicants, the support from the UNESCO National Commissions, as well as the overall success of the implementation of this programme on this launching year inspired and motivated APCEIU to continue this endeavor for the coming years.

The Centre encourages the educators, scholars and activists from the Asia-Pacific region to apply and share their successful experiences. In this way, the best cases will be shared and promoted in the whole region towards achieving a Culture of Peace.

Researcher & Research Team



Dr. Godwin Kodituwakku

Godwin Kodituwakku (Bachelor of Education- University of Colombo, 1976; Master of Arts in Education- University of Peradeniya, 1989; Ph D- Open University of Sri Lanka, 2006) has a professional experience of 31 years in the field of education. Has served as a teacher (10 years), an In Service Advisor (2 years), and a Researcher (19 years). Currently he is the Director of the Department of Research and Development of the National Institute of Education, the institution responsible for the Curriculum and Professional Development of School level education in Sri Lanka. He has conducted three free lance research studies and has completed more than ten research studies either as a chief researcher or research team member. He has written five books in Sinhala medium on Action research, Questionnaires, Experimental research, Metacognitive writing of children, Travelogue on India, and Slow learning child. Has visited India (International Training Programme on Research Methodology: 2 months in 1994) and USA (Educational Leadership Programme sponsored by State Department: 3 weeks in 2006). His pet subjects are Research and Metacognitive Psychology.

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This project proposal has been selected as one of the best case study research proposals in Asia. Our sincere thanks are due to the two institutions - UNICEF and UNESCO and the personnel attached to those two institutions who paved way for this opportunity. In this regard we highly value the services of Ms. Ji-hyang Lee, Programme Specialist, APCEIU who visited the schools and gave direction.

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We should state humbly that the authorship of this research study based on good school practices should go to the principals, teachers, students and the community of those schools who initiated and developed good practices. As the research team what we did was simply the analysis and presentation of those practices within the frame of a Research Methodology.

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Schools for the Child: Child Sensitive Good Practices in Sri Lankan Schools

1. Background

The protracted civil strife accompanied by war and followed by destruction, fear, suspicion, trauma and stress is common experience to many in Sri Lanka. In this context, the education has to assume the role of normalizing the victims, minimizing stress and promoting access. Being a pro - active change agent rather than reactive, education has the potential to engender a peaceful and friendly society for which school is the ideal spawning ground.

Sri Lanka is an island located between the sixth and tenth north latitudes and the eighth and eighth - second east longitudes. It is separated from India by the Palk Strait about forty kilometres wide (Figure 1). It has a land area of 65,525 square kilometres. The island has a population of over 19 million.

Although known as the pearl of Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka had to suffer the consequences of two civil uprisings led by disgruntled Sinhala youth in 1971 and 1989 and is still suffering from a civil war waged by Tamil youth since 1980 's. The underlying reasons for these struggles are varied. Whatever the reason, they have led to a mental upheaval in the people of Sri Lanka. The frequently heard words over the media are related to conflicts. Bomb blasts, indiscriminate killings, recurrent guerrilla attacks and

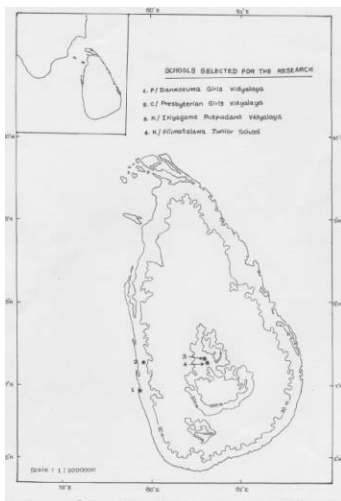


Figure 1. Map of Sri Lanka

bloodsheds have created tension among the people, although the incidents are sporadic or confined to certain areas. Even schools, a stratum of society, have been affected indirectly by this situation.

To remedy this situation, UNESCO, National Integration Programme Unit (NIPU), The Basic Education Sector Programme (GTZ), and UNICEF in collaboration with Peace Education Unit, Ministry of Education and National Institute of Education, have conducted programmes from 1991 on education for peaceful living and conflict resolution. For this purpose a number of publications related to peace education have been published (Balasooriya, 1993; 1994a; 1994b; Distance Education Department, (Year not cited); Primary Education Department, 1995). Literature on peace and peace education were produced introducing teaching methodologies. Teacher and official awareness programmes have been continuously conducted. An evaluation paper by Herath (1995) has been published. The effectiveness of such programmes, however, has not been assessed using research techniques. One research study by Cordozo (2006) has focused on peace educator's programme makers, national and international policy makers perceptions of peace education in Sri Lanka and their actions. Another study by Kodituwakku et al. (2004) has focused on the good practices that support peace culture at the school level.

Apart from the official intervention and input from the foreign funded programmes, unidentified numbers of schools have conducted peace education programmes without knowing that they have been implementing such programmes. The principals and teachers and community leaders, on their own experience and insight, have developed schools with peaceful environments. While implementing the prescribed curriculum, teachers have incorporated peace concepts into lessons, intentionally or unintentionally, instilling thoughts of peaceableness in the minds of pupils. These schools have been frequently mentioned in day to day official meetings, as having good practices. Kodituwakku et al. (2004) found out activities going

on in them and potential impact of such activities on school community. The current study intends to investigate three schools out of the five selected for the study and one outdoor classroom as cases to represent aforesaid two systems of peace education programmes.

2. Review of literature

The chapter on literature review includes two sections. Section one describes the theoretical background on conflict in Sri Lanka and measures of school effectiveness emphasizing the need for effective measures in identifying peace related activities. Section two underscores the Sri Lankan research scene on peace education. Finally the rationale for the present study is highlighted.

[Section one: Theoretical background](#)

The nature of the conflict

The history of the conflict in Sri Lanka can be divided into three stages (Perera, Wijetunge & Balasooriya, 2004) and the basis of conflict in all these stages is ethnicity. Citing relevant sources, the direct and indirect influence of conflicts on children has been succinctly presented by Perera, Wijetunge & Balasooriya (2004).

As a general fact of war, children are the most affected group. The direct and indirect effects on the everyday life of a country at war apply to all children indiscriminately, and especially to those living in the war zones and border villages. According to UNICEF sources, 900,000 children in the north and east have been directly affected by the war as of 1998. An estimated 380,000 children have been displaced. Thousands of children living in all parts of the country suffered the loss of a parent or parents, and family members were separated from loved ones and lived in constant fear and suspense. Education of children in the north and east, and in the border villages,

was disrupted. Children living in fear demonstrated psychological dysfunction such as a loss of concentration in their studies and social withdrawal behaviours.

...The vivo evaluation report (2003) on the psychosocial / counseling component of the GTZ/BECARE Vanni Education Rehabilitation Programme (VERP) validates the findings of a school- based epidemiological survey of children 's mental health conducted by GTZ/vivo in 2002 in the Vanni region. The report indicates that 92 percent of the children surveyed have experienced severely traumatizing events, and that about a quarter of the interviewed children suffer from severe and chronic post- traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

According to Cordezo (2006) ongoing violence and conflict have a negative impact on Sri Lanka 's political, economic, societal and education system.

The in-built ethnicity-related factors that lead to conflict are religious diversity and, regional imbalances in development. This entails inequalities in the distribution of educational resources and psychological backwardness among the children. In this respect schools have a major role to play to resolve conflicts. Hence, the roles of the school and its effectiveness have to be considered in peace related programmes.

Peace and conflict as a measure of effectiveness of schools

The conceptualization of " school effectiveness " and framing indicators to assess and evaluate it has been the subject of interest to many educationists over the years. Effectiveness is the extent to which a specific set of objectives is attained (Gunawardena, 1987). Gunawardena (1987) comes out with six determinants of an effective school. They are Curricular content, Instructional methodology, Instructional time, Social and economic factors, School related factors viz. physical and teacher resources, and Environmental factors

including geographical, technological and political factors. Early efforts in this area were undertaken mostly by professional educators resulting in several cost - quality studies (Barron, 1967, John et al., 1952) that used per pupil expenditure levels, measures of pupil performance, rate at which the schools adopted innovative instructional practices or new curricula, and students' social context rather than school services as determinants of pupil performance.

Mann (1984), Mellor & Chapman (1988) have attempted to identify characteristics of effective schools and deliberating on similar lines the Research Division of the National Institute of Education (NIE) initiated a series of case studies (1988 - 89) with a view to identify factors contributing to effective school practices. The studies helped to figure out both site-specific and generalisable determinants and indicators. The principal's leadership, community participation, teacher development, teacher incentives, welfare activities, limiting expansion of schools, enrichment programmes for pupils, delegation of authority, long standing traditions, participatory decision making, efficacy of traditional and non-traditional instructional methods have been identified as the major aspects responsible for effectiveness.

Teddlie and Reynolds (2001) identify Staff development, Involvement, Leadership, Coordination, Enquiry and reflection, Collaborative planning as conditions that underpin the work of successful schools. Jansen (1995) citing Edmonds (1979) distills five factors attributable to most effective schools. They are Strong administrative leadership, School climate conducive to learning, High expectations for children's achievement, Clear instructional objectives for monitoring student performance and Emphasis on basic skills instruction.

Effectiveness is also evaluated on the basis of outputs of a school. Windhem (1988) lists output indicators into four categories: attainment effects, achievement effects, behavioural effects and equity effects. Hence the need to look into the attitudinal and behavioural effects of schooling cannot be overlooked in this regard. However the

substance of the literature discussed above reveals that this aspect is hardly discussed in general and especially in relation to the Sri Lankan school context. Hence items such as motivation, discipline and citizenship are rarely translated into standardized measures.

The Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty - first century (Delors et al., 1996) states that education as one of the principal means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development and thereby to reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war. In this context many have foreseen the importance of education for pluralism, education in tolerance and respect for other people, a prerequisite for democracy, teaching non - violence in schools for combating prejudices that lead to conflict, establishment of satisfying and mutually supportive relationships, provision for the harmonious juxtaposition of desperate attitudes and value systems within the frame of reference of mature nationhood (National Education Commission, 1992), respect for human life and human dignity, sensitivity, caring, cooperation, social commitment and responsibility (Jayaweera, 2001) and promotion and propagation of human values (NIE, 2001).

The situation has expanded the boundaries of effectiveness indicators which now tend to encompass more attitudinal and behavioural aspects within its purview (Kodituwakku et al, 2004).

[Section two Research environment on peace in education in Sri Lanka](#)

There are two M. Phil studies and two research studies on the peace education in Sri Lanka. Premathilaka (1998) and Ratnayake (1998) studied respectively on the suitable citizenship education for the establishment of peace in a multicultural society and a way of contributing school education to build good interrelationship between Sinhala and Tamil families.

The study by Kodituwakku et al. (2004) concentrated on isolating a

set of events and relationships among nine selected school processes (School management, Classroom management, Student development, Staff development, Teaching/ learning process, Co - curricular activities, School environment building, Community relations and cultural harmony) using case study method providing a rich and vivid description of events on five schools emphasizing chronological order of school history, individual role in good practices, school processes of a day and during the year. Study reveals that the role of the principal was an influential factor in deciding the good practices in school. The cooperation of teachers, community and students are centered on principal's personality, which is 'Sri Lankan' in nature. The child-friendly approach in planning school and classroom programmes and implementing such programmes in fulfilling needs of the child have developed peaceful environment of the school. Sensitivity towards parents was reflected in the preparation of plans without harassing them. Good school practices related to nine school processes have been identified.

While the study by Kodituwakku et al. (2004) is based on an inductive approach based on the data derived from the schools, the study by Cardozo (2006) was on an inductive approach based on the succinctly explained peace concepts developed or identified worldwide. The study tries to answer the question of prevailing peace educators', programme makers', and national international policy makers' perceptions of peace education in Sri Lanka and their related actions. According to the research, although there are varieties of peace education initiatives, no co-operation and co-ordination exist among them and a national plan, a joint coordination body and a leading intervention of government organizations are necessary to go forward. Cordozo (2006) also suggests the need for more research on peace education specially to enhance the capability and commitment of school personnel to analyze their own practices.

3. Model of peace education in Sri Lanka

Considering the timely need for a kind of education which can prevent children from being driven by the violent forces in the society, the Ministry of Education and National Institute of Education decided to launch an education innovative project in 1991. Later the project was named education for conflict resolution. UNICEF came forward to fund Project.

The National Institute published a number of Teacher Guides on Peace Education and distributed to all the 10,000 schools on Sri Lanka. The primary and secondary curricula were revised by integrating peace concepts, values and behavioral skills. Over 5000 teachers , principles and education administrators were trained in peace education. In addition regular radio and TV programmers were produced and transmitted to raise public awareness. Peace concepts were integrated into teacher education curriculum. Teacher educated were given basic training.

The Project developed a Model of Peace Education for the children of Sri Lanka which drew attention in many countries. For example, recently in 2005 NCERT in India invited Mr. A.S. Balasooriya, the former Chief Education Project Officer, who developed the Sri Lankan model, to share his experiences and views, with the Indian educationalists. In order to help them developing a meaningful model for them. The Project has initiated several SARC countries to develop similar models for introduction of peace education in their general education.

The model proposes ten broad peace concepts to inculcate in children. They are:

- 1) Positive Attitudes and Self esteem
- 2) Cultivating feeling for others (through empathetic listening, understanding others needs and feelings, etc)
- 3) Discovering inner peace (through meditation, relaxation, aesthetic appreciation, Self understanding, gaining sight into

- self, learning to resolve one's inner conflicts etc)
- 4) Cooperative attitudes and skills (Learning to share, play, work and enjoy with others).
 - 5) Conflict resolution and problem solving (Negotiation skills, conflict analysis, mediation, nonviolent actions etc)
 - 6) Assertive skills (Learning to be one's true to one's conscience, learning to say 'no', Self dignity etc)
 - 7) Critical thinking and responsible decision making.
 - 8) Global outlook (Human rights ,valuing life in every form, appreciating other cultures, rising above race and parochial attitudes. citizenship attitudes etc.)
 - 9) Caring for the planet (Environmental preservation , and management)
 - 10) Community development (Participation in community building activities) (Balasooriya, 1994, 1995, 2001)

As Stomfay- Stiz (1996) observes ' Peace remains hidden in education literature rather than practiced '. The Guides present many game like, interesting learning activities to inculcate peace attitudes and skills related to the above concepts in children in the formal lessons. When a teacher is familiar with the above concepts they can identify them in almost every subject content. Once identified teachers can elaborate them to internalize as a character building effort. Thus peace education was integrated into the school curriculum.

However several additional efforts have been taken by the Ministry of Education to promote peace in the country through Education. Multiculturalism is promoted through teacher Education and curriculum revision. Children of different races and cultures are encouraged to learn in the same school through amity schools, where bilingual medium of instruction is adopted. Sinhala schools are encouraged to teach Tamil language and vice versa in Tamil schools. In additions to the efforts of the Ministry of Education, German

Technical Cooperation (GTZ), UNESCO and UNICEF and some NGOs have implemented education projects to promote peaceful living attitudes and competencies. .

Education Reforms in 1995 introduced ' Life Competencies ' as a formal subject starting from Grade 6. Most of the Life Competencies prescribed in the innovation are peaceful living competencies such as self understanding, coexistence, and active listening conflict resolution.

Nearly one and half decades have been passed after the introduction of peace education into the Sri Lankan schools. It is opportune to conduct a national survey to assess the impact of the efforts. The general observation is that there are handfuls shining exemplary schools in the Island who have taken real interest in peace education. However many schools still needed to develop initiatives. At the National level, the provincial education authorities needed to be motivated and guided to implement peace education as a National need. In paramilitary controlled areas children are highly exposed to militarization. There is a serious need to make the paramilitary to accept schools as ' Zones of Peace ' an innovative promoted world wide by UNICEF.

4. Rationale

In performing professional role vested with principals and teachers, good practices have emerged at different school settings in Sri Lanka. Some of the good practices are mainly due to official/ institutional interventions and others are initiatives of dedicated individuals at school level.

The study by Kodituwakku et al. (2006) have explored the state of the art of selected five schools that have been pinpointed as having good school practices at different school processes based on the guidelines delineated by Sri Lankan publications on peace education/ conflict resolution/ school system (Distance Education Department,

Year not cited; Kularatne, Wellala, Wimaladharma, 1988; Kularatne, Dasanayake, Kodituwakku, 1992; Primary Education Department, 1995; Balasuriya, 1993, 1994a, 1994b, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b). In depth interviews at workshop level with four resource persons (A. S. Balasooriya, L. Amarasinghe, Dr. D. P. Bibile and A. P. Gunaratne) were also used to develop the conceptual framework. In spite of that, the resurgent need was to inquire into the sustainability of those practices.

Hence identifying peace and conflict resolution practices tied with characteristics incorporated in school processes deems necessary. The situation also calls for an assessment while identifying the new concepts that have surfaced and an inquiry into the challenges confronting the sustenance of such practices.

5. Objectives

The purpose of the study was to identify the good practices of Sri Lankan schools in the field of education for peace and conflict resolution. The specific objectives are:

- 1) To explore good practices and models of peace education in

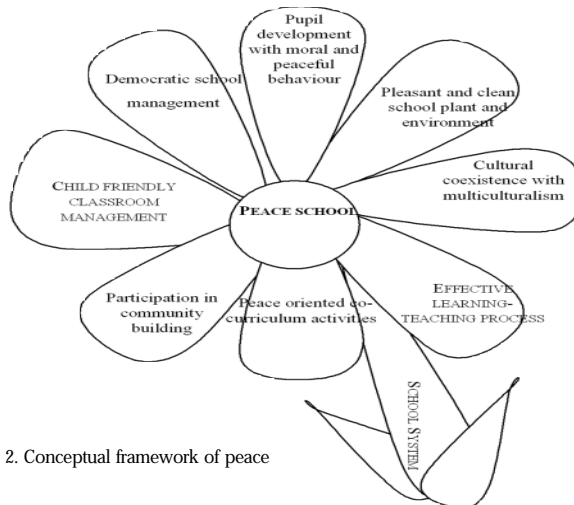


Figure 2. Conceptual framework of peace

school management, classroom management, student development, staff development, teaching/ learning process, school environment building, community relations and cultural harmony (Figure 2)

- 2) To identify peace concepts imbibed in the above mentioned practices
- 3) To compare schools with good practices to identify school-specific and country- specific practices
- 4) To identify challenges faced by schools in sustaining good practices

6. Methodology

Longitudinal case study method was used as the study was based on identified peace and conflict resolution characteristics included in school processes by an earlier survey (Kodituwakku et al., 2004). During the second stage the schools were studied again after two years in 2006 using a snap shot survey to assess the present situation and sustainability. Field visits to schools to observe the school environment, interviews with the principals and teachers and written submissions by children were used to collect data.

School settings

In the selection of school sites, based on the purposive sampling technique, recommendations and suggestions of education officers and educationists who were involved in peace education and conflict resolution were considered. Two schools were selected to represent different intervention programmes launched during the year past, namely the programme implemented by Peace Unit of the MOE and the programme conducted by UNICEF with the collaboration of the NIE. Two schools without official intervention were also selected. One of them had developed a peaceful environment within the school with grassroot level experiments. The other school which lacks

a good environment for its lessons was remarkable for the selection of outer sites to conduct lessons (Figure 1). A comprehensive description of the selected schools is given in Box 1.

Box 1. Schools

School 1: P/ Dankotuwa Balika (Girl 's) Vidyalaya, Dankotuwa

Dankotuwa Balika Vidyalaya is situated in a rural area close to the western coastal belt of the country (Figure 1). Though the foundation stone was laid in 1987, the school was formally inaugurated in January 1993 with 149 students and 3 teachers. At present there are 1600 students and 58 teachers. The principal 's office, computer section, laboratories, activity rooms, Mathematics rooms, green houses, reproductive health unit, library, Home Science room, multimedia unit, aesthetic unit, and sports rooms are notable specialties in the school among the traditional classrooms and erections. A studio designed according to traditional architecture is under construction. In addition, a resource unit has been constructed in 2006 to store Mathematical equipment required for primary classes. The school premises offer a pleasant sight to a visitor (Figure 3 & cluster of Figures 1).



Figure 3. Eye catching school site Cluster of figures 1. Places for outdoor classes

The school buildings lie close to the boundary. There is a free area in the centre bordered by flower plants of various colours. In between the buildings and the hedge sylvan trees such as Margosa, Mangoe, Benjamina are grown. The netball court is in the middle of the garden. On the elevated plot of land near the office, is the mathematics garden constructed by combining different geometrical shapes such as sphere, pyramid, triangle, and quadrangle.

The official intervention on peace concepts by Ministry of Education and National Institute of Education has developed this school into an exemplary school in peace concepts after 2001. In the development stage of the school, while facing crisis situations over religious issues, the community and the principal understood the importance of coexistence and peace to achieve objectives. The beautiful environment in the school and peaceful behavior of children is unique. The school has incorporated JICA intervention flexibly that resulted in a well structured improved peaceful school. Although the school belongs to the Catholic tradition, it serves children from all religious denominations. It is erected in a land of two acres belonging to the Catholic Church. A sister acts as the principal from its inception to date (Cluster of Figures 2).

The school which commenced with grades 1, 6 and 7 in 1993 has evolved into a fully fledged school by 2006 with science, arts, commerce streams and classes from grades 1- 13. Figures and tables relevant to various subjects are displayed on walls of the buildings. They make pupils recall what they have learnt. The notice boards put up in several places with sayings, dictums related to moral and character development, enable to build good attitudes among students. Another conspicuous feature is the good resource management. All the buildings, plots, classrooms, the office and other units within school premises are well maintained. This lays a solid foundation for a peaceful existence.



Cluster of figures 2. Vision of the principal with positive results

School 2: C/ Presbyterian Balika Vidyalaya, Colombo

The school situated in the heart of the Colombo city established as an assisted school since its inception (15.01.1918). It became a Government school in December 1962. From the beginning, the school adopted English as the medium of instruction, and then switched over to Sinhala after the take over. Table 1 reveals the diversity of the student population. Due to the multiethnic prevalent in the school the principal has requested the

Government to make it a multiethnic school.

Table 1. Pupil population according to diversity

Criteria	Divisions	No. of children in 2006
Medium of instruction	Sinhala	876
	Tamil	236
Race	Sinhala	396
	Tamil	201
	Muslim	515
Religion	Buddhism	376
	Hinduism	130
	Islam	515
	Christianity	91

The mission statement of the school reads thus: “ As a multiethnic model school, promotes to produce human-friendly, efficient, intelligent citizens to the nation while upholding a cordial mutual coexistence not only among all races and religions but also among cultures ”. The busy buildings belonging to the general hospital surround the school. Though it is a populated area, the chapel located within the school premises gives a scene of mental tranquility when entering the school (Cluster of figures 3). This mental pacification and peaceful environment enable the children to learn in cooperation and coexistence irrespective of their religion and social status.



Cluster of figures 3. Child friendly school plant amidst the populated city

School 3: K/ Eriyagama Pushpadana Model School, Peradeniya

Eriyagama Pushpadana Model School is situated 115 km away from the metropolis of Colombo in an elevated land in the middle of a suburb. The buildings constructed to suit the hilly land are connected by the flight of steps. Remaining spaces were used for

growing useful plants and vegetables (Cluster of figures 4).

The school was started as a Dhamma school in 1925 and got established as a Buddhist school in 1927 in a cadjan thatched single building with 15 students and a single teacher. In 1960, the school was taken over by the Government and by 1996/1997 had faced a pathetic downturn. Nevertheless the vision and effort of the principal who was appointed to this school in 1997 spearheaded change which led to a peaceful environment finally resulting in the current developed stage. In 2006 there are 414 students on roll. The staff with the principal counts to 37.

A special feature of this school is, that it is not intervened by any peace related official/ foreign funded programme.



Cluster of figures 4. Using the land in an environment friendly manner

In 2003, Advanced Level classes were started and there is a gradual progress of students passing A Level Examination. It is noticeable that the enrollment rate both in Grade 1 and the A Levels has increased. The school programmes that led to its development were organized in a stepwise manner during the period of earlier principal (Figure 4). The noteworthy nutrition programme implemented in the school is based on Buddhist philosophy (Kodituwakku & Somaratne, in print) (Cluster of figures 5).

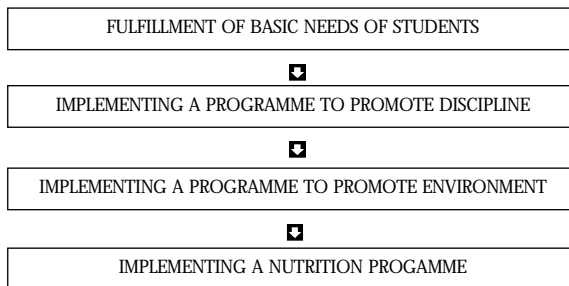


Figure 4. Stepwise development of the school



Cluster of figures 5. Motto - School for the child: Nutrition programme with a philosophy

Co-curricular activities such as cubbing, “ little friends ”, guiding and up-country dance have been carried out in 2006. It is a remarkable feature to note the development of both physical and human resource management in the school. Though it is a Buddhist school, statistics show that in all the classes there are Tamil and Muslim students studying along with Sinhala students.

The school community mainly comprises minor traders and people engaged in agricultural activities. Children born through mixed marriages such as Sinhala -Muslim come to this school too. They show a peaceful, cooperative, disciplined and committed behaviour pattern.

School 4: K/ Pilimathalawa Primary School

The school is situated in a small plot of land, 63 perches in extent with two story incomplete building. The main hall is temporarily partitioned and used as classrooms. There is a computer room donated by a foreign teacher in 2004. It is a mixed school with 140 male and 148 female students. Majority of the students are Sinhala Buddhists yet there are three Muslim students. When compared to populated schools, there are less number of students in each class. There are 4 male and 14 female teachers.

Due to lack of space and fauna and flora, students are taken outside the school premises to conduct certain lessons (Cluster of figures 6). Sometimes they are taken to the botanical gardens accompanied by parents to conduct lessons pertaining to nature. A special feature of this school is that it is not intervened by any peace related official/ foreign funded programme.



Cluster of figures 6. Congested school plant and spacious Botanical Garden

Data collection instruments and data providing sources

Convenient sampling method was used to select principals (4), teachers (17), Primary Grade students (148) and Secondary Grade students (209) to collect data from questionnaires and interviews (Table 2).

Table 2. Sample for collection of data from questionnaires

School	Principals	Teachers	Primary Grade Students	Secondary Grade students
School D	1	5	42	143
School P	1	7	28	35
School I	1	5	28	31
School B (Outdoor classroom)	1	1	50	-
Total	4	18	148	209

The following qualitative data collection methods were employed.

- In-depth unstructured observation of events, incidents, and processes at school premises (Appendix 1).
- Observation of classrooms for analysis of lessons to identify sections that deal with peace concepts and to evaluate the prevalent practice at classroom level in using these concepts in the teaching learning process.
- In-depth interviews with principals (Appendix 2).
- Written submissions from students on prompts given to them. In this process students were asked to write narrative essays on selected themes of the school (Appendices 3 & 4).

- Photographs to catch the school processes that focus peace environment.

Data collection procedure

- The school / classroom environment, behaviour of students and teachers in the school premises were observed and notes were taken as qualitative data. Notes were written in Reflective Diaries with reflections based on the concepts of peace and conflict resolution. Prior to the observation, researchers were acquainted with the basic concepts related to the study, so that they could focus their observations.
- In depth interviews were conducted with the Principals, teachers, and students.

Data analysis

Based on selected aspects of the study, qualitative observation and interview data were transcribed and coded. Written primary data, extracted from prompt questions were coded according to selected themes and frequencies were calculated. Specific patterns of good practices identified through ' data triangulation ' using qualitative and quantitative data were then again elaborated using photographs. In the writing of the report an attention was made to summarize good practices and then to compare practices among schools to identify common practices and challenges.

Ethical considerations

The names of the selected schools were cited in the report, as the principals and teachers have willingly consented to have their school names in the report.

7. Findings

(a) Good practices

School 1: P/ Dankotuwa Balika (Girls ') Vidyalaya, Dankotuwa

Pleasant and clean school plant and environment

- A board stating, “ Blessed are the peacemakers ” is displayed at the bridge which connects the public stadium and the school.
- Trees and various types of flower plants are planted systematically to beautify the environment
- There is a large tree in the school ground named “ peace tree ” where statements relevant to development of peace are hung (Figure 5).
- Boards with the following statements are hung on trees.
 - “ Let us protect beings as our own eyes ”
 - “ Let us plan at minor level and have immense results ”
 - “ Let us be satisfied with what we have ”
 - “ Let us have simple behavioural pattern (Figure 5).
- Close to the main hall, boards are hung with statements to develop positive attitudes on the protection of environment.
- A systematic procedure is carried out to maintain cleanliness of the school.
- Dustbins of two different colours are kept to dispose litter systematically.
- Mathematical Garden constructed according to geometrical shapes.
- Herbal garden.
- In the Green house there are various flower plants planted in pots.
- In the school ground, evolution of the water well system is displayed.
- Special resource rooms are allocated to Mathematics and Art.
- There is a computer unit.



Figure 5. peace tree

Cultural co-existence with multiculturalism

- At 12.00 noon pupils listen to Catholic prayers recited over the public address system. Buddhist stanzas too are recited at this occasion.
- In welcoming guests, a flower is pinned on the dress.
- Words in Tamil & Tamil alphabet are displayed in the school ground to encourage Sinhala pupils to learn Tamil.
- There is a democratic environment in the class. A pupil centered teaching learning method could be observed.
- Various framed teaching aids including Mathematical formulas, drawings, illustrating human evolution, work instruments etc. are displayed on the walls.

Pupil development with moral and peaceful behaviour

- The pupils enter and leave the school in a disciplined manner.
- Pupils obey the rules and regulations willingly.
- Rules indicating how to behave in the school are displayed on boards.
- News on current events are announced over the public address system soon after the interval.
- Child friendly environment both inside and outside classrooms exist.



Cluster of figures 7. Child friendly environment

Democratic school management

- Students who come to school by bicycles keep them systematically.
- In order to discourage getting late to school, the latecomers are made to clean the school ground and recorded in the pupil

record book.

- Pupils, who need to go out of the class, should take a token prepared for the purpose.
- Principal is considered as a role model.

Child friendly classroom management

- Teaching learning aids are exhibited in the classrooms.
- A personal file with details is maintained for each pupil from grade one.
- When a teacher gets absent, each child is given activities to do on the special workbook maintained by her.
- Pupils are made to stay in school for half an hour to evaluate the students ' performance (parents are notified).



Cluster of figures 8. Friendly relationships between teachers and children

Challenges

- Transfer of trained teachers affect the systematic learning-teaching procedures.
- Non-availability of a playground and a main hall.
- Less opportunities for computer education.
- Disturbances from pigeons.
- Lack of teachers for dancing.
- In sufficiency of necessary books in the library.
- Paying more attention to extra curricular activities.

Suggestions

- Provision of physical facilities to develop sport skills.
- Constructing a main hall.

- Improve opportunities for pupils to get computer education.
- Take action to avoid disturbances from pigeons.
- Provide better opportunities for dancing.
- Develop library facilities.
- Pay more attention to educational activities.

School 2: C/ Presbyterian Balika Vidyalaya, Colombo

Pleasant and clean school plant and environment

- The school plant and environment are kept clean and ornamented. The cleaner comes in the morning and finishes cleaning well before the school begins.
- Various sayings and maxims aiming at attitude and moral development of children and indicating the value of peaceful living and coexistence are displayed on boards in all the three languages. i.e. Sinhala, Tamil and English.

Cultural coexistence with multiculturalism

- The school has pupils belonging to different ethnic groups (Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim, Burgher) and religions (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Catholicism) but these differences have not hindered their coexistence as evidenced by the following.
 - Sharing meals with one another
 - Sinhala pupils reciting Tamil songs and vice versa
 - On the eve of religious festivities, girls of one religion sing devotional songs of another religion. “ Cultural activities like these build confidence and develop the values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed to live and work with dignity and participate in development ” (Huck, 2006)
- Appointment to posts such as school prefects is based purely on meritocracy and not on race or religion.
- The composition of teachers too is variegated. They belong to three major ethnicities and different creeds. But all including the

principal can use the three languages for communication.

- The mutual appreciation of teachers' work is irrespective of their racial or religious affiliations.

Effective learning teaching process in curricular activities

- The seating arrangement of primary classes deliberately mixes the children of different ethnic groups. The monitorship rotates weekly. In classroom activities they mix freely without any discrimination. For instance in activities related to cultural and religious aspects all chip in disregarding their tagged differences.

Democratic school management

- The top managerial positions are distributed among the different ethnic groups and religions. e.g. The principal is a Sinhalese whereas the two vice principals are a Tamil and a Muslim.
- Many teachers are conversant in all the three language so they handle school management and community related activities without language barriers.
- Prefects are appointed on merit and they belong to all ethnic groups. They supervise students' cleanliness. Those who can speak all the three languages check students' bags. They also see to the minor problems of parents without sending them to the principal.
- Religious observations of four different religions are performed simultaneously at four different places earmarked for the purpose when the school begins.
- The log book which gives the history of the school is kept well protected.

Child friendly classroom management

- The classrooms are properly arranged and offer a conducive environment for learning.



Cluster of figures 9. Classrooms: Conducive environment for learning

- The principal supervises classes, looks into absenteeism and promptly attends to classroom requirements.
- Some teachers buy materials for the classroom.
- Before taking the midday meal, grade 1 pupils recite a poem which praises their parents.

Peace oriented co-curricular activities

- In addition to normal co-curricular activities such as sports, religious activities and ceremonies of all religions are conducted both at classroom level as well as at school level. All pupils participate and gain a practical experience of other religions as well.
- All major national festivals are celebrated in school. Pupils unitedly participate in them irrespective of their religions and ethnicities.
- For the language days too, all children participate whatever the language they speak.
- Some of these activities are related to the subject content too.

Pupil development with moral and peaceful behaviour

- Pupils address morning assembly in all the three languages making it a common forum for coexistence and developing skills and knowledge.

- Teachers also speak at the assembly on various topics which not only add knowledge but also mould attitudes.
- Extra activities and some practices followed help both cognitive and affective development of pupils. e.g. Floriculture, making compost, growing environmental plants; Welcoming visitors by reciting a verse; Giving words / phrases of similar meaning in all the three languages when they are used. e.g. Greetings
- The school community is plural and represents all major ethnic groups and religions. But they collectively participate for religious and other ceremonies and festivals held in school. They also support other common school activities.

Challenges to the school

- Problems regarding the leadership. Since Muslim pupils have become the majority in the school, Muslim community attempts to get a Muslim principal to the school.
- There are Tamil teachers belonging to different sub groups such as Jaffna Tamils, Batticaloa Tamils, Estate Tamils and Colombo Tamils and sometimes disputes arise among them. Sometimes the principal gets involved in negotiating them (Figure 6).
- Lack of pupil centered and democratic teacher pupil relationships in the teaching learning process found in most of the secondary level classes. Teachers in the observed two classes adopted the lecture method in their teaching. Teachers addressed pupils in high tone and there was no pleasant look in their faces. Pupils were very silent and were passive listeners.
- Differences in the use of language between Tamils and Muslims has caused a problem among pupils as well as teachers.
- The school is situated at a busy and hurly-burly place close to the general hospital and surrounded by large buildings and streets full of vehicles. Hence the outside environment has become a



Figure 6. Reconciling with different ideas

challenge to the school.

- The school does not have enough buildings to accommodate pupils. Some classes are held in corridors. Lack of a playground for the school has also become a problem. Hence the physical environment will in some way affect the minds of pupils.
- Lack of a teacher for Music has become a problem.

Suggestions for further development

- Provide a playground to the school. Build up two upstairs buildings at the space available to accommodate all the classes. Provide a computer room, a swimming pool and three rooms for Aesthetic subjects, Art, Music and Dancing with necessary facilities and repair available lavatories and construct four more lavatories.
- Start a programme to develop language fluency in all the three languages for teachers as well as children which would help to develop coexistence among different groups.
- To have a training programme for teachers to develop their skills and attitudes so that they would adopt better teacher learning practices.
- Appoint a Music teacher.

School 3: K/ Eriyagama Pushpadana Model School, Peradeniya

Pleasant and clean school plant and environment

- Flowers are grown in the garden. Vegetables are grown in every nook and corner.
- Name boards are fixed to show directions.
- Flowerbeds near the classrooms and the Buddha statue beautify the environment.
- Green vegetables are grown in the flowerbeds for consumption.
- The statement “ Let us have a school devoid of polythene is displayed on the upstairs building which is visible to the Peradeniya town.

- Dustbins made of cane by students are kept at several places.
- School has a computer unit with computers for students and a separate computer room for teachers with 2 computers. There is a lecture hall attached to the computer unit.
- Every classroom is nourished with resources developed by children and teachers.



Cluster Figure 10. School made environment

Pupil development with moral and peaceful behaviour

- Students ' basic needs are fulfilled by providing midday meal.
- Production of compost manure, cultivation of plants and selling them by pupils incline them towards self-employment.
- Although there are malpractices in the external environment the physical and social environment in the school help students to develop moral values.
- Statements to develop moral values in students are displayed in different places.
- The school facilitates and encourages the pupils to participate in co-curricular activities.

Democratic school management

- Though the school has an un appealing history the good management practices adopted by the former principal and the present principal have brought the school to a better place.
- Due to good management practices, the student enrolment rate has increased in 2006. There has been a demand for admission for grade I in 2006.



Figure 7. Dictums displayed



Cluster of figures 11. Practices moulding discipline of children

- Students who are well disciplined are rewarded.
- Various activities are conducted for the students during vacations.
- The administrative practices set up by the former principal led to the development.
- A special education unit is established.

Participation in community building

- Assistance of the teachers, parents and well wishers are sought for the midday meal project.
- Community support is obtained to construct a Buddha statue and the access road to the school.
- Community buy the compost manure and plants produced by the school.
- School main gate was donated by a business enterprise.
- Another company has promised to construct a wall along the road leading to the school.

Teacher development

- Top management listens to the proposals and suggestions made by the teachers.
- Teachers are informed about the staff meetings three days in advance, in order to come prepared for the meeting.
- Thirty eight teachers underwent a training on Computer Assisted Learning.

Challenges

- From the end of year 2006 the school has to bear the expenses of the electricity bill of the computer laboratory, which has been paid by the SEMP.
- Difficulty in protecting the school property since the school cannot afford to employ a watcher.
- It is felt that there would be a dearth of physical resources when the student number increases.
- No playground.
- Safeguarding children from the external environment of the school where malpractices are rampant.
- Unable to cater to all applicants who seek admission to grade I due to lack of accommodation.

School 4: K/ Pilimathalawa Primary School

and a lesson conducted in the Botanical Gardens

This specific section covers the good practices in a lesson of Grade 2 conducted at a Botanical Garden. Lesson was on a theme related to the subject Environmental Related Activities. Since the school premise is not equipped with necessary facilities to conduct the lesson, the teacher has used the botanical garden to conduct the lesson. She spends extra time to plan the lesson at home showing her dedication (Lesson plan is in Appendix 5). The lesson includes the following steps:

- Accompanying the children to the botanical garden by bus: this step itself is a learning experience for both children and teachers
- Holding a group discussion with children to provide a general idea about the lesson and the whole group reconnaissance of the selected area of the garden (Cluster of figures 12 below).



- Dividing the children into five groups and assigning one teacher to guide the children
- Group activities at selected pockets of the garden (Cluster of figures 13 below).



- Children produce artifacts based on their observation (Cluster of figures 14 below).



- Display of the artifacts and evaluating the performance of children by teachers and children themselves(Cluster of figures 15 below)



The identified good practices of the lesson are summarized below.

Overcoming the barriers in school plant and environment

- Owing to the limited space in the school and also to seclude the children from the hustle and bustle of the environment, Peradeniya Botanical Gardens, situated 4 km away from the school, was selected to present the lesson. The other reasons for selecting the garden was to achieve the objective of identifying an environment created by man under the theme “ Different places in the surroundings ” and giving an opportunity for Grade two children to have a scientific experience.
- Giving the pupils an opportunity to see a popular and famous place of scenic beauty and historical importance was another reason to select the “ Gardens ”.
- The need for on-site participation of workers who work in an environment created by man to the lesson was also a reason for its selection.
- Since the school does not have a peace conducive physical environment the teachers have developed a new methodology to overcome the impediment.

Pre-planning for better management of the lesson

- Selection of Peradeniya Gardens for the lesson under the approval of Zonal Director of Education, principal and parents.
- Chartering a bus beforehand to bring pupils to the “ Gardens ” and making seating arrangement according to numbers assigned earlier on.
- The pupils getting down from the bus and walking to the site in line according to numbers without hustle.
- The pupils were clad in the similar uniforms and similar shoes. They had identical bags. Hence uniformity, orderliness, discipline and cleanliness were conspicuous.
- Materials to be used during field trips had been provided to

children by the school. e.g. Boards to lay on the floor and write, trays to knead clay for those who do it, carpets to sit on the floor, boards to make drawings. The teacher had to spend an extra time for this purpose.

- Good management outside the classroom has led the children to develop their peaceful learning culture.

Curriculum and teaching- learning process

- The teacher had prepared a lesson plan for the lesson presented. She had herself provided some necessary resources.

- Lesson engagement

The cordial relationship between the teacher and pupils was seen in the engagement stage of the lesson itself. The peacefulness was reflected in the lovable tone with which she addressed the children at the beginning of lesson. The lesson was started with a melodious singing on the “ Garden ”. The teacher too participated in the singing. The children had the liberty to dance with gestures, which they enjoyed inculcating mental peace.

- Lesson development

The lesson conducted covered cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of the content relevant to the grade (Figure 8). The lesson time was 90 minutes. The preparation and conduct of a lesson with board- range objectives of this magnitude is commendable, because having children out of school for about four hours is an arduous task.

Facts learned in the Cognitive Domain

- Lists the characteristics of a man- made environment.
- Discusses the nature of flora seen in such an environment.
- Describes the factors essential for growing trees and flower plants.
- Discusses the methods used to prevent soil erosion.

- Name geometrical shapes.
- Name sunlight-loving plants and shade-loving plants.
- Discusses how a compost pit is constructed.

Facts learned in the Affective Domain

- Enlivening child's mind through a peaceful, free, spectacular environment
- Getting used to act in cooperation as a team member. e.g. Pupils cordially talking with one another uttering things like " We'll do this way ", " Let's cut here " etc. and working in the five groups into which they were divided.
- Listening to others' ideas. e.g. Pupils first listen to what the workers in the garden say. Then they talk among themselves.
- Getting used to work in peace. e.g. Giving necessary items to others and helping them during work.
- Becoming sentimental over creative team work. e.g. There was a display of pupils' activities at the end of the lesson. The pupils who were involved in making them mutually appreciated their attempts by saying words like " good ", " I like " and so on.
- Understanding that the cooperation of others is important. e.g. Helping the workers in the garden and understanding the importance of parents' help to children.
- Addressing others affixing a kinship to them and addressing even non-living things such as trees etc. taking them as humans. This helps to develop a sense of love and affection not only towards humans but also towards environment. e.g. Addressing workers as uncle and calling moon, " handa mama " (uncle moon).
- Emergence of the concept of orderliness throughout the lesson and pupils getting used to it.
- Pupils, parents and students working together in cooperation.
- Teacher encouraging children often through reinforcement.

Facts learned in the Psychomotor Domain

- Getting used to question. e.g. Asking various questions from the workers in the garden without mistakes.
- Singing songs, designing models, writing songs, making drawings and performing.
- Adopting various methods to report (Imitation / miming, Making drawings, Sculpture and modeling, Writing songs, Writing phrases/ sentences, Designing cards).

Student development

The lesson developed all the three domains, cognitive, affective and psychomotor. It has been indicated in the report.

Participation in community building

Good community relations were observed. The workers in the garden willingly took part in the lesson. Six parents came and helped pupils. The principal too came and supported the lesson. The members of the research team who had come to observe the lesson too gave their help. One member of the research team was in-charge of one group in the stage of group work.

Peace oriented co - curricular activities

- The lesson was organized as a field trip.
- After meals the pupils played joyfully for a short while. Hence opportunities were offered for enjoyment.

Cultural coexistence with multiculturalism

- Fifty six students belonging to two classes participated in the lesson. There were three Muslim students among them. Their action in partnership and cooperation with others was a good example for a peaceful environment.
- Many personnel in various fields supported the lesson and its development. This paved way for cultural coexistence. e.g.

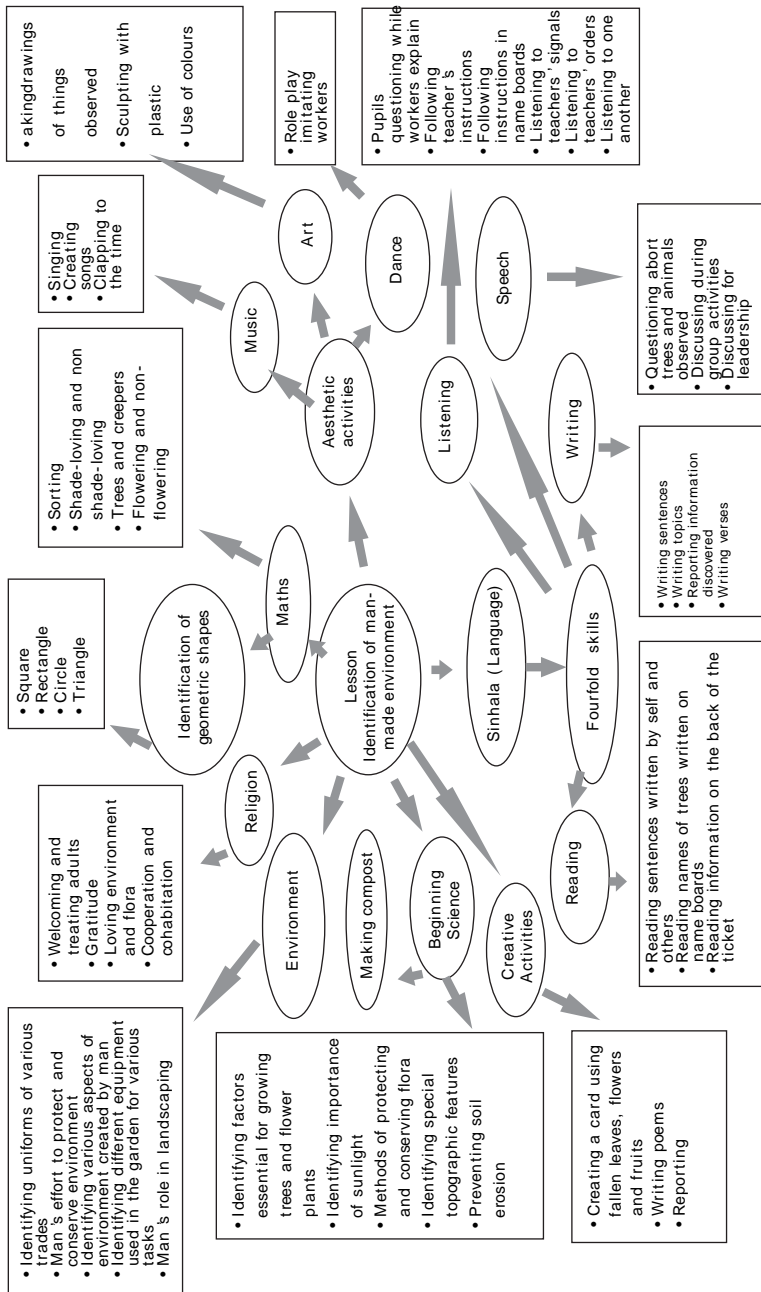


Figure 8. Subject integration and pupil development through the lesson

Support and guidance given by the workers in the garden.
Participation and assistance of six parents.

- The Muslim students collaborate with Sinhala students in group work. The students belonging to these two ethnic groups shared their food. This is another instance for the prevalence of peaceful cohabitation.
- There was cooperation between the two classes as well as between boys and girls. It was observed that parents help the entire group as a whole rather than their own children individually.

Challenges emerged in conducting a lesson in a man-made environment

- The teacher didn't have a sound theoretical knowledge in the peace concepts concerned. Therefore this bypassed a good opportunity of teaching those concepts well.
- Using negative words instead of positive words. e.g. Using the words "It's not good to quarrel" would germinate a negative attitude in the child.
- When the teacher spoke to children about how the garden workers treated an old tree she elaborated the equivalence of it with bringing up of children by parents but didn't mention the need of looking after the old parents which is directly related to the central theme of peace.
- Support for the lesson was obtained from the workers but their service was not appreciated.
- The order given by the whistle to attract children's attention is not appropriate from the point of view of building peace concepts. It is an order. The concepts of peace should be inculcated so that the feelings and responsibilities emerge from within.

Challenges/ difficulties posed by the teacher

- Obtaining permission to take the children away from the school

is time consuming.

- Difficulties in getting down a vehicle to transport children.
- Allocating extra time to do a complete investigation to find the most appropriate location in the garden for which much time has to be spent.
- Challenges in getting tools and equipment required for such a field trip. e.g. Blocks of wood, handkerchiefs to sit on, food etc.
- Facing the challenge of planning an integrated lesson for pupils who were to spend one day away.
- Grouping and dividing work among teachers, pupils and parents for it is a greater challenge than conducting a normal classroom lesson.

Suggestions

In order to raise the awareness of teachers as to how a lesson can be built up so that peace concepts are developed, they should be given a theoretical training in peace education and conflict resolution.

(b) Students 'perceptions on good school practices

The identified good practices in the first three schools by observation and interview data were triangulated by data obtained from children. For the purpose a primary and a secondary class from each of the three schools were selected and responses were elicited from them for the three questions given in the Appendix 3. The content of these responses was read, coded and listed as specific facts. They were classified under the eight themes of the school system used for the study and ranked (Table 3).

In considering the pupil responses on the reasons why they like the schools - pupils in the primary section in Dankotuwa Balika Vidyalaya had given priority to school plant and school environment. Pupils in the secondary section in that school had given priority to student development.

Pupils in the primary section in Eriyagama Sri Pushpadana Maha Vidyalaya had given priority to pupil development, whereas the pupils in the secondary section to the curriculum and the teaching learning process. Pupils in the primary section in Presbyterian Balika Vidyalaya had given priority to curriculum and teaching-learning process, whereas the pupils in the secondary section had given priority to cultural co-existence.

In considering the pupil responses on factors that have to be further developed in the school for their satisfaction, pupils in the primary and the secondary section in Dankotuwa Balika Vidyalaya had given priority to student development. Pupils in the primary and secondary section in Eriyagama Sri Pushpadana Vidyalaya had given priority to school plant and school environment. Pupils in the primary section in Presbyterian Balika Vidyalaya had given priority to cultural coexistence, whereas the pupils in the secondary section had given priority to school plant and environment.

Table 3. Pupil responses to the questionnaire

\ SCHOOL	DANKOTUWA						ERIYAGAMA						PRESBYTERIAN					
	PRIMARY			SECONDARY			PRIMARY			SECONDARY			PRIMARY			SECONDARY		
RANK	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Pupil development			■	■	■	■												
School plant and environment	■						■	■	■		■	■						■
School management																		
Co-curricula activities																		
Cultural co-existence														■		■		
Learning- teaching process in curriculum										■			■					
Classroom management																		
Community relationships																		

- Reasons why students like the school
- Factors that have to be further developed for satisfaction
- Things needed further for free learning

On analyzing the pupil responses on factors that are needed to further their free learning, pupils in the primary section in Dankotuwa Balika Vidyalaya had given priority to school plant and environment whereas the pupils in the secondary level had given priority to student development. Pupils in the primary and secondary level classes in Eriyagama Pushpadana Vidyalaya had given priority to school plant and environment. Pupils in both primary and secondary section in Presbyterian Balika Vidyalaya too had given priority to school plant and environment.

In considering the pupil responses in all the three schools, it was found that the pupils had given priority to factors on student development and school plant and environment.

In the fourth school which conducted the lesson in the Botanical garden, the student satisfaction and perceptions were very well reflected in their engagement in activities (Cluster of Figures 16) and artifacts they produced after the lesson (Cluster of Figures 17).



Cluster of figures 16. Joy of the students



Cluster of figures 17. Satisfaction depicted through the artifacts

(c) Peace concepts emerged from good practices

Good practices at school level are mixed with peace concepts. If a practice is for the betterment of the child and the other members of the school, peace concepts should emerge within the school practices. Such identified factors are summarized in Figure 9.

(d) Challenges faced by Schools

The identified good practices are not free of factors which challenge their sustainability due to reasons incorporated in the school system as well the education and societal system.

A school can be viewed as a complex comprising three levels, physical, human and psychological. The psychological level rests on the nature of physical and human environments. The three schools subjected to the study and the botanical garden had physical and human environment conducive to promote psychological environment. But, schools have faced the challenge as to how their

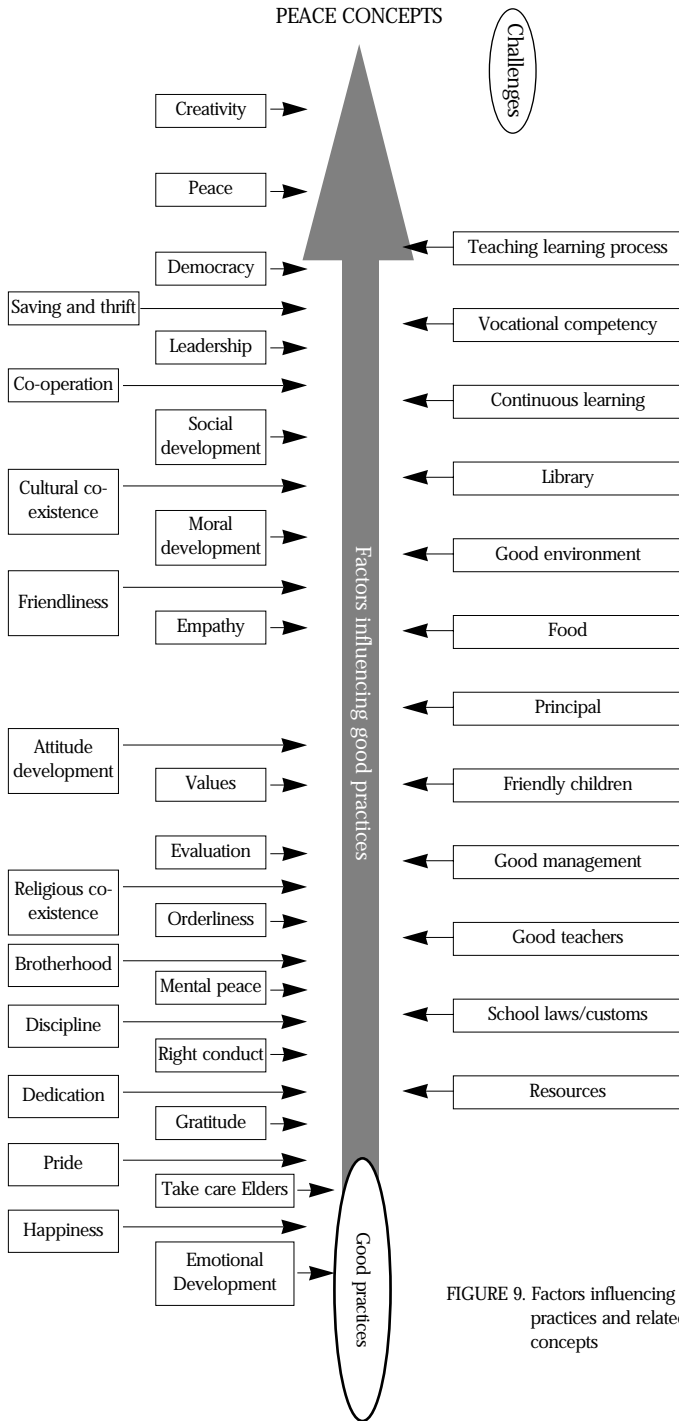


FIGURE 9. Factors influencing good practices and related peace concepts

physical environments are geared to suit the natural characteristics of pupil behaviour.

Dankotuwa Balika Vidyalaya has successfully used the resources provided by the JICA project to ameliorate its physical environment yet the face lift presents somewhat artificial or foreign as regards the home environments of pupils. This doesn't mean that it hinders their mind set. The new environment is supportive and the students experience it at the school. As the principal mentioned at the interview with her, anyone who has problems at home can gain peace after entering the school.

In contrast, the pleasant, attractive environment of Eriyagama Vidyalaya had a "rural grace" intertwined with the modesty of the village community. This unique feature, however, is transforming into a metropolitan template with the addition of storeyed buildings, computer laboratories and other components of popular schools. The perpetuation of good practice while absorbing these popular facilities is a challenge faced by this school.

The teacher centered, didactic method of teaching is a problem common to every Sri Lankan School. The schools taken for the study are not completely free from this rule. How they can switch over to meaningful pupil centred teaching from this old pervasive pattern is a serious challenge.

It is a praiseworthy feature that the schools established on the basis of ethnic distribution in Sri Lanka, exercise good practices in accordance with the cultural patterns unique to their race and religion. Nevertheless it has been seen in places where there is a mixed population, the majority community has its cultural dominance. This is a common tradition in Sri Lanka. In the Presbyterian school, however, the majority students' culture (Muslim) is not practiced as the major culture and each and every religion are given due place in the cultural activities. The possibility for the creation of problems under such a situation challenges the school.

The management patterns relevant to the total education system too

cause challenges. For instance, after a specified number of years the teachers are transferred from schools according to the accepted policy of teacher transfers. The teachers who assimilated the concept of the identified practices get transferred after a certain period. The newcomer, to whom it is alien, takes time to internalize it. Dankotuwa Balika Vidyalaya is inflicted by this problem.

Teacher shortage is one of the severe problems in Sri Lankan schools and the sample schools are no exception to the rule. Dankotuwa Balika Vidyalaya suffers a shortage of 10 teachers. The Presbyterian Balika Vidyalaya lacks a music teacher so the music section is crippled.

The study of Kodituwakku et al. (2004) unveils the fact that the principal is the crucial factor affecting good practices. The school culture builds up on his/her vision (Kularathna, Dasanayaka, Kodituwakku, 1992). The present principal of the Eriyagama Vidyalaya appears to repose his faith on the popular metropolitan school model in contrast to his predecessor who apparently believed in a community-inclined rural model on which the good practice initiatives were spearheaded. These policy-bound changes pose challenge to good practices .



Cluster of figures 18. How to go forward preserving heritage with a new vision? The challenge faced by the new principal and stakeholders



8. Conclusions

- Good practices can be built in relation to eight fields within a school i.e. School plant and environment, Curriculum and teaching-learning process, Co-curricular activities, Student development, Classroom management, Cultural co-existence and Community relations.
- Peace concepts can be generated through various processes in a school if they are organized sensitizing the needs of the child and the community where they live.
- A peaceful environment can be build within the school system by developing the school in consonance with the positive needs of the community.
- Even without knowing the theoretical concepts of peace, a school can develop their inbuilt peace environment to suit the community.
- There are specific factors that affect good practices in schools. The main factor responsible for good school practices are principals ' commitment and his/her vision.
- The vision and resources to build good practices can be obtained from community (e.g. Eriyagama) or foreign countries (e.g. Dankotuwa). But in both of these approaches the school should be able to decide on student-sensitive policies.
- The curriculum of Sri Lanka is common, centralized and monolithic. The creativity and commitment of teachers is indispensable to implement such a curriculum in the classroom to suit the regional and cultural variations.
- The lack of pupil-centered teaching especially at the secondary level is a hindrance to good practices.
- Although good practices are developed in the schools, principals, teachers and other stakeholders have to face challenges in sustaining the developed practices.
- Transfer of principals and teachers may affect the smooth flow of

school activities that generate peace.

- Ethnic and religious biases in society are potential sources of conflict at school level.

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Appendix 1

Observation schedule

To the researcher: Be a member of the school community. Be friendly in every aspect of your research role and try to extract natural situation of the school. Be not a hindrance to the natural flow of events in the classes and outdoor school activities.

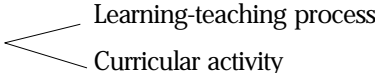
1. What measures have been taken to clean and beautify environment of the school premises?
2. What measures have been taken to inculcate ideas on peaceful environment?
3. What measures have been taken to have a child friendly learning environment in classrooms?
4. What are the practices followed when entering/ leaving school and changing classrooms?
5. What measures have been taken to conserve the environment?
6. How has the physical environment contributed to develop a peaceful environment?

Try to catch any event that has bearing to the motif of peace.

Appendix 2

Principal / Teacher Questionnaire

Principal / Teacher Interview Schedule & Questions

1. Give a brief description about the development of the school from inception to date.
2. Briefly describe the development of the school from the date of your appointment in this school to date.
3. Do you think that a peaceful environment exists in the school- Give reasons?
4. What are the special features you see in your school?
5. What aspect in your school should be improved further?
6. What are the special victories that your school has achieved?
7. What special features under each of the following can be seen in your school?
 - a. Provision of students ' basic needs
 - b. Implementing self-discipline development programmes
 - c. Implementing environmental development programmes
 - d. Implementing students ' nutrition programmes
 - e. Cocurricular activities
8. What steps have been taken by the school for human resource development?
 - a. Student development 
 - Learning-teaching process
 - Curricular activity
 - b. Teacher development

9. What steps have been taken for the cultural coexistence of the school?
10. What place has been given to students in the management structure of your school?
11. What services are provided to the community by your school?
12. What examples has your school set for other schools?

Appendix 3

Prompt questions for children

- Prompt questions to be asked from children to elicit their ideas
 - To the researcher: Select one primary and secondary class randomly. Explain children the objective of collecting their ideas. Confirm that their anonymity is assured. Give children time to think on the questions. If they ask clarifications, questions explain. However, do not provide leadings to have biased answers.
1. Do you like this school? Yes No
 2. If you like please state reasons.
 3. What measures can be taken for you to be happy in the school?
 4. What are the measures that can be taken to have a better school where you can learn freely?

Appendix 5

Lesson plan of the teacher Nilanthi Thumbowila

Date : 2006.11.08

School : K/Pilimathalwa Primary School

Subject : Environment

Limit : Different places in the environment

Grade : 2

Students : 56

Place : Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya

Objectives :

■ Cognitive

- (1) Lists the characteristics of a man-made environment
- (2) Discusses the factors essential for growing plants
- (3) Discusses about the nature of the trees, creepers and flower plants in the selected environment
- (4) Discusses the methods which prevent soil erosion
- (5) Names the geometric shapes of flowerbeds
- (6) Selects shade-loving and sunlight-loving plants. Names them
- (7) Discusses how a compost pit is constructed

■ Affective

- (1) Gets used to act as a team member
- (2) Listens to others ideas
 - Listens to speeches of the workers of the garden
 - Listens to explanations of pupils
- (3) Works cooperatively within the group: Group activities and Final display
- (4) Appreciates collective creative work (Display)

- (5) Values one another (Values one another after the display)
- (6) Understands that other 's cooperation is important (Parents, workers, teachers)
- (7) Gets used to work in unity
 - Exchange of items during work
 - Those who have finished work helping others who haven't finished.
- (8) Loves flora
 - Addresses trees and shrubs with words which conotate relatives. e.g. Ira mama (uncle sun)

■ Psychomotor

- (1) Gets used to ask questions e.g. From workers, From friends, From teachers
- (2) Sings songs: -Songs crated by pupils and songs written at the garden
- (3) Designs models
 - Characteristics of the man-made environment
- (4) Creates songs
 - Songs on the man-made environment
- (5) Makes drawings
 - Makes drawings on the characteristics of the man- made environment.
- (6) Discusses on how man changes the environment and performs a dance accordingly.
- (7) Designs cards
 - Designs cards using flowers, leaves, fruits, barks of trees in the environment and designs a beautiful card.
- (8) Makes drawings of the shapes of flower beds constructed according to various geometrical shapes.

■ Development of the lesson

Introduction - Engagement by singing a song on the flower garden (5 min)

Step 1 - Directing pupils to see a part of the garden showing the limits of the part

selected. Attention is paid to the following while observing

- Growing flower plants, preparation of environment, effort of humans
- The patterns in which trees are grown, shapes of flower beds
- Equipment used to make flower beds, fertilizers applied, method of watering
- Shade- loving and sunlight-loving plants
- Steps taken to prevent soil erosion (10 min)

Step 2 - Common discussion on information collected (5 min)

Step 3 - According to the information gathered divide into five groups and involve in a study according to following assignment sheets

(1) Look at this beautiful environment

Draw what men and women do to make it beautiful. Colour it. Write a verse.

(2) Look at the environment shaped by the tireless effort of people.

Make a model of it on the board provided to you using clay

(3) Select plants which don't like sunlight (under sun). Draw them and name them.

(4) Look at the strategies used by humans to grow trees and flower plants. Ask them about fertilizing, watering and other work they do. Imitate them.

(5) Pick up fallen flowers, leaves, and fruits. Make a design out of them. (20 min)

Step 4 - All see the display. Talk about the exhibits, appreciate them and enjoy. (5 min)

Evaluation - Speak about the whole exhibition. Talk about the pains taken by humans in order to bring the environment to this condition.

Feedback - One has to work hard to make his/her own home garden beautiful.

Pupils are given direction to make a flower bed on their own.

Field Visit

As a representative of APCEIU, Ms. LEE Ji-Hyang, Programme Specialist, Office of Planning and Administration took a field visit from 4-9 November 2006 to Sri Lanka to carry out the missions such as : 1) to award the researcher as a winner of 2006 Best Case Study of EIU Experiential Learning Programme; 2) to give a guideline on finalizing the report of case study; and 3) to interview teachers, headmasters, scholars and students involved in the research and encourage them to continue and enhance further activities related to EIU.



▲ Discussion with the Research Team of Department of Research and Development

▶ Dr. Godwin Kodituwakku and his wife at Eriyagama Pushpadana Model School, Peradeniya

▼ National Institute of Education (NIE) on the Case Study Proposal and Case Study Report





◀ Awarding Ceremony with Director of National Institute of Education



▶ Researchers on school visit planning, interviewing and class observation





▲ School Visits