

An Analysis of Education for Social Cohesion and Peace in Sri Lanka

by

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A doctoral dissertation submitted to Osaka Jogakuin University Graduate School  
of International Collaboration and Coexistence in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Doctoral Course,  
in fulfillment for degree requirements.

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January 31, 2020

## **Abstract**

Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country which encountered a devastating civil war for 26 years. Although war ended in 2009, Sri Lanka is still far from reaching positive peace, as ethnic disharmony and national disintegration adversely affect the nation-building process. This situation has impelled some government and private institutions to promote social cohesion and peace through many means including education. This study is an analysis of education for social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka. Mainly the programs proposed by the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace 2008 fall under seven areas: curriculum, teacher education, second national language, whole school culture & community, integration, co-curriculum and research (Ministry of Education, 2008) are concerned in this research. In addition, the similar programs conducted by NGOs are also concerned. Accordingly, this study discovers the progress of programs implemented in building social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka for ten years from 2008-2018. Progress of programs were evaluated based on the extent to which the objectives of the National Policy were achieved. This research mainly used qualitative methods as it required a detailed investigation about programs and perceptions of research participants about these programs. Coding was also used to categorize data and obtain percentages and frequencies. This study was conducted covering 400 stakeholders of education, including policy and program makers, donors, educators and formal and non-formal students in five provinces of Sri Lanka. The results show a strong compatibility of participants' perceptions with the objectives of the National Policy indicating the "relevance" of programs conducted to achieve these objectives. Overall, programs were found "effective" as participants have acquired the intended knowledge and skills and are applying to their lives what they learned. Some of the programs initiated have been continued successfully marking the "sustainability." Programs have also made a positive "impact" on participants by changing their perceptions and behavior. However, "efficiency" is low as there is neither a systematic mechanism nor coordination delivering these programs.

## **Statement of Declaration**

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or tertiary institution and to the best of this candidate's belief, neither does it contain material previously published or written by another person, except where due acknowledgement is made in the text.

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Chamila Geethanjalee Mallawaarachchi

## Acknowledgement

I would like to thankfully acknowledge the assistance received from the people around me in pursuing this study and complete this doctoral thesis.

I am sincerely grateful to my supervisor professor Mabuchi Hitoshi for extending his advice, theoretical input and support to me in completing this study. This thesis would not have been possible without the support and patience of him. My deep gratitude goes to Professor Scott Johnston, who guided me in effective and supportive ways to complete fieldwork of this research. Then, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Professor Kurosawa Mitsuru who gave his consent to follow the doctoral course after completing one year in the masters course. I would also like to pay my special regards to all professors whom I had the chance to study with although I have not mentioned their names here. I could gain much knowledge on diverse topics through their academic support.

I wish to thank all the officials of Osaka Jogakuin University office, including Ms. Tanaka Rie, Ms. Shirano Manami, Ms. Kawabata Naomi, Ms. Takagi Yoshiko and Mr. Suzuki Hidekazu who extended their great support on both academic and personal level.

I have been fortunate to have kind support from the officials of Ministry of Education, National Institute of Education, Office for National Unity and Reconciliation, GIZ, Sarvodaya and National Peace Council to successfully complete fieldwork in Sri Lanka. I am particularly grateful to Mr. Milroy Jayamanna, Mr. Padmashantha, Mr. Muralitharan, Mr. Rajapaksa, Ms. Prageethika, Mr. Ravi Kandage, Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne, Dr. Lalitha Batuwitage, and Dr. Jehan Perera.

My special thanks goes to Ms. Nilmini Siriwardana for introducing me to the Ministry of Education and Mr. Avinash Selvaratnam for supporting Tamil language translations.

I also want to express my gratitude to all respondents in Sri Lanka.

Finally, I would like to thank my elder brother Hemantha and elder sisters Janakie and Nayana and my brother-in-law Piyal and my cousin Suneth for their personal support at all times. And I would like to extend my gratitude and love for my nephew Hirushan for supporting me in the cumbersome process of sorting out questionnaires.

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my late father Herby Mallawaarachchi and my late mother Sheela Perera for giving me much love and freedom in my life. And to my late elder brother Thushara Mallawaarachchi who was always there for me through good and bad times and made me smile.

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# List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ESCP	Education for Social Cohesion and Peace
GCE (A/L)	General Certificate of Education Advance Level
(GCE O/L)	General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level
GIZ	German Development Cooperation
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization
MoE	Ministry of Education
NCoE	National Colleges of Education
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NIE	National Institute of Education
OECD/DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
ONUR	Office for National Unity and Reconciliation
PERU	Peace Education and Reconciliation Unit
2NL	Second National Language
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASP	White, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant



# Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter presents four topics: Motives of the Research, Significance of the Research, Research Questions, and Structure of the Research.

Under **1.1 Motives of the Research**, I discuss my inspirations of doing this research. **1.2 Significance of the Research** presents the main purpose of doing this research and its importance. Theory is presented to justify the significance of the research. In addition, it presents how the knowledge is developed. Under **1.3 Research Questions**, first the main research question is presented. Second, three sub research questions made to support the main research question are presented. Finally, under **1.4 Structure of the Research**, the structure of the entire research paper is presented.

## 1.1 Motives of the Research

I was inspired to do this research based on personal experiences I had since my childhood. Subsequently, the change occurred in my perceptions from “otherness” to “oneness” was also a motivation for doing this research.

‘War’ and ‘conflict’ were common words heard in Sri Lanka, the country I was born and brought up, as this island had to face many hardships since ancient times due to foreign invasions and internal conflicts. The history books I read were filled with fighting and killing for power and about severe human rights violations done against inhabitants by three colonizers (Portuguese, Dutch and British) for over three centuries.

Un-remedied structural weaknesses of the post-colonial economy, the continued colonial-era exploitation by indigenous political leaders, and the introduction of free market reforms and structural adjustment programs (from 1977 onwards) led to widening of inequalities, social disorder and corruption (Richardson, 2005, p. 40). Unemployment among youth increased

significantly and as a result, disillusioned youth of both Sinhala<sup>1</sup> and Tamil<sup>2</sup> ethnic groups, being deprived of better jobs and a better life gave rise to militant youth movements.

I recall an incident that occurred when I was a primary student. At that time the second youth rebellion led by a southern radical Sinhala political movement (People's Liberation Front-Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna) was continuing. After school, when I was escorted home by my elder sister and a cousin, youth rebels suddenly attacked the police station in that area. When firing started, bewildered civilians ran here and there, and we three also barely could jump into a nearby school playground. Many people gathered there were trembling with fear, listening to the firings continued. After half an hour, hundreds of armed-troops, armed cars and helicopters entered into the city to defend the police. They chased us towards the school buildings to land their helicopters on the ground where we were gathered. Hearing the sounds of firing, threatening and screaming and seeing armed troops, vehicles and roaring helicopters, I ran towards school buildings feeling that doomsday has come and I would die in a moment. After gruesome hours of waiting behind school buildings, when we returned home taking a detour, my mother waited crying. It was the destiny of all mothers in Sri Lanka who were exposed to 'war' or 'conflicts' directly or indirectly. This was my first experience of an armed conflict which gave rise to so many questions in my mind as a child. Why did it happen? Would it happen again? What would I do if I were alone?

At the same time of this Sinhala youth rebellion, another conflict lies in the majority-minority division, which caused a violent struggle between the Sinhala majority and a group of Tamil separatists in the north and eastern parts of the country. Although I did not know much about the separatist war at that time, I felt it due to the horrific incident I encountered. However, I used to tell others about this horrific experience in a dramatic way, with an adventurous thrill. Hart (2002) says, "Although children living in the north and east of the country are most commonly and most directly affected, nearly two decades of armed conflict has had profound implications for all of the nation's young." Toys of children, especially boys were transferred from toy cars to toy pistols and instead of pulling toy cars with joy and harmony, they were fighting divided into two groups. For the first time, these games planted in their innocent minds the feeling of "otherness" and a hatred of it. I was no exception, and hated "others" who tried to divide our land. However, we

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<sup>1</sup> Sinhala or Sinhalese is the majority of Sri Lanka that represent 75% of the population.

<sup>2</sup> Tamil is a minority of Sri Lanka that represent 15% of the population.

were too young to realize that “otherness” is made by a few people for their own goodwill, putting the rest of innocent lives at risk.

Although the Sinhala youth rebellion was quelled, the separatist war fought in north and east of the country spread to the south by terrorist suicide bombings until 2009 that marked the end of the 26 years long civil war<sup>3</sup>. I was born and brought up in such a stressful situation being scared of losing my own life or the lives of loved ones. I felt that we had no hope for the future as there seemed no way to get away from this war. Barash, and Webel (2008) say hopelessness can result from the denial that solutions ever exist, or could ever be implemented (p. 535). However, I have seen campaigns done by different groups, including peace activists and civil society organizations to stop the war. Although, NGOs and INGOs were engaged in humanitarian and peace building activities, the general public were suspicious about them and the transparency of their work. The general anti-statist ideologies of many NGOs caused the government to view their activities negatively, and on several occasions to slate them for undermining national security, disrupting ethnic harmony and supporting terrorism (Asian Development Bank, 2013, p. 5).

Although, people felt relieved after the end of the war in 2009, time to time some conflicts arose among different ethnic and religious groups of Sri Lanka, indicating that there is a possibility of re-occurrence of war in the future. In this situation, I felt that if we are divided by ethnicity and religion, there is no hope for a better future. This feeling made me further study about social cohesion and peace with the intention that I should contribute something good to promote national integration to help my country and people. Accordingly, I started to refer to the causes of the civil war of Sri Lanka and measures taken so far to stop the war and build reconciliation among people. I found that the government and some private institutions including NGOs were conducting many programs to build social cohesion and peace and educating people how to live in a pluralistic society. I have neither studied social cohesion and peace as a subject in school nor attended any program. I have also never had a friend from an ethnic group other than mine. Therefore, I was curious to know how these programs are going on, how people accept them and whether these government and private bodies have a noble intention of conducting these programs. Based on the

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<sup>3</sup> The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (a Tamil separatist group) fought against the Sri Lankan government to create an independent Tamil state in the north and the east of the country.

above motivations, I did this research to explore the intention of conducting programs to build social cohesion and peace through education and the progress these programs achieved so far.

## **1.2 Significance of the Research**

Sri Lanka is a multicultural country that consists of several different ethnic and religious groups (Youth, Peace and Security Coalition Sri Lanka, 2017, p. 5). This diversity has caused many conflicts and sometimes impelled people to get together in hard situations, such as fighting together to expel the colonial rule. However, the British through their colonial policy of “divide and rule” brought the ethnicity as a prominent factor in politics and administration in the colonial rule (Ranasinghe, 2014, p. 63). Gradually, politics became separated along ethnic lines and this policy is being continued until today by opportunistic politicians.

Although the civil war continued for 26 years and ended in 2009, the authorities of Sri Lanka has not being able to achieve positive peace or set up a favorable environment to achieve positive peace. According to de Mel and Venugopal (2016), Sri Lanka appears to be caught within a trap of negative peace (p. 5). Positive peace denotes the absence of direct violence such as physical harming and hurting, as well as indirect violence including structural and cultural violence (Galtung, 2007, p. 31). According to Galtung (2007), structural violence is the polarization between classes, meaning that basic needs of the lower class are molested or left unsatisfied by a structure of exclusion (p. 18). Cultural violence is aspects of a culture that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence (Grewal, 2003) and may be exemplified by factors such as language, religion and ideology. If structural and cultural violence are not remedied the society may fall again into direct violence.

Today many international organizations including the UN and its affiliated organizations such as UNESCO and UNICEF have emphasized the importance of peace education to achieve positive peace. Human rights education, multicultural education, global citizenship education and conflict resolution education all fall under the scope of peace education (UNESCO, 2015, p. 7). The Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka has recognized the importance of peace and multicultural education to accommodate the pluralistic society of Sri Lanka. Therefore, the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace was formulated in 2008 to amalgamate and strengthen

existing activities and propose new activities for social cohesion and peace, with the intention of promoting national integration (Ministry of Education, 2008). This policy has introduced programs under seven areas: curriculum, teacher education, second national language (2NL)<sup>4</sup>, whole school culture & community, integration, co-curriculum and research, aimed at producing a citizen who has certain skills needed to live in a multicultural society, such as respecting diversity.

Many institutions engaged in building social cohesion and peace include the Ministry of Education (MoE), the National Institute of Education (NIE) and the Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR) are conducting programs proposed under above mentioned seven areas. These institutions carry out programs independently or sometimes together. Then, private institutions such as NGOs and INGOs are also conducting social cohesion and peace programs by their own. Private programs are also similar to the government programs conducted under “integration” and “co-curriculum.” The National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (ESCP) (2008)<sup>5</sup> had provided a backdrop for the activities of some INGOs or NGOs (Ministry of Education, 2016a). There is no proper coordination among these institutions, even among the government institutions, cause overlapping of programs. Less research and monitoring have been done in this field. Therefore, relevance, effectiveness, acceptability and sustainability of these programs are yet to be investigated. The National Policy (2008) mentions that there is an uncertainty about roles and responsibilities and implementation of proposed activities, as well as lack of public awareness about what it was trying to do (Ministry of Education, 2008). Referring to above factors, this research was conducted to find out the progress of programs conducted from 2008-2018.

Four main topics: perceptions (of participants), implementation of programs, experience and usefulness, and success and challenges were concerned in this research.

Under **perceptions**, this research concerns about general perceptions of research participants on social cohesion and peace, the existence or non-existence of these perceptions in reality in Sri Lanka, and perceptions of participants on accepting “otherness.” Research participants are divided into two main groups: (A) State actors and (B) Practitioners. Under (A) State actors: policy and

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<sup>4</sup> There are two national languages in Sri Lanka, Tamil and Sinhala. For Sinhala speakers Tamil is the 2NL. For Tamil speakers, Sinhala is the 2NL.

<sup>5</sup> The National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (ESCP) (2008) is mentioned as the “National Policy (2008)” or “National Policy” in some places.

program makers, donors and resource persons are considered. Under (B) Practitioners: (a) Educators (teacher trainers, teachers, and teacher trainees), (b) Formal students (secondary school students) and non-formal students (youth leaders), and (c) Non-government actors (NGO officials and religious leaders) are considered. Finally, this topic answers the sub research question, “*What are the perceptions of research participants on social cohesion and peace?*”

Next, **implementation of programs** discusses about social cohesion and peace programs in Sri Lanka and the implementation process of these programs. Mainly there are two types of programs: (A) Government programs and (B) Private (NGOs) programs. Under (A) Government programs, different programs are implemented covering seven areas: curriculum, teacher education, 2NL, whole school culture & community, integration, co-curriculum and research as suggested by the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (2008). There are two types of (B) Private programs: youth programs and inter-religious programs. Youth programs are implemented under five categories: awareness, leadership building, exchange, 2NL and vocational training. This section answers the sub research question, “*What are the programs implemented in building social cohesion and peace?*”

Under **experience and usefulness**, first this research discusses about experiences research participants obtained through these programs. Second, how participants assume about usefulness of these programs and how they practically use what they learnt are discussed.

Under **success and challenges**, first this research discusses overall success of these programs. It is considered to what extent the objectives of the National Policy (2008) (Ministry of Education, 2008) have achieved in evaluating the success of the programs. Second, the challenges for implementing social cohesion and peace programs are discussed. This section answers the sub research question, “*What are the challenges in building social cohesion and peace?*”

Finally, the main research question, “*What is the progress of the programs in building social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka?*” is answered based on findings presented under four sections mentioned above.



### 1.3 Research Questions

The main purpose of this research is to evaluate the progress of programs implemented in building social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka. In addition to the main research question, three sub research questions are made to make it easier to answer the main research question. I explained under the significance of the research above, how and under which section the main research question and sub research questions are answered. I present below, the main research question and sub research questions.

#### Main Research Question:

*What is the progress of the programs in building social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka?*

#### Sub Research Questions:

- *What are the perceptions of research participants on social cohesion and peace?*
- *What are the programs implemented in building social cohesion and peace?*
- *What are the challenges in building social cohesion and peace?*

### 1.4 Structure of the Research

In this chapter, first I discussed the motives and the significance of this research. Subsequently, I presented the main research question and sub research questions.

**Chapter 2** describes my **theoretical framework**, defining the conceptual scheme of this research.

The theoretical framework is presented under three main topics:

- 1) Concepts of peace and multiculturalism
- 2) Evolution and role of peace and multicultural education
- 3) Implementation of peace and multicultural education

Under concepts of peace and multiculturalism, first concepts of peace: inner peace, interpersonal peace & outer peace and negative peace & positive peace are discussed. Second, under concepts of multiculturalism: assimilation, cultural pluralism, multiculturalism and problems of cultural essentialism are discussed.

Under evolution and role of peace and multicultural education, first evolution and role of peace education and second, evolution and role of multicultural education are discussed.

Under implementation of peace and multicultural education, the implementation process is discussed in four categories: learners, teaching & learning circle (schools), education administration and support, and context or environment.

**Chapter 3** presents the **context of Sri Lanka**. It is discussed under three main topics. First, geographical characteristics, history and demography are discussed. Second, socio-economic and political context are presented. Finally, education is described in detail as this research mainly focuses on building social cohesion and peace through education.

**Chapter 4** describes about the **methodology** used in this research. Under methodology, research design, participant sample, data collection procedures, research location and scope, and data analysis are discussed. Finally, ethical considerations and limitations of the research are presented.

**In chapter 5 and chapter 6, research findings** are presented under four topics: perceptions, implementation of programs, experience and usefulness, and success and challenges. **Chapter 5** discusses perceptions of research participants on social cohesion and peace. **Chapter 6** discusses the remaining three topics: implementation of programs, experience and usefulness, and success and challenges. A discussion is presented at the end of each chapter to answer research questions concerned.

**Chapter 7** presents the **conclusion** under three topics: a review of the research, evaluation of the research, limitations, contribution to knowledge and recommendations.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework is presented under three main topics: Concepts of Peace and Multiculturalism, Evolution and Role of Peace and Multicultural Education, and Implementation of Peace and Multicultural Education.

Under **2.1 Concepts of Peace and Multiculturalism**, first concepts of peace related to this study: (A) Inner Peace, Interpersonal Peace and Outer Peace, and (B) Negative Peace and Positive Peace are discussed. Second, under concepts of multiculturalism, the chronological evolution of multiculturalism and criticism against multiculturalism are discussed in (A) Assimilation, (B) Cultural pluralism, (C) Multiculturalism, and (D) Problems of Cultural Essentialism. **2.2 Evolution and Role of Peace and Multicultural Education** is presented under two parts: Evolution and Role of Peace Education, and Evolution and Role of Multicultural Education. Gradual evolution of peace and multicultural education and their different applications are discussed under this section. Under **2.3 Implementation of Peace and Multicultural Education**, the implementation process is discussed in four categories: learners, teaching & learning circle (schools), education administration and support, and context or environment.

### **2.1 Concepts of Peace and Multiculturalism**

#### **2.1.1 Concepts of Peace**

Peace is an umbrella concept (Galtung, 1967, p. 6). There are varieties of definitions to peace and it covers a wide range of meanings. Peace education is more effective and meaningful when it is adopted according to the social and cultural context and the needs of a country (Balasooriya, 2001, p. 4). Therefore, concepts of peace which are regarded as applicable to the Sri Lanka's context are discussed below under two main topics: first, inner peace, interpersonal peace & outer peace (Webel, 2007, p. 10) and second, positive peace & negative peace introduced by Johan Galtung in Journal of Peace Research in 1964 (Grewal, 2003).

## **A. Inner Peace, Interpersonal Peace & Outer Peace**

### **Inner Peace**

The importance of inner peace in building world peace has been emphasized by religious leaders. Dalai Lama points out the importance of inner peace as, “although an individual's development of inner peace may seem an insignificant step in the direction of world peace, world peace is impossible without it” (Bennett, 1991). Galtung (1967) presents the old idea of peace as a synonym for stability or equilibrium which refers to internal states of a human being, the person who is at peace with himself (p. 12). There is a growing recognition among peace educators that the inner dimensions and sources of peaceful values and practices should be equally cultivated with other measures of peace (Toh, 2006, p. 9). Balasooriya, (2001) says man is intrinsically pure by nature and education for peace must aim to reform humanity, so as to permit the inner development of human personality (p. 4).

World organizations engaged in peace building processes have also recognized the importance of building inner peace. The Constitution of UNESCO mentions that since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed (UNESCO, 1945). The notion of inner peace has entered in to the education initiatives of world organizations. For example, “global education” adopted by the UNICEF has four dimensions including the “inner dimension” which emphasizes on developing self-awareness and spiritual awareness (Fountain, 1999, p. 10-11). “Values education and life skills education” include core values such as empathy for other human beings, intra - personal skills such as emotional awareness and inter - personal skills such as communication and cooperation (UNESCO, 2015, p. 7).

Inner peace is important to build interpersonal peace and outer peace. Hanh (1987) says that if we are not happy, if we are not peaceful, we can't share peace and happiness with others (p. 13). Balasooriya, (2001) says that peace education empowers children to find creative and nondestructive ways to settle conflicts and to live in harmony with themselves, others, and the world (p. 5). Therefore, it is obvious that inner peace, interpersonal peace and outer peace are interconnected.

## **Interpersonal Peace**

Interpersonal peace is the behavioral field of human interaction in daily life and work (Webel, 2007, p. 10). The concept of “social peace” presented by Balasooriya (2001) has a similarity with the concept of interpersonal peace (p. 10). Social peace indicates peace between people and harmony arising from human relationships at all levels, enriched by values such as love, friendship, mutual understanding, co-operation and tolerance of differences (Balasooriya, 2001, p. 10). According to Galtung (1967), interpersonal models are concerned with relations of individuals at the micro level (for e.g., family and school) and at the macro level (for e.g., between major groups and institutions) (p. 70-71).

Interpersonal relations can be developed as a tool for conflict management by promoting it through many means including education, socialization and mutual interaction (Galtung, 1967, p. 73-74). Bush and Saltarelli (2000) emphasize building bridges between groups and communities that have been separated and polarized by violent conflict through peace education as re-humanizing of those who have been de-humanized (p. 30). Re-building interpersonal relationships or reconciliation is vital for post-conflict situations in which the two rival groups continue to live in one political entity (Bar-Tal, Rosen & Nets- Zehngu, 2009, p. 23). Incompatible or disharmonious (negative) goals lead to conflict while harmonious (positive) goals offer potentials for positive peace (Galtung, 2007, p. 16).

Johnson and Johnson (2014) presents the social interdependence theory that develops cooperative relationships and the integrative negotiations theory that focuses on resolving conflicts to maximize joint gain (p. 226). Therefore, these theories can be applied to create harmonious or positive goals through cooperative relationships and mutually beneficial agreements (Johnson & Johnson, 2014, p. 226).

The development of interpersonal peace leads to building a favorable outer peace structure in the society. Galtung (1967) says that when a person learns harmonious interaction patterns through different means, he transfers them to other members of the society and to the future generations and introduces what he learnt, when he enters a new system (p. 75). All these transfer mechanisms are stronger, the higher the number of members transmitting the messages. So the next generation

meets comprehensive networks of positive interpersonal relations reinforced through consistency (Galtung, 1967, p. 75).

## **Outer Peace**

Webel (2007) defines outer peace<sup>6</sup> as sociopolitical, domestic and international peace (p. 10). Peacebuilding in the “outer” sphere is broader than peacebuilding in the “inner” and “interpersonal” spheres and at the same time a combination and an extension of “inner” and “interpersonal” spheres. Peace education can be utilized as a thread that all these areas interweaves. Johnson and Johnson (2014) say the ultimate goal of peace education is for individuals to be able to maintain intrapersonal peace, interpersonal peace, intergroup peace and international peace (p. 226).

Moreover, outer peace can be a broader concept than human relationships at different societal and international levels. Balasooriya (2001) presents the concept of peace with nature, which indicates harmony with the natural environment and the earth (p. 11). Toh (2006) emphasizes the importance of “living in harmony with the earth<sup>7</sup>” which focuses on environmental sustainability, as a holistic approach to make a culture of peace that transcends unsustainable relationships and systems (p. 2-3). A holistic approach to peace education that incorporates global, social, political, and personal dimensions of peace is needed to promote United Nation’s “culture of peace” effort (Tinker, 2016, p. 31).

Outer peace can be disturbed by the mismatch of different structures used in sociopolitical, domestic and international levels with the interests of people. For example, peacebuilding in realism refers to maintaining the stability through hegemonial power, and in idealism it advocates for a world regulated by the international organizations like the United Nations (Paffenholz, 2009). If people are not satisfied with the above systems, they may request systems such as post

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<sup>6</sup> Main objective of the social cohesion and peace programs referred in this study is building national integration in Sri Lanka (building outer peace). Therefore, programs are implemented at the local level to develop inter-cultural peace and harmony (interpersonal peace).

<sup>7</sup> According to Toh (2006) “living in harmony with the earth is caring about the environmental sustainability which is needed to make a culture of peace. The social cohesion and peace programs referred in this study also emphasized the need of environmental peace among many other factors.

structuralism which Paffenholz, (2009) defines as a system that focuses on justice, equality, marginalized actors and discourses and critically analyze power relations within the system.

King and Matthews (2012) say that the Agenda for Peace<sup>8</sup> emphasizes the idea of “liberal peace” or the idea that building peace is building a liberal democratic society with open elections and free markets (p. 278-279). Seitz (2004) says that peace education concepts are based on “western bias” which is rooted in the western and Christian concept of man and its transfer to non-western context is extremely problematic as it emphasizes on “self” which is a European concept associated with individualistic societies (p. 63).

Therefore, many scholars talk about “localizing” peacebuilding. Bush and Saltarelli (2000) say that peacebuilding and education for peacebuilding would be a bottom-up rather than a top down process especially in war-torn communities, founded on their experiences and capacities (p. 27). Each country can construct an approach and model of curriculum for peace education, considering its own circumstances (UNESCO, 2015, p. 31) to build outer peace in a localized manner. Such bottom-up approaches can be implemented at schools and in community projects at the micro level. Accordingly, a person who had training in peacebuilding and conflict management at the micro level will transfer that training to the higher levels (the outer sphere). People used to such structures will try to form the international system (the outer sphere) according to the same idea, and in doing so contribute to the realization of highly viable, peace models (Galtung, 1967, p. 75).

## **B. Negative Peace & Positive Peace**

Negative peace and positive peace are discussed in this section. It is expected to understand the socio-economic and political context of the research destination Sri Lanka based on these two concepts.

### **Negative Peace**

Negative peace is the absence of war and the other forms of violent human conflicts (Webel, 2007, p. 6). Galtung presents typologies of violence: direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence (Grewal, 2003) to evaluate the concept of peace.

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<sup>8</sup> An Agenda for Peace: Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping is a report written for the United Nations by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in 1992.

Negative peace exists when there is no direct violence such as physical harming and hurting, but structural and cultural violence (Galtung, 2007, pp. 31). Structural violence is the polarization between classes, meaning that basic needs of the lower class are molested or left unsatisfied by a structure of exclusion (Galtung, 2007, p. 18). Cultural violence is aspects of culture that legitimize direct and Structural violence (Grewal, 2003). In this sense, negative peace can be defined as peace without social justice.

Negative peace is accepted by over-privileged groups interested in stability, law and order as they are uninterested in violence, since any violence would be directed against themselves (Galtung, 1967, p. 12). Accordingly, the notion of negative peace could be embedded in the structure and visible through the education structure. Tinker (2016) says that peace education's formative years only studied the causes of war and other forms of direct violence and strategies to reduce or eliminate them (p. 28).

Bush and Saltarelli (2000) say that there are two faces of education: positive and negative (p. 9). Positive face of education can have a socially constructive impact on intergroup relations and negative face of education can have a socially destructive impact on intergroup relations (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, p. 9). For example, the theory and practice of nationalist education towards the end of the 19th century displayed a growing affinity to fostering militant feelings of superiority (Seits, 2004, p. 59).

Significant proportion of students' learning will occur outside the formal school curriculum such as ethos of the school, from the ways in which they are treated and by their teachers and peers (UNESCO, 2015, p. 30). This learning is referred to as the "hidden" curriculum and can be positive or negative in character. Uneven distribution of educational resources, manipulating history for political purposes and segregated education to ensure inequality, lowered esteem and stereotyping are some features of the negative education (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, p. 34). Davies (2015) says that segregated schooling with language differences is the key barrier for peace education in Sri Lanka (p. 5). According to Grewal (2003), the negative peace is useful for the short-term, and the longer term remedies are only achievable with the positive peace approach.



## **Positive Peace**

Positive peace is the absence of structural and cultural violence and presence of dialogue, equity, equality (Galtung, 2007, pp. 31). Positive peace denotes the simultaneous presence of many desirable states of mind and society such as harmony, justice and equity (Webel, 2007, p. 6). Examples of positive peace policies and proposals include improved human understanding through communication, peace education, international cooperation, dispute resolution, arbitration, and conflict management (Grewal, 2003).

Presenting a medical analogy to explain about positive peace, Galtung (2007) resembles good health to positive peace (pp. 14-15). To achieve good health or positive peace, preventive methods are needed. Curative methods may be short-term, as it would worsen the health condition in the future. It resembles achieving negative peace by applying temporary measures to solve the conflict without caring the underlying causes (Galtung, 2007, pp. 14-15). Therefore, to achieve positive peace, root causes of the conflict should be addressed.

Peace educators and world organizations work for peace have included positive peace concept to their education initiatives. For example, peace education is an integral part of the UNICEF vision of quality basic education, and it focuses on promoting social justice, acceptance of differences, and peace (Fountain, 1999, p. 1). Bush and Saltarelli (2000) present some facts needed to implement socially constructive positive face of education: nurturing an ethnically tolerant climate, de-segregation of minds, linguistic tolerance, disarming of history and cultivating inclusive citizenship (p. 34).

Galtung (2007) proposes many steps including, making a peace culture/structure to achieve peace by peaceful means (p. 27). Schools can be utilized at the grassroots level to implement structural equality by building a culture of peace. In this context, the school's culture should be consistent with and promote relevant values, such as non-violence, compassion, equality, sustainability, respect for diversity and human rights (UNESCO, 2015, p. 40).

## **2.1.2 Concept of Multiculturalism**

### **A. Assimilation**

The assimilationist and liberal ideology that dominated the Western nations envisioned a nation-state in which individuals from diverse groups are able to participate fully (Banks, 2009, p. 11). Assimilation aims to preserve the majority culture and identity (Race, 2015, p. 19) and this conceptual application is still relevant in today's world. Milton Gordon presented three main ideologies: "Anglo-confirmity," "melting pot" and "cultural pluralism" in which goals of assimilation exist (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 25). The Anglo-confirmity theory demanded the complete renunciation of the immigrant's ancestral culture in favor of the behavior and values of the Anglo-Saxon core group. The "melting pot" envisages a biological merger of the Anglo-Saxon people's cultures into a new indigenous American type (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 25). Milton Gordon identified seven types of assimilation: (1) cultural or behavioral assimilation or acculturation, (2) structural assimilation or entrance into the institutions of the host society, (3) marital assimilation or amalgamation, (4) identificational assimilation or shared sense of peoplehood at the societal level, (5) attitude receptional assimilation or absence of prejudice, (6) behavior receptional assimilation or absence of discrimination and (7) civic assimilation, where interethnic conflict over values and power overcome by shared identity of citizenship (Kivisto, 2002, p. 29). However, the United States has been dominated by the White, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant (WASP) culture and ethnic and racial groups that are not a part of the WASP culture have been denied (5) attitude receptional, (6) behavioral receptional and (7) civic assimilation (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 25). This indicates that assimilationist ideology has worked less well for non-white groups (Banks, 2009, p. 12).

In the early 20th century, educational efforts to assimilate also had harsh programs that were designed to alienate children from their parental cultures and languages (Ramsey, Williams & Vold, 2003, p. 8). Cultural differences are considered to be disadvantageous within assimilationist ideology, therefore critics including multicultural educators see it as undemocratic, ethnocentric and unrealistic (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 25). According to Race (2015), assimilation raised issues such as resistance of oppressed parents and students against school structures and the curriculum taught in the classroom (p. 16). By 1970s assimilation theory lost its hegemonic status replaced by the cultural pluralism (Kivisto, 2002, p. 30).

## B. Cultural Pluralism

Horace Kallen popularized the concept cultural pluralism (Kivisto, 2002, p. 29), which would provide unity through diversity, denouncing the Anglo conformity and the melting pot ideology (Ramsey, Williams & Vold, 2003, p. 10). Grant and Ladson-Billings (1997) say that cultural pluralism extols the value of *e pluribus unum* in which many groups exist while supporting and developing a cohesive society by sharing widely divergent ethnic experiences (p. 64). The new pluralism grew out of the Civil Rights Movement (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 64) that developed in the 1960s and 1970s due to the structural exclusion of ethnic groups of color (Banks, 2009, p. 12). According to Banks (2009), so called disillusionment made these groups demand structural inclusion and the rights to retain important aspects of their cultures such as their languages and religions (p. 12). The hegemonic rise of the cultural pluralist paradigm was growing interest in the social construction of ethnicity (Kivisto, 2002, p. 31). Huntington (1996) says local politics is the politics of ethnicity in this new world and people use politics not just to advance their interests but also to define their identity (p. 4). Soon cultural pluralism expanded to include more than identity with an ethnic group, it embraced women, economic ability, and homosexual and age groups (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 64).

In the 1930s many educators adapted a culturally pluralistic approach that incorporated tolerance and even celebration of cultural differences in the service of a more gradual and humane assimilation (Ramsey, Williams & Vold, 2003, p. 10). Integration or cultural fusion incorporates diversity into the mainstream to change it (Race, 2015, p. 20). Race (2015) says integration although being a conditional “two way” relationship is still controlled by institutions (for e.g., the nation state) like assimilation (p. 20). The cultural pluralism stresses group rights over the rights of the individual although in a modernized and equitable society individual rights are paramount and group rights are secondary (Banks, 2009, p. 11). The education policies like Plowden Report<sup>9</sup> pointed out educational issues to address diverse cultural traditions such as no teacher training and lack of professional development within education (Race, 2015, p. 21). However, cultural

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<sup>9</sup> The Plowden Report is the 1967 report of the Central Advisory Council For Education (England) into Primary education in England.

pluralism, along with equality remains one of the tenets that undergird multicultural education (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 64).

### **C. Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism as a concept has different histories and origins in different countries (Race, 2015, pp. 2-3). According to Kellner (1998), the term means quite different things in different contexts and overloaded with diverse meanings of different political agendas and discourses (p. 212). For instance, multiculturalism in the United States was concerned with liberty and equality which does not promote historic identities of non-English subcultures (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 182). Canada was the first country to adopt multiculturalism as an official policy in 1971, with the definition “all citizens are equal, their identities are ensured and multiculturalism encourages racial and ethnic harmony and cross-cultural understanding” (Race, 2015, p. 3). Nowadays this concept is increasingly criticized and many question its ability to solve cultural problems (Berkes, 2010, p. 1).

According to Baber (2008) Amartya Sen’s “plural monoculturalism” which indicates that a good society ought to be a “salad bowl” with diverse groups interact peacefully, undermines social cohesion and sets back the interests of the culturally dominant majority (p. 37). Therefore, there is a conflict of interests between cultural preservationists and individuals who wish to assimilate (Baber, 2008, p. 61). Kellner, (1998) says that in the United States multiculturalism is contested between conservatives who would vilify it as a threat to traditional canons of education and those who would defend it as a cover for liberal reform of education and society (p. 213). In the post-60s US society, multiculturalism signifies a mode of affirming “otherness” and difference, and the importance of attending to marginalized, minority and individuals (Kellner, 1998, p. 213). Baber (2008) says that the debate is consequently framed between proponents of cultural diversity who support the right of individuals to do as they wish and opponents of diversity who aim to enforce conformity to majority values and practices (p. 57). Accordingly, multiculturalism promotes the interests of minorities at the expense of majority’s interests. Kellner (1998) says that in contrast to the conservatives, liberals use the concept to restructure education and society to cover differences and inequalities (p. 213).

However, cultural pluralism and multiculturalism are having problems with cultural essentialism, which I will explain below.

#### **D. Problems of Cultural Essentialism**

One important criticism of multiculturalism is that it promotes “essentialism” reifying the identities and practices of minority groups (Kymlicka, 2014, p. 2). Phillips (2010) identifies four distinct meanings of essentialism: (1) attribution of certain characteristics to everyone subsumed within a particular category (e.g., all women are caring and empathetic), (2) attribution of those characteristics to the category, in ways that naturalize or reify what may be socially created or constructed, (3) invocation of a collectivity as either the subject or object of political action (“the working class” or “women”) in a move that seems to presume a homogenized and unified group, (4) policing of this collective category and its shared characteristics as the defining ones that cannot be questioned or modified without undermining an individual’s claim to belong to that group (p. 1). The four meanings are not identical, therefore one might be engaged in essentialized thinking on one score, while managing to avoid it on others (Phillips, 2010, p. 5).

Multiculturalism exaggerates the internal unity of cultures, solidifies differences that are currently more fluid, and makes people from other cultures seem more exotic and distinct than they really are, by forcing members of a minority cultural group into a regime of authenticity denying them the chance to cross cultural borders (Kymlicka, 2014, p. 2). This naïve, static and undifferentiated conception of cultural identity abandon universalist notions of individual choice and rights (May, 2009, p. 37).

Pointing out ethnic reductionism in Britain, Baumann (1996) says it mis-represented culture as “an imprisoning cocoon or a determining force” (p. 1). Phillips (2010) mentions that it is central to the practice of politicized ethnicity to cast ethnic groups, races, or nations as protagonists, and make claims in their name and reifying groups is precisely what ethno-political entrepreneurs are in the business of doing (p. 6).

According to many critics, liberal multiculturalism involves essentializing the identities and practices of minority groups (Kymlicka, 2014). However, Kymlicka (2014) defends criticism against liberal multiculturalism saying that liberal multiculturalism is a liberal democratic form of multiculturalism, grounded in core liberal values of freedom, equality and democracy. Liberal

multiculturalism even guarantees official language rights for national minorities and accommodation rights of immigrant groups. Therefore, liberal multiculturalism differs from non-liberal forms of multiculturalism (Kymlicka, 2014). In summary, liberal multiculturalism is not just a theoretical possibility, rather it exists as a real world practice (Kymlicka, 2014).

## **2.2 Evolution and Role of Peace and Multicultural Education**

### **2.2.1 Evolution and Role of Peace Education**

One of the first Europeans who espoused peace education was Comenius, a Czech educator in the seventeenth century (Harris, 2008, p. 1). Comenius said that education and teaching are fundamentally committed to the goals of improving human relationships, enhancing communication between people, and bringing about peace between nations (Seitz, 2004, p. 59). The growth of peace education parallels the growth of peace movements; the modern peace movement against war began in the nineteenth century after the Napoleonic wars when progressive intellectuals and politicians formed societies to study the threats of war and against armaments, the second wave of nineteenth century peace movement was closely associated with workingmen's associations and socialist political groupings and the last segment of the nineteenth century peace movement preceded the First World War (Harris, 2008, p. 1-2).

At the genesis of the European nation state, education was assigned the task of fostering the national identity and the nationalist education towards the end of the 19th century which fostered militant feelings of superiority contributed to the First World War (Seitz, 2004, p. 59). Seitz (2004) says that the colonial education concept disseminated the concept of nationalist education in many parts of the southern hemisphere and the model of the "national school" still exists worldwide (p. 59). The international peace movement at the beginning of the 20th century was characterized by resistance to the militancy of the imperialistic national states, in contrast, peace education approaches after the Second World War were interested in the international cooperation (Seitz, 2004, p. 59).

Many international documents have mentioned about the importance of peace education. In 1945, the United Nations was established to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and "to reaffirm faith in the ...dignity and worth of the human person in the equal rights of men and

women” (United Nations, n.d.). UNESCO has sought through education to advance international peace and the common welfare of humankind by improving education (Tinker, 2016, pp. 28). The Convention on the Rights of the Child viewed the promotion of peace and tolerance through education as a fundamental right of all children (Fountain, 1999, p. 2).

According to UNESCO (2015), peace education should not be taught in isolation from other related curriculum themes and topics and human rights education, multicultural education, global citizenship education and conflict resolution education all fall under the scope of peace education (p. 7). Each country adopts the terminology that best suits its own social, historical and political environment (UNESCO, 2015, p. 8). For example, it is “education for conflict resolution” in Sri Lanka (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, p. 27).

Galtung (2007) emphasizes the importance of peace education as a mean of achieving peace by peaceful means when transfer the society from negative to positive peace (p. 27). Accordingly, UNICEF defines peace education as a process of promoting knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural, to resolve conflict peacefully, and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level (Fountain, 1999, p. 1).

### **2.2.2 Evolution and Role of Multicultural Education**

The early phases of multicultural education developed first in the United States as a response to the civil rights movement (Banks, 2009, p. 13). Grant and Ladson-Billings (1997) say that the ethnic studies movement which grew out of the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s is also central to the development of multicultural education (p. 172). During this movement, African Americans and many other groups of color demanded equity and equality in the policies and practices of schooling (Grant and Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 172). Consequently, other groups who viewed themselves as victims of the society and the schools such as women and people with disabilities also demanded the incorporation of their histories, cultures, and voices into the curricula and structure of the schools, colleges, and universities (Banks, 1993, p. 20). Multicultural education developed subsequently in other nations such as United Kingdom, Canada and Australia (Banks, 2009, p. 13). According to Banks (2009), multicultural education is an approach to school

reform designed to actualize educational equality for students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, social-class and linguistic groups and to promote democracy and social justice (p. 13).

Multicultural education is conceptually defined in different ways, and educational practices described as multicultural are implemented based upon different frameworks (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 172). In 1971 the National Coalition for Cultural Pluralism asserted that all cultural, racial and ethnic groups in the American society have the right to mutually coexist and have the freedom to maintain their own identities and lifestyles (Ramsey, Williams & Vold, 2003, p. 16). The concept of “education that is multicultural” includes social re-constructionism which emphasizes on social action to challenge existing structural inequalities (Ramsey, Williams & Vold, 2003, p. 19-20).

Banks (2009) developed five dimensions of multicultural education: (1) content integration, (2) knowledge construction, (3) prejudice reduction, (4) equity pedagogy and (5) empowering school culture to help educational practitioners to develop practice, theory and research in this field (p. 15). Content integration deals with the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures in their teaching. The knowledge construction process helps students to become knowledge producers, not merely the consumers of knowledge produced by others. Prejudice reduction focuses on how racial attitudes can be modified by teaching methods. Equity pedagogy is that teachers modify their teaching in ways that will facilitate the academic achievements of students from diverse groups. Empowering school culture is restructuring school culture that empowers students from diverse racial, ethnic and gender groups (Banks, 2009, p. 15).

Banks (2007) says that to prepare effective citizens for living in a democratic society, schools must become democratic institutions that model caring and ethnic diversity (p. 7). To be effective citizens, students must be knowledgeable and develop the ability to rationally justify the conceptions of various ethnic and racial groups and their roles in the society (Banks, 2007, p. 16). Citizenship education encourages children to interact with the other groups, develop habits of civility and the capacity for public reasonableness, while promoting critical attitude towards the authority (Race, 2015, p. 104). Therefore, Banks (2007) mentions about “multicultural citizenship,” a new kind of citizenship education that enable students to acquire a delicate balance



of cultural, national and global identifications to participate in civic action to create a more humane nation and world (p. 19).

## 2.3 Implementation of Peace and Multicultural Education

### Implementation Process

Many groups are involved in the process of implementing peace and multicultural education. This process can be explained as a learning system in which all groups are assigned different, but joint responsibilities. If one group does not fulfill its responsibility properly would lead the whole system to be ineffective.

The UNESCO (2015) presents a learning system to show that it is not enough to have peace education in the formal school curriculum, but that the entire system conveys the message (p. 8).

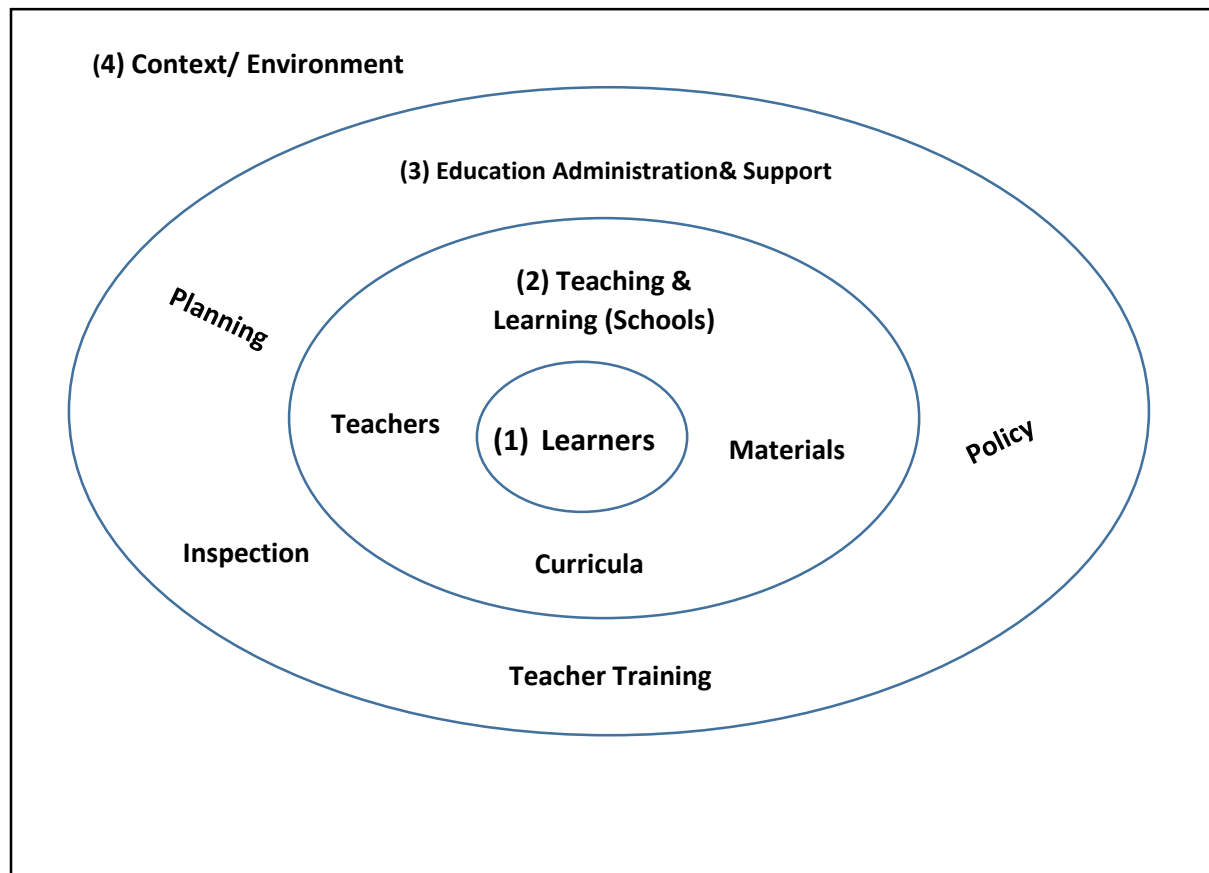


Figure 2.1. The Learning System by UNESCO. Adapted from UNESCO (2015).

The learning system depicted in figure 2.1 consists of four levels: (1) Learners, (2) Teaching & Learning (Schools), (3) Education Administration and Support, and (4) Context or Environment (UNESCO, 2015, p. 8-9). Each level is explained below in detail.

### **(1) Learners**

Figure 2.1 shows the learners at the center of the system. Children and youth are mainly focused as learners in most initiatives to build social cohesion and peace.

Balasoorya (2001) emphasizes the need to nurture peace in the hearts of children to prevent them absorb violence in the atmosphere and grow to be next generation of perpetrators of violence (p. 1). UNICEF's Education for Development is an approach to teaching and learning that builds a commitment to global solidarity, peace, acceptance of differences, social justice and environmental awareness aiming to empower children and youth (Fountain, 1999, p. 8).

However, the "Learners" cannot be confined merely to children and youth. Bush and Saltarelli (2000) say peacebuilding education cannot be restricted to the classroom and might include community projects involving children and adolescents (p. 27). This indicates that the community including parents should be included in the peacebuilding process. Otherwise, the dissonance between the values taught in school and at home can trigger angst and stress in children (Seitz, 2004, p. 63).

### **(2) The Teaching & Learning Circle (Schools)**

UNESCO (2015) says the "Teaching & Learning" circle represents the schools or any other place where learning occurs, such as a non-formal education center (p. 8). In addition, this circle includes everything that learners closely interact with- teachers, school principals and administrators, the curriculum in use, textbooks and other educational teaching and learning materials (UNESCO, 2015, p. 8).

Schools are often the only institution that society can formally, intentionally, and extensively use to achieve the mission of peace education, as they have the authority, the legitimacy, the means, and the conditions to carry it out, and schooling takes place during the formative years in which children and adolescents are relatively open to form their repertoire (Bar-Tal, Rosen & Nets-

Zehngu, 2009, p. 24). However, one half of the world's out - of - school children lived in conflict affected countries by 2011 (UNESCO, 2015, p. 5). This indicates the importance of providing education at the non-formal level focusing on students who are out of formal education.

The nature of school culture and its education can affect learners negatively or positively. For example, Bush and Saltarelli (2000) say that there are two faces of education: the negative face and the positive face (p. 34). In the negative face, the role of textbooks can impoverish the imagination of children and thereby inhibiting them from dealing with conflict constructively. Peer mediation programs, school visits or joint school projects with children from different ethnic groups which break down prejudices (fountain, 1999, p. 30) can be viewed as the positive face of education that cultivates inclusive conceptions of citizenship (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, p. 34).

### **(3) Education Administration and Support**

This circle represents the rest of the education system and includes areas such as policy, inspection and supervision, educational planning, research, teacher training and other things needed to support the teaching and learning process (UNESCO, 2015, p. 8). This circle has an influence on “Learners” and “The Teaching & Learning (Schools)” circles.

Gorski, (2012) mentions that in order to maintain a “multicultural school environment,” all aspects of the school have to be examined and transformed, including policies, teachers' attitudes, instructional materials, assessment methods, counseling, and teaching styles.

According to Bar-Tal, Rosen and Nets-Zehngu (2009), school system requires setting new educational objectives, preparing new curricula, writing school textbooks, training teachers, and constructing a climate in the schools that is conducive to peace education (p. 24).

We now see a strong inter-connection of the three cycles “Learners,” “Teaching & Learning (Schools)” and “Education Administration and Support” is needed in achieving the progress of their joint activities.

### **(4) Context or Environment**

The context or environment includes the social, political and economic environment of the country or area, governance structures, labor markets, peer and parental influences on learners, and other

external factors which influence learners and the quality of learning outcomes outside the direct control of the education system (UNESCO, 2015, p. 9). The external factors which influence learners can be differed in accordance with the context of the country. According to Karuna Center for Peacebuilding (2013), in Sri Lanka religious leaders are naturally respected for their moral leadership, and their values are frequently adopted by the population at large (p. 1). Therefore, in Sri Lanka religious leaders have a powerful influence (Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, 2013, p. 1). Therefore, it can be regarded as an important external factor that has an influence on learners.

As explained under “Learners,” parents can also be regarded as an important external factor. The solution to changing cultural diversity within education concerned the need for all groups that is, parents, children, schools, local education authorities and government to recognize the changing nature of the society (Race, 2015, p. 21).

Many scholars emphasize the importance of the role of different actors involved in the learning system as well as implementation of programs in accordance with the local context. For example, King and Matthews (2012) argue that in contrast to the focus of the Agenda for Peace on the international community’s role in peacebuilding, “localizing” peacebuilding is essential to building sustainable peace (p. 291). Peace education is a process to be mainstreamed into all quality educational experiences within schools or outside of schools and determined by local circumstances. (Fountain, 1999, p. 3).

According to UNESCO (2015), this system-wide approach recognizes that education does not occur in a vacuum and that key messages about peace are transmitted to the learner via all parts of the system as well as through the broader, social environment (p. 9). Learners convey these messages to others in the education system, especially their peers, as well as back to their environment through their involvement and behaviors in their local communities. Therefore, education needs to focus on establishing a cooperative, not a competitive, relationship among all relevant parties (Johnson & Johnson, 2014, p. 226).

## **Chapter 3: Context of Sri Lanka**

This chapter describes the context of Sri Lanka under three main topics: Geographical Characteristics, History & Demography, Socio-Economic and Political Context and Education of Sri Lanka.

Under **3.1 Geographical Characteristics, History & Demography**, first geographical characteristics and history and second, demography of Sri Lanka are presented.

**3.2 Socio-Economic and Political Context** is presented under three topics: Current Socio-Economic Factors in Brief, Language Issue of Sri Lanka and Evolution of the Conflict.

**3.3 Education of Sri Lanka** is also presented under three topics: Evolution of Education, Structure of the Education System, and Education for Social Cohesion and Peace. Education is elaborately discussed in this section as this research mainly focuses on education.

### **3.1 Geographical Characteristics, History & Demography**

#### **Geographical Characteristics & History**

Sri Lanka is an island in the Indian Ocean situated to the southeast of the Indian subcontinent with a land area of 65,000 square kilometers. Sri Lanka is strategically situated on the main sea routes between the East and the West. This strategic location has always been a key factor for the external powers to look for settlements in the island. The close proximity to the Indian subcontinent has resulted in frequent invasions from South India. Tamils who came and settled in Sri Lanka in early centuries are called Sri Lankan Tamils. Descendants of laborers brought from Southern India by the British in the 19th century are called Indian Tamils (Perera, 2001, p. 5). The Muslim settlements came up much later when the Arabs came as traders in large numbers and settled down after the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 12).

Portuguese and Dutch captured the maritime provinces of Sri Lanka in the 16th and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries respectively (Ministry of Education, 2013, pp.12). The British were able to subjugate the whole country by 1815 (Perera, 2001, p. 7). In the 1948 the country gained independence and became a

dominion within the British Commonwealth (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 5). Ministry of Education (2013) says that in the 1972 the Republican Constitution was promulgated and in 1978 an Executive Presidency model of governance was adapted (p. 5). In 1987 some of the powers and functions exercised by the central government were devolved to the provinces. Each province has an elected Provincial Council which manages the provincial administration with regard to the devolved functions (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 5).

## **Demography**

The population of Sri Lanka is 20.35 million by 2012 according to the Census of Population and Housing 2012 (Department of Census and Statistics, 2012, p. 43). Sri Lankan society is an ethno-religious mosaic and there are clear religious divisions within the ethnic groups (Perera, 2001, p. 4). Sinhalese are the majority and account for nearly 74.9 %, Sri Lankan Tamils 11.2 %, Indian Tamils 4.2%, Sri Lanka Moors 9.2% and others 0.5%. Others comprised of Burgher<sup>10</sup>, Malay<sup>11</sup>, Vedda<sup>12</sup> and many more ethnic groups (Department of Census and Statistics, 2012, p. 141).

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<sup>10</sup> Burgher people are a small Eurasian ethnic group in Sri Lanka descended from Portuguese, Dutch, British and other Europeans.

<sup>11</sup> Malay people are natives of the Malay Archipelago who reside in Sri Lanka.

<sup>12</sup> Vedda are a minority indigenous group of people in Sri Lanka.

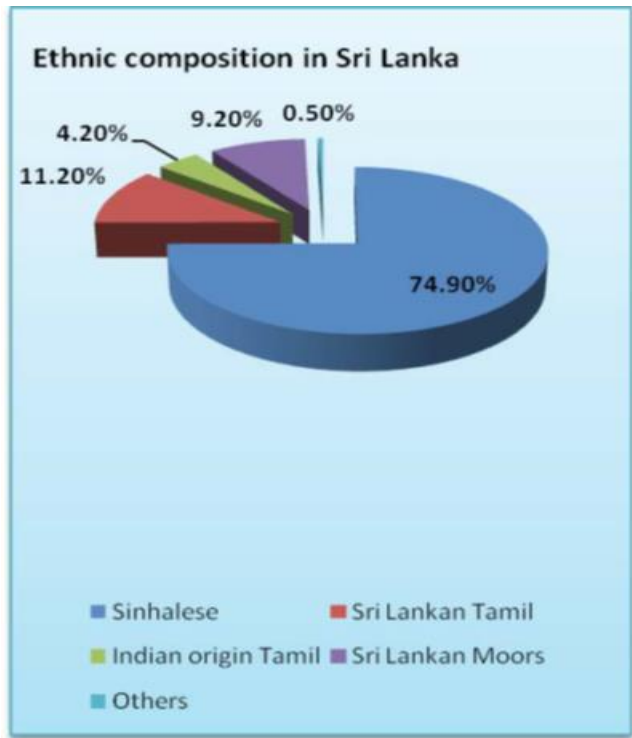


Figure 3.1. Ethnic Composition in Sri Lanka. Ministry of Education (2013).

The country is divided into nine provinces (Department of Census and Statistics, 2012, p. 33). Sri Lankan Tamils predominate in the Northern Province and maintain a significant presence in the Eastern Province (Perera, 2001, p. 4). Perera (2001) says that Indian Tamils are concentrated in the parts of the Central, Uva and Sabaragamuwa Provinces (p. 5). Sinhalese Buddhists predominate in all parts of the country except the Northern and the Eastern Provinces. Muslims have a significant concentration in the Eastern Province, but are scattered throughout the country (Perera, 2001, p. 5).

*Sri Lanka's map illustrating nine provinces is depicted in the appendix 1*

Ministry of Education (2013) says majority of Sinhalese being Buddhist accounts for 70.2% (p. 7). Most of the Tamils are Hindus and account for 12.6%. 9.7% are followers of Islam. Roman Catholics and other Christians (non-Roman Catholics) account for 6.1% and 1.3% respectively and are comprised with Sinhalese and Tamils who were converted by Portuguese, Dutch or the British (Ministry of Education, 2013, p.7).

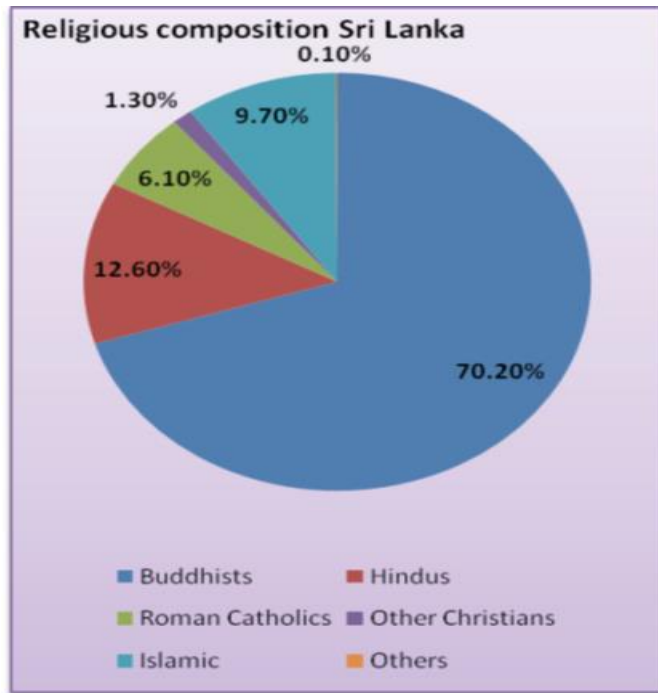


Figure 3.2. Religious Composition in Sri Lanka. Ministry of Education (2013).

## 3.2. Socio-Economic and Political Context

### 3.2.1 Current Socio-Economic Factors in Brief

According to Ministry of Education (2013), Sri Lanka has elevated to the level of a middle-income country in the year 2010 with a per capita income of 2400 US dollars (p. 8). The Human Development Index (HDI) at 0.691 shows that Sri Lanka enjoys a higher level of quality of life in comparison to countries having a similar or a higher level of per capita income. Expectation of Life at Birth is 74 years. Average Literacy Rate is 94.5%. Infant mortality rate is 8 per 1,000 live births (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 8)



### **3.2.2 Language Issue of Sri Lanka**

The language issue is regarded as one of the root causes of the ethnic conflict. The language issue in many ways brought the Sinhala-Tamil conflict into the forefront of Sri Lankan politics (Perera, 2001, p. 10). Perera (2001) says that in addition to the barriers imposed by the continued use of English language as the official language of the state, the emerging nationalist (Sinhala) forces perceived that the Sri Lankan Tamils had access to a disproportionate share of power as a consequence of educational opportunities in the colonial period and were also disproportionately represented in the civil administration (p. 10). A considerable mercantile interests were also controlled by non-Sinhalese groups. These fears and concerns were a basis for the politics of language that was to emerge (Perera, 2001, p. 10). Subsequently, in 1956 the government passed the Official Languages Act known as the “Sinhala Only Bill” declaring Sinhala as the official language of the country (Perera, 2011, p. 57). Perera (2011) says that in 1987 through the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution, Tamil was also decreed to be an official language of the state (p. 58). However, the damage caused by the politics of language still remain unaddressed.

### **3.2.3 Evolution of the Conflict**

Ranasinghe (2014) says that the British brought the ethnicity as a prominent factor in politics and administration in the colonial rule and promoted the ethnic minorities against the majorities by extending more opportunities for minorities in politics and administrative spheres than that of majorities (p. 63). Thus the colonial policy of “divide and rule” employed by the British in Sri Lanka promoted the ethnic conflict as a long-lasting issue that thwarted the socio-economic and political progress (Ranasinghe, 2014, p. 63). The current conflict had its roots in political uprisings in the early 70s (Cardozo, 2006, p. 34). Un-remedied structural weaknesses of the post-colonial economy, the continued colonial-era exploitation by indigenous political leaders, and the introduction of free market reforms and structural adjustment programs (from 1977 onwards) led to widening of inequalities, social disorder and corruption (Richardson 2005 p. 40).

According to Nubin (2002) the big losers were the members of the Sinhala community who were finally able to obtain high school or university degrees during educational expansion by the late

1960s, but found further advancement difficult (p. 169). Frustrated aspirations lay behind the participation of many Sinhala students in the abortive uprising by the People's Liberation Front (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna-JVP) in 1971 (Nubin, 2002, p. 169).

In addition, the language issue in many ways brought the Sinhalese-Tamil conflict into the forefront of the Sri Lankan politics ("The Root Causes of the Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka," n.d.). Education policies<sup>13</sup> of the government were perceived by the members of the Tamil community as blatant discrimination (Nubin, 2002, p. 170). Nubin (2002) says that many Tamil youth reacted to the blockage of their educational prospects by supporting the Tamil secessionist groups (p. 170). The first of these groups was the Tamil Tigers which later came to be known as the LTTE (Perera, 2001, p. 21). According to Cardozo (2006), earlier tensions between Sinhalese and Tamils erupted into war in 1983 (p. 35). The rise of insurgencies against the government in 1983 was the beginning of the conflict in Sri Lanka, which ended in 2009 when the Sri Lankan military defeated the LTTE (Youth, Peace and Security Coalition Sri Lanka, 2017, p. 6).

### **3.3 Education of Sri Lanka**

#### **3.3.1 Evolution of Education**

In the ancient times education was provided at Pirivenas or monastic colleges to clergy and lay students (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 12). According to Ministry of Education (2013), Portuguese missionaries established parish schools in 16<sup>th</sup> century with the main intention of propagating the Roman Catholic religion and the Dutch set up a well-organized system of primary schools to support the missionary efforts of the Dutch Reformed Church (p. 13). The British laid the foundation for the education system in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to train natives to serve in the lower level positions in the public service (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 13).

Following the national revival by the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a number of Buddhist and Hindu schools rapidly increased (Ministry of Education, 2013, pp. 14). Dr. C.W.W. Kannangara who held the portfolio of education from 1931 to 1947, initiated a series of educational reforms that created a lasting influence on the history of education in Sri Lanka. These changes include; grant of free

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<sup>13</sup> Education policies will discuss under the evolution of education.

education from the kindergarten to the university, establishment of central schools, change in the medium of instruction to national languages, curricular changes and student welfare measures (Ministry of Education, 2013, pp. 14).

The post-independence period (after 1948) is marked by further growth in education, establishing a network of schools spread throughout the country (Ministry of Education, 2013, pp. 15). According to Ministry of Education (2013) the take-over of schools under state control in 1960-61 is another landmark towards establishing a national system of education (p. 15).

Examinations were held in Sinhala and Tamil by the mid-1960s, opening the universities to a large number of applicants (Nubin, 2002, p. 169). According to Nubin (2002), university expansion slowed down due to the lack of funds, and the increasing numbers of qualified candidates could not be admitted to the universities (p. 169). Only 20% of applicants were admitted by 1965. The students who could enter the university followed the traditional road to a bachelor's degree and the government or private enterprises could not absorb the glut of graduates (Nubin, 2002, p. 169). Accordingly, educational expansion by the late 1960s led to two major problems: the difficulty of admissions to universities and the irrelevance of liberal arts education for employment (Nubin, 2002, p. 169).

From 1971 onwards, a new standardization policy was adopted, which ensured that the number of students qualify for university entrance from each language was proportionate to the number of students who sat for university examination in that language ("The Root Causes of the Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka," n.d.). In 1972, a district quota system was introduced in order to benefit those not having adequate access to education facilities within each language ("The Root Causes of the Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka," n.d.). In general, these policies impacted upon chances of Tamils to gain access to higher education. In 1977, the language based admission policy was abolished and since that time various adjustments have been introduced on the basis of merit and district quotas dismantling the ethno-linguistic discrimination of the 1971 policy. However, many Tamil youth still feel that they are discriminated against in access to higher education ("The Root Causes of the Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka," n.d.).

### 3.3.2 Structure of the Education System

At present there are 10,162 government schools, 232,555 teachers and 4,143,330 students (Ministry of Education, 2016b, p. 1). According to Ministry of Education (2016b) there are four types of schools (p. 3). (1) 1AB: schools which have classes up to General Certificate of Education Advance Level (GCE A/L) in all subject streams; Science, Arts and Commerce with or without primary sections, (2) 1C: schools which have classes up to GCE A/L Arts and Commerce streams with or without primary sections, (3) Type 2: schools which have classes up to General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (GCE O/L)-up to grade 11, (4) Type 3: schools which are primary schools and have classes up to grade 5 or grade 8 (Ministry of Education, 2016b, p. 3). Ministry of Education (2013) mentions that the general education span is of 13 years of duration from age 5-18 years (p. 18). Education is compulsory up to grade 9 (age 14) and a policy decision has taken to increase the limit to 16 years (MoE, 2013, p. 18).

Table 3.1.

#### *Number of Schools under Medium of Instruction*

Medium of instruction	Number of schools
Sinhala only	6338
Tamil only	2989
Sinhala & Tamil	66
Sinhala & English	554
Tamil & English	168
Sinhala, Tamil & English	47

*Note:* Adapted from Ministry of Education (2016b).

Sri Lankan schools follow the national curriculum developed by the National Institute of Education (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 32). Schools have the freedom to adapt the curriculum to the local environment. In addition to the academic curriculum, schools pay a lot of attention to co-curricular and extra-curricular activities (MoE, 2013, p. 33).

There are four main subject areas in the integrated primary curriculum (Grade 1-5): (1) language (mother tongue), (2) mathematics, (3) environment related activities and (4) religion (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 24). The Activity-based oral English (ABOE) is introduced through environment related activities. English is introduced as a second language at grade three. An introduction to the second national language (Sinhala for Tamil speaking children and Tamil for Sinhala speaking children) is also implemented from grade three onwards. These measures are aimed at promoting national integration and to ensure that future citizens are trilingual (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 24).

At the junior secondary level (Grade 6-9), the child will begin to learn through a subject based curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 26). Next, students proceed to senior secondary level (Grade 10-11) and at the end sit the public examination- GCE (O/L) (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 25). Ministry of Education (2013) mentions that the curriculum consists of six core subjects and three or four optional subjects selected from several groups of subjects (p. 25). Students who pass in six subjects with first language, mathematics and three subjects at credit or higher level qualify to follow the Senior Secondary Level course for two years. Students are selected to universities based on the results of the GCE (A/L) examination at the end of this course (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 26).

### **3.3.3 Education for Social Cohesion and Peace**

#### **Evolution of Education for Social Cohesion and Peace**

The education reforms implemented even during the conflict of Sri Lanka included the concepts related to social cohesion and peace. For example, the General Education Reforms of 1997 with regard to pre-service and in-service teacher education emphasized human values, human rights, conflict resolution and national cohesion (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 8). The overall education policy of Sri Lanka has national goals relevant to social cohesion and peace, including the achievement of national integration and the establishment of social justice (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 1). In 2007, a new curriculum was introduced for citizenship education (grade 6-11) which includes peace related concepts: the multicultural society, interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, democracy and human rights (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 8).

The National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (ESCP) was formulated in 2008 with the hope of producing a citizen who is having the values such as respect diversity and rights of others, democratic in decision making and has inner peace (Ministry of Education, 2008, pp. 3-4). Ministry of Education (2008) says that this policy is aimed at seven key strategic areas in the promotion of social cohesion and peace: (1) curriculum, (2) teacher education, (3) second national language, (4) co-curriculum, (5) whole school culture & community, and (6) integration models (schools, students and teachers) (p. 5-6). These strategic areas are covered by a (7) research strategy, a management strategy and structure, and a monitoring and evaluation system to evaluate efficacy (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 6).

### **Institutions Promoting Social Cohesion and Peace**

Institutions that implement programs for social cohesion and peace are introduced below. I will present main institutions referred to in this research. In addition to the government institutions, I present below two NGOs concerned in this research.

#### **The Ministry of Education (MoE)**

The responsibility for provision of education in Sri Lanka is shared by the central government and the provincial councils (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 42). The Central Ministry of Education operates under the central government is responsible for tasks, including formulation of the national policy on education and the national curriculum, teacher education, management of national schools, administration of public examinations, providing subsidies for school children and donor coordination (Ministry of Education, 2013, pp. 42-43). There are 353 national schools under the central MoE (Ministry of Education, 2016b, pp. 1).

*Structure of the Ministry of Education is depicted in the appendix 2.*

There are nine provincial councils in the nine provinces of Sri Lanka and each province has a Provincial Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 45). The Provincial Ministries manage 9809 provincial schools (Ministry of Education, 2016b, pp. 1). For administration purpose each province is divided into a number of educational zones and each zone has approximately 100 to 150 schools (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 45).

The other agencies functioning under the ministry are the Department of Examinations, the Department of Educational Publications and the National Institute of Education (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 43). The Department of Examinations is responsible for conducting public examinations. The Department of Educational Publications is responsible for the production and distribution of textbooks.

The National Institute of Education (NIE) is responsible for the development of the national curriculum, training of teachers and carrying out research on education (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 43). The NIE also prepares the teacher instructional manuals (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 32).

*The structure of the NIE is depicted in appendix 3.*

Pre –service teacher training is conducted at National Colleges of Education (NCoE) (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 15). The Diploma in Teaching conducted in NCoEs is for three years duration (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 30).

The Peace Education and Reconciliation Unit (PERU) unit was initially established as the Social Cohesion and Peace Education Unit (SCPEU) under the MoE (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 2). This unit is seeking to provide assistance and guidance to the education sector including coordination of peace education initiatives in schools (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 2).

The German Development Cooperation (GIZ) is a development partner of the education sector (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 48). The governments’ initiatives on education for social cohesion are supported by the GIZ (Ministry of Education, 2016a). Accordingly, the GIZ provides assistance since 2005 to peace and value education, language education, disaster safety education and psycho-social care (Ministry of Education, 2016a).

### **Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR)**

ONUR was set up under the Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation in 2015 (Office for National Unity and Reconciliation, 2017). ONUR is responsible for the promotion of national integration, reconciliation and durable peace in the country. In addition, it formulates programs

and projects to promote national unity to ensure a non-recurrence of the conflict (Office for National Unity and Reconciliation, 2017).

### **Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)**

This research covered two main NGOs, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement (Sarvodaya) and the National Peace Council.

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement was founded in 1958 with the vision of establishing a new social order influenced by the ethos of non-violence voiced by Ghandi and teachings of Buddha (Thodock, 2005, p. 2). The programs of Sarvodaya include peace building and conflict transformation, environmental protection, early childhood development, health and nutrition (Ariyaratne, 2010). Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena (Peace Brigade) since 1978 is dedicated to establish ethnic harmony and empower youth to serve the vision of the Sarvodaya (Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena Sansadaya, 2018). Accordingly, it conducts programs including youth leadership training, youth exchange camps and inter-religious harmony and coexistence (Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena Sansadaya, 2018). Sarvodaya works from the bottom up and all of its work originates in the villages and carried out by village people (Ariyaratne, 2010).

### **The National Peace Council (NPC)**

Established in 1995, the National Peace Council is an independent and non-partisan organization that works towards a negotiated political solution to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka Guardian, 2008). It has a vision of a peaceful and prosperous Sri Lanka in which the freedom, human rights and democratic rights of all the communities are respected (Sri Lanka Guardian, 2008).). The NPC conducts programs including social cohesion and reconciliation, religious harmony and transitional justice (National Peace Council, 2019). The NPC has established eight District Inter Religious Committees (DIRCs) in 2010 to address inter-religious and inter-ethnic problems (National Peace Council, 2019).



# Chapter 4: Methodology

## 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the progress of programs conducted to build social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka. Mainly the programs were conducted in the formal education sector, under the recommendations of the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (2008) are considered. In addition, some non-formal education programs conducted by NGOs to achieve objectives similar to the objectives of the National Policy are considered. The National Policy has suggested seven major areas to implement programs: (1) curriculum, (2) teacher education, (3) second national language, (4) whole school culture & community, (5) integration, (6) co-curriculum and (7) research. The non-formal education programs are considered under “integration” and “co-curriculum” categories due to their similarity with the formal education programs conducted under these categories (for e.g., student exchange programs).

The main research question answered is:

- What is the progress of the programs in building social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka?

The sub research questions to support the main research question are:

- What are the perceptions of research participants on social cohesion and peace?
- What are the programs implemented in building social cohesion and peace?
- What are the challenges in building social cohesion and peace?

This chapter discusses the **4.2 Research Design**, **4.3 Participant Sample**, **4.4 Data Collection Procedures**, **4.5 Research Location and Scope**, **4.6 Data Analysis**, and **4.7 Ethical Considerations and Limitations**.

## 4.2 Research Design

This research is mainly a qualitative research, as it required a detailed investigation about programs implemented to build social cohesion and peace and perceptions of research participants on these programs. According to Trochim (2005), qualitative research focuses on achieving deep

understanding about issues and developing detailed stories to describe a phenomenon. Qualitative research enables us to deepen our understanding on how things work. It is difficult to learn from a quantitative study how the phenomenon is understood and experienced by the respondents and how it interacts with other factors that affect their lives (Trochim, 2005).

This research alternated to elicit the perceptions of research participants and whether they are matching with the objectives of the National Policy (2008) assuming that their respective actions on social cohesion and peace are based on their perceptions. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2003), qualitative investigators think that they can get closer to the actors' perceptions through detailed interviewing and observations. They argue that quantitative researchers are seldom able to capture their subjects' perceptions, because the researchers have to rely on more remote, inferential empirical methods and materials. However, quantitative coding gives additional useful information and makes it possible to do analysis (Trochim, 2005). Moreover, quantitative research excels at summarizing large amount of data and reaching generalizations based on statistical estimations (Trochim, 2005).

Denzin & Lincoln (2003) say qualitative research does not belong to a single discipline. Qualitative researchers use statistics, tables, graphs and numbers. According to, Neuman, (2014), qualitative and quantitative research overlap a great deal despite some real differences between them. Trochim (2005) says even the simple act of categorizing can be viewed as a quantitative one. Mixing these approaches tends to differ in how and what stage of the research that qualitative and quantitative traditions apply (Trochim, 2005). This research also applied qualitative coding to summarize data and obtain frequencies and percentages.

### **4.3 Participant Sample**

Research participants are divided into two main groups: (A) State actors and (B) Practitioners. Under (A) State actors, policy makers, donors and resource persons are considered. Under (B) Practitioners: (a) Educators (teacher trainers, teachers and teacher trainees), (b) Formal students (secondary school students) and non-formal students (youth leaders) and (c) Non-government actors (NGO officials & religious leaders) are considered. These groups are described in detail below. Table 1 illustrates different groups of research participants and number of participants under each group.

Table 4.1.

*Research Participants*

<b>(A) State actors</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>	<b>(B) Practitioners</b>		<b>No. of participants</b>
(a) Policy makers	<b>15</b>	(a) Educators	Teacher trainers	<b>5</b>
(b) Donors			Teachers	<b>63</b>
(c) Resource persons			Teacher trainees	<b>139</b>
		(b) Learners	Formal students (secondary school)	<b>107</b>
			Non-formal students (youth leaders)	<b>47</b>
		(c) Non-government actors	NGO officials	<b>18</b>
			Religious leaders	<b>6</b>

**(A) State Actors**

State actors are mainly responsible in policy making. They also make and implement programs for social cohesion and peace under the recommendations of the National Policy 2008. The government institutions considered in this research are: Ministry of Education, National Institute of Education, National Colleges of Education and Office for National Unity and Reconciliation.

In addition, a donor agency GIZ<sup>14</sup> which operates under the Ministry of Education is also added to this study. Finally, resource persons who contribute to the programs organized by the above mentioned government institutions are also concerned. These resource persons were government employees who are on active duty or retired government officials.

## **(B) Practitioners**

Under practitioners, three groups are concerned: (a) Educators, (b) Learners and (c) Non-government actors. Under (a) Educators, teacher trainers who are operating under the NCoEs, teachers from five government schools and teacher trainees who represent three NCoEs in three provinces (Western, Northern and Eastern) are concerned.

Under (b) Learners, formal secondary school students selected from five government schools in three provinces (Western, Central and Northern) are concerned. In addition, non-formal students who attended programs conducted by the main NGO-“Sarvodaya” which I referred to in this research are considered. These non-formal students are trained by Sarvodaya as future leaders who can spread the message of peace to the society.

Finally under (c) Non-government actors, officials from two NGOs that implement social cohesion and peace programs are concerned. Two NGOs covered in this research-Sarvodaya and National Peace Council have formed inter-religious committees to build social cohesion and peace through religious leaders. Therefore, religious leaders are also added under (c) Non-government actors group. Religious leaders who are the active members of the Sarvodaya Inter-religious Committee represented four religions: Buddhist, Hindu, Islam and Christianity are concerned in this research.

## **4.4 Data Collection Procedures**

This section discusses different methods used in this research to collect data: interviews, questionnaires, observation and nonreactive research methods. Concerning the external validity<sup>15</sup>, five out of nine provinces of Sri Lanka are covered and a fair sample of research participants is taken from three main ethnic groups.

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<sup>14</sup> The German Development Cooperation (GIZ) supports social cohesion and peace education in Sri Lanka.

<sup>15</sup> The degree to which the conclusions in the research would hold for other persons in other places and at other times.

#### 4.4.1 Interviews

Personal interviews and group interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner. Personal interviews were conducted with policy makers, managerial level NGO officials, a teacher trainer, some teachers and religious leaders. Pointing out the advantages of face-to-face interviews Neuman (2014) says that, it has the highest response rates and permits the longest and most complex questionnaires. Group interviews were conducted with teacher trainers, teachers, youth leaders, NGO officials and religious leaders.

Snowball sampling was used to select participants for interviews. Snowball sampling, in which the researcher begins with one case and then, based on information about interrelationships from that case, identifies other cases and repeats the process (Neuman, 2014). In snowball sampling, informal social networks can be capitalized to identify specific respondents who are hard to locate (Trochim, 2005).



Figure 4.1. Nature of Interviews Conducted.

#### **4.4.2 Questionnaires**

Questionnaires were given to teachers, teacher trainees, formal students and non-formal students (youth leaders). Stratified random sampling<sup>16</sup> was used to select participants. Stratified random sampling divides the population into homogeneous subgroups and takes a simple random sample from each subgroup. According to Trochim (2005), this method assures representation of not only the overall population, but also key subgroups, especially small minority groups.

Both open-ended and close-ended questions were included in questionnaires. Open-ended questions were asked to know perceptions of participants on social cohesion and peace. According to Neuman, (2014), open-ended questions permit self-expression, richness of detail and an unlimited number of possible answers. It was important to know respondents' perceptions descriptively, assuming that perceptions are a self-evaluation undertaken by respondents that will help them to understand causes of their own actions to arrange future actions more reasonably (EURED Teacher Training Programme, 2002). Close-ended questions were included in questionnaires to know about experience and usefulness, implementation, success and limitations of social cohesion and peace programs. Pointing out advantages of close-ended questions Neuman (2014) says that it is easier and quicker for respondents to answer, the answers are easier to compare, answers are easier to code and statistically analyze and respondents are more likely to answer about sensitive topics.

#### **4.4.3 Observation**

This research referred a series of social cohesion and peace programs conducted under formal and non-formal education systems. These programs are Symposiums on Education for Social Cohesion, Sister Schools Program for Teacher Trainees, Leadership and Peace Development Program for youth, United Religious Initiative and a Mindfulness Program. These programs are explained in detail under “scope of the research.”

The method of observation was used for the programs where a large number of participants were present. Both direct observation which contacts with subjects of observation and remote

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<sup>16</sup> Stratified random sampling is a method of sampling that involves dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups and then taking a simple random sample in each subgroup.

observation which is done by recording data with photography and audiotape (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) were done. Accordingly, important speeches delivered by national and provincial level policy makers, donors, resource persons, educators, high ranking NGO officials and religious leaders were audiotaped. Videotapes of performances of formal and non-formal students were also taken. Also different events of these programs and exhibition of past works related to social cohesion and peace of the groups participated in these programs were photographed. Later, audiotapes, videotapes and photographs were referred and notes were taken for further analysis.

I was able to access through observation the provincial level policy makers, principals, teachers and students whom I couldn't access through interviews and questionnaires. In addition, I could observe through these programs the policy makers, teacher trainees and non-formal students whom I already covered through interviews and questionnaires. This fits with the idea of "triangulation" which Neuman, (2014) defines as looking at something from multiple points of view that improves accuracy.

#### **4.4.4 Nonreactive Research Methods**

In this research nonreactive methods: content analysis, and secondary data analysis were used in data collection. These methods are nonreactive as the study participants are not aware that information about them is part of a study (Neuman, 2014). Under content analysis, I examined the contents and information contained in written documents and other communication media (for e.g., photographs, posters, pictures, song lyrics & documentaries). Under secondary data analysis, previously collected and stored data for example, census and statistics collected by relevant government institutions were concerned.

Content analysis and secondary data analysis were done in two stages. First, I started content analysis and secondary data analysis before starting field work in Sri Lanka and next, while doing field work in Sri Lanka. Accordingly, government policies related to education, social cohesion and peace, and previous researches related to social cohesion and peace were referred to in Japan. The main document referred to is the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (ESCP) (2008). Interview questions and questionnaires were made based on this policy. After going to Sri Lanka, I could refer to the Review of the ESCP (2016) along with the other new documents and policies formulated in this field. This method was very important for me to collect data and get a preliminary understanding about how to arrange my research and fieldwork.

## 4.5 Research Location and Scope

### Research Location

Sri Lanka is divided into nine provinces. In this research, five out of nine provinces were concerned. Those are Western, Central, Uva, Northern and Eastern. There are two main reasons of selecting these provinces. First, relevant authorities have selected five provinces: Central, Uva, Northern, Eastern and Sabaragamuwa as most needed areas in implementing social cohesion and peace programs. Four out of five provinces: Central, Uva, Northern and Eastern were covered in this research. I could not access the Sabaragamuwa Province due to the limited timeframe. Remaining four provinces: Western, Southern, North Western and North Central are not especially focused as hotspots needed social cohesion and peace programs. However, I covered the Western Province out of the remaining four provinces with the aim of generalizing the final result to all provinces.

*Sri Lanka's map divided into nine-provinces can be viewed in the appendix 1.*

Table 4.2.

*Percentage of Distribution of Population by Ethnic Group in Provinces Covered*

Provinces	Ethnic Group			
	<i>Sinhala</i>	<i>Tamil</i>	<i>Sri Lanka Moor</i>	<i>Other</i>
Western Province	84.2	6.8	7.9	1.2
Central Province	66.0	23.8	9.9	0.3
Uva Province	80.8	14.7	4.3	0.3
Northern Province	3.0	93.8	3.1	0.1
Eastern Province	23.2	39.2	36.9	0.7

*Note:* Department of Census and Statistics (2012).



Table 4.3.

*Percentage of Distribution of Population by Religion in Provinces Covered*

Provinces	Religion				
	<i>Buddhist</i>	<i>Hindu</i>	<i>Islam</i>	<i>Roman Catholic</i>	<i>Other</i>
Western Province	<b>73.4</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>2.1</b>
Central Province	<b>65.0</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1.2</b>
Uva Province	<b>80.4</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>0.6</b>
Northern Province	<b>2.9</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>4.2</b>
Eastern Province	<b>23.0</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>37.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.3</b>

*Note:* Department of Census and Statistics (2012).

### **Research Scope**

This research concerned programs for social cohesion and peace conducted by the government institutions and private institutions. Under the government programs Symposiums on Education for Social Cohesion conducted in three provinces of Sri Lanka (Central, Uva and Northern) were covered. These Symposiums were an evaluation of social cohesion and peace programs conducted so far under the formal education system. I could observe the performance of school principals, teachers and students under four themes: school networks<sup>17</sup>, psycho-social care<sup>18</sup>, student

<sup>17</sup> School networks adjoin different ethnic, religious schools and conduct social cohesion and peace programs together.

<sup>18</sup> Psycho social care concerns about developing counselling facilities at schools to cover students in need.

parliament<sup>19</sup> and second national language<sup>20</sup>. Also I could listen to speeches made by policy makers, donors and resource persons and observe discussions conducted by these groups.

I could attend the Sister Schools Program for teacher trainees conducted in the Western Province. This program was conducted for five consecutive days with the participation of approximately 180 teacher trainees from three National Colleges of Education (NCoEs): Siyane NCoE (Western Province), Jaffna NCoE (Northern Province) and Addalachahenai NCoE (Eastern Province). These teacher trainees represented different ethnic groups: Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim and different religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. Questionnaires were given to all teacher trainees and their activities were observed during the workshop. 139 teacher trainees have fully completed questionnaires. Then, interviews were conducted with five teacher trainers (one group interview with four teacher trainers and one personal interview with a teacher trainer).

Finally under government programs, I could visit five schools in three provinces: Western, Central and Northern. Two schools selected in the Western province were Sinhala medium mixed schools. Two schools selected in the Northern Province were Tamil medium schools: one boys' school and one girls' school. The girls' school selected in the Central Province was a multi-ethnic and religious school having three mediums: Sinhala, Tamil and English. Snowball sampling was used in selecting these schools. Approval to access to these schools was taken from the Ministry of Education with the assistance of the Deputy Commissioner of Education and the head of the Peace Education and Reconciliation Unit (PERU) of the Ministry.

Questionnaires were given to a total of 125 secondary school students by selecting 25 students from each school. 107 students have fully completed questionnaires. 50 questionnaires were given to teachers. 10 teachers were selected from each school. Four group interviews were conducted with teachers and five personal interviews were conducted with a principal, a section head teacher and three teachers in these five schools. Totally 63 teachers were covered. All these teachers and students belonged to different ethnicities and religions.

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<sup>19</sup>Similar to the national parliament, student parliament conducts at schools to give children a practical training on citizenship education. Students are selected as representatives of the student parliament.

<sup>20</sup> Second National Language (2NL) is the language students learn at school other than the mother tongue. In Sri Lanka, for Sinhala students 2NL is Tamil. For Tamil students, 2NL is Sinhala.

Private programs were also concerned in this research. First, I could attend the Leadership and Peace Development Program that was conducted for three consecutive days in the Eastern Province by the NGO-Sarvodaya. Questionnaires were given to 47 youth leaders. A group interview was conducted with 10 youth leaders. Next, I observed an inter-religious meeting held with religious leaders and religious representatives and had a group interview with two religious leaders (Hindu and Islam) and a community representative (Islam). Another personal interview was conducted with an Islam religious leader at a mosque. All these interviews were conducted in the Eastern Province.

I visited a village in the Eastern Province which is having Sarvodaya programs. I had a group interview with 10 female representatives of Sarvodaya in this village. Subsequently, personal interviews were held with a community leader of Sarvodaya in the Eastern Province and an official from another NGO-Center for Non Violent Communication who served as a resource person to the Leadership and Peace Development Program of Sarvodaya. All other interviews with the NGO officials who represent Sarvodaya and the National Peace Council were held at their head offices in Colombo in the Western Province.

I also observed a program called United Religious Initiative (URI) which was held in the Western Province for two days. This program is held each year by Sarvodaya and its affiliated local and international organizations which are conducting programs to build inter-religious harmony. There, I interviewed two religious leaders (Buddhist and Roman Catholic) who are the representatives of Sarvodaya Inter-religious Committee.

Finally, I observed as a participant, the Mindfulness Program conducted at the Sarvodaya Center in the Western Province by the Peacebuilding Officer of the United Nations in Sri Lanka. Officials of Sarvodaya and some of other private peace organizations, youth leaders and community participants were present at this program. There I interviewed a youth volunteer in peacebuilding of the UN.

## 4.6 Data Analysis

Data was analyzed to see to what extent the objectives of the National Policy was achieved through the programs. Hierarchical modeling was used in data analysis to deliver more accurate conclusions. Trochim, (2005) defines hierarchical modeling as the incorporation of multiple units of analysis at different levels of a hierarchy within a single analytic model. For example, in this research, data was collected at different levels: learners, teachers, policy makers and program makers to evaluate the progress of related education programs.

Theory of change<sup>21</sup> was used to measure the impact of these programs on research participants. Theory of change articulates explicitly how a project or initiative is intended to achieve outcomes through actions, while taking into account its context (Laing & Todd, 2015). Accordingly, first, participants' perceptions are compared with the objectives of the National Policy to see to what extent participants have developed an understanding about the relevant pedagogy through programs, assuming that their perceptions will shape their future actions. Second, four levels of the Kirkpatrick Model<sup>22</sup> (James & Kayser, 2016) used in evaluating the change occurred through these programs.

*The Four Levels of the Kirkpatrick Model is presented below in Table 4.4.*

Finally, five evaluation criteria from the Development Assistance Committee of the Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC): relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability (OECD.org, n. d.) are used to evaluate the overall result.

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<sup>21</sup> Theory of change is a theory-based approach to planning, implementing or evaluating change at an individual, organizational or community level.

<sup>22</sup> Dr. Don Kirkpatrick created four levels: reaction, learning, behavior and results in the 1950s as the subject of his dissertation which is regarded as most-used training evaluation model.

Table 4.4.

*The Four Levels of the Kirkpatrick Model*

Level 1: Reaction	The degree to which participants find programs are favorable and relevant to them
Level 2: Learning	The degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in programs
Level 3: Behavior	The degree to which participants apply what they learned during programs to their lives
Level 4: Results	The degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the programs

*Note:* Adapted from the Kirkpatrick’s Four Levels of Training Evaluation (James & Kayser, 2016).

A large amount data of was collected from research participants about, (1) programs and the nature of their implementation, and (2) perceptions about these programs and related concepts. Data collected through interviews, questionnaires and observation was first recorded in Excel sheets. Separate Excel sheets were used for different groups of participants. Open ended questions were asked to know the perceptions of participants about social cohesion and peace concepts in which these programs are centered. When recording answers of the open ended questions, first a list of categories was developed. Subsequently, answers were classified under appropriate categories. Due to the large number of respondents, frequency of each category was calculated. The percentage of answers to the close-ended questions was also taken based on ethnicity and gender differences of participants. Next, the frequencies and percentages were evaluated to deliver conclusions.

## **4.7 Ethical Considerations and Limitations**

Consent letters were given to research participants and asked for their informed consent. Informed consent means that research participants must be fully informed about the procedures and risks involved in research and must give their consent to participate (Trochim, 2005). I guaranteed confidentiality, anonymity and privacy of research participants and not to release information acquired to anyone outside the research. Proper approval was received from the Ministry of Education to go to the schools. Approval was taken from heads of the government and private institutions prior to attending their programs.

The main limitation of this research was the language. As I speak the majority's language of Sri Lanka (Sinhala), it was very difficult for me to directly contact schools and persons who speak the minority language (Tamil). During interviews with other ethnic groups, some people (e.g., teachers) came forward to help me in interpretation. However, sometimes I was doubtful whether the correct meaning of questions and answers were exchanged via them, as these intermediaries did not have proper interpretation skills.

My pre-conceived mindset was a main barrier at the beginning when interacting with people belonging to other ethnic groups. When they openly said biased ideas about the majority which I belong to, it was hard for me to endure at the beginning. However, after a hard struggle of thoughts I could be neutralized to a position of a researcher. As it was the first time I was exposed to a large number of people from other ethnic groups and to some specific areas, I had little confidence to interact with them. I also faced only two hard occasions with a policy maker and a school principal who were suspicious of social cohesion concepts. They were reluctant to comply with this research at the beginning, but finally fully agreed to help after I convinced them.

Three months was not enough to cover many programs conducted. For example, I could not cover the Symposium on Education for Social Cohesion conducted in the Sabaragamuwa Province and the Inter-religious Program conducted in the Eastern province with the participation of a large number of religious leaders. However, a substantial amount of data was collected during three months to draw a fair result that can be generalized to the population of this research.

## Chapter 5: Perceptions of Research Participants on Social Cohesion and Peace

In Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, analysis of research findings are presented under four topics: (1) Perceptions, (2) Implementation of Programs, (3) Experience and Usefulness, and (4) Success and Challenges. Chapter 5 discusses (1) Perceptions of research participants on social cohesion and peace. Chapter 6 discusses (2) Implementation of Programs, (3) Experience and Usefulness, and (4) Success and Challenges. A discussion is presented at the end of each chapter to answer sub research questions. Chapter 5 answers sub research question “*What are the perceptions of research participants on social cohesion and peace?*” Chapter 6 answers sub research questions: “*What are the programs implemented in building social cohesion and peace?*” and “*What are the challenges in building social cohesion and peace?*”

Chapter 5 is discussed under four sections: **5.1 Participants’ Perceptions on Social Cohesion and Peace**, **5.2 Existence or Non-existence of Social Cohesion and Peace in Sri Lanka**, **5.3 Participants’ Willingness to Accept Others**, and **5.4 Discussion**.

Research participants are divided into two main groups: (A) State actors and (B) Practitioners. Under (A) State actors, policy makers, donors and resource persons are considered. Under (B) Practitioners: (a) Educators (teacher trainers, teachers, and teacher trainees), (b) Formal students (secondary school students) and non-formal students (youth leaders) and (c) Non-government actors (NGO officials and religious leaders) are considered.

When I mention about the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (ESCP) 2008 (Ministry of Education, 2008), sometimes I use it as the National Policy (2008) or National Policy in short form. Subsequently, the Review of the Sri Lankan National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace 2008 (Ministry of Education, 2016a) is mentioned as the Review of the ESCP (2016).

### 5.1 Participants’ Perceptions on Social Cohesion and Peace

The question “*What is social cohesion and peace?*” was asked to all research participants to know about their perceptions on social cohesion and peace. In line with the frequency, perceptions of

participants are coded under five categories<sup>23</sup>: 1. Togetherness, 2. Freedom, 3. Favorable environment, 4. Values, and 5. Communication. Perceptions of Research Participants in Table 5.1, presents number of participants fall under each perception categorized.

Next, the perceptions of participants are compared with the objectives of the National Policy (2008) and the Review of the ESCP (2016). It is presented in Table 5.2. Finally, research participants' perceptions which fall under five categories are explained in detail.

Table 5.1.

*Perceptions of Research Participants*

N U M B E R	Participants' Perceptions	T O T A L	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS																		
			<i>Govern ment</i>		<i>Teachers</i>			<i>Teacher Trainers</i>			<i>Teacher Trainees</i>			<i>NGOs</i>		<i>Youth</i>			<i>Religious Leaders</i>		
			S	T	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T	S	T	M	B / C	Hi	Is
1	Togetherness	177	13	2	8	3	1	2	2	1	26	26	41	10	10	4	19	3	2	1	3
2	Freedom	83	2	1	2	3	1	1	2		27	8	5	3	7	14	5		2		
3	Favorable environment	66	6		4	1	1	2	3	1	9	5	8	5	8		8		1	1	3
4	Values	61	8	2	5			3	1		7	7	8	5	4	1	2		3	2	2
5	Communication	40	6		3	3	1	1	1		3	4	4	2	8		3	1			

*Note.* S-Sinhala, T-Tamil, M-Muslim, B/C-Buddhist/ Christian, Hi-Hindu, Is-Islam

<sup>23</sup> I originally made 14 categories of research participants' perceptions on social cohesion and peace. Subsequently, I selected five categories which are the most frequently mentioned by research participants in their answers. Next, remaining nine categories were classified under these five categories. For example, peace related concepts: inner peace and negative peace were classified under the category "freedom."



Table 5.2.

*Comparison of Participants' Perceptions with National Policy Objectives*

No	Participants' Perceptions	Compatibility with Objectives of the National Policy	
		<i>The National Policy on ESCP (2008)</i>	<i>The Review of the ESCP (2016)</i>
1	Togetherness	Live in a multicultural society/ respect diversity	Inclusion of minorities/ a common identity
2	Freedom	Democratic citizen/ inner peace/ peaceful and sustainable lifestyle	Practical activities of democracy/ Achieve positive peace
3	Favorable environment	Transform conflict/ environmental friendly/ Participate in the development	Building resilience to manipulation and extremism/ vocational education
4	Values	Civic virtues/ Sri Lankan values/ humanity, respect, share, sacrifice	Common values across religions/ Equality and equity/ Recognition through history education and social cohesion and peace work
5	Communication	Communicate, understand, listen	Media education for critical analysis/ interaction

**1. Togetherness**

The most frequent answer of all groups of research participants to the question “*What is social cohesion and peace?*” is “**togetherness.**” Togetherness is expressed in different terms such as unity, oneness, a common Sri Lankan identity, harmony, social cohesion, social integration and reconciliation. A policy maker says, “*Working together by all ethnic groups will wipe away chronic prejudices among them.*” Proportionately more Muslim participants express this answer compared to Sinhala and Tamil participants. However, I observed in the Sister Schools Program for Teacher Trainees that Muslim teacher trainees, especially women had restrictions in joining certain activities. For example, Muslim women teacher trainees were left aside while Sinhala and

Tamil Teacher trainees enjoyed recreational activities mingling with each other without gender differences. A teacher trainer (Muslim) explained it as, “*We as teachers don’t like to put restrictions on our students to enjoy with others, but we will be in trouble if this information leaked to the church (Muslim religious leaders).*” This indicates that practical implementation of “togetherness” is impossible for some groups due to cultural and religious taboos. Ministry of Education (2016a) says that there seems an issue regarding the Muslim community’s role in the reconciliation process. Most of the reconciliation work reported in the field work seemed to center around Tamils getting to know Sinhalese and vice versa.

Most youth participants (teacher trainees and non-formal students) talk about the need of building “*oneness and a common Sri Lankan identity*” uniting all ethnic groups. Some participants expressed “togetherness” as “**divisionlessness.**” They express ethnic and religious divisions in addition to language, cultural, caste, and class divisions. A resource person, adds to this category “*politically made divisions.*” The National Policy (2008) recognizes “togetherness” in its policy objectives as, the desired citizen, who is a product of Education for Social Cohesion and Peace, is one who can live in a multicultural society, respects diversity and does not compete based on differences (Ministry of Education, 2008). Going beyond strengthening “individuality” in the National Policy (2008), the Review of the ESCP (2016) emphasizes the importance of inclusion of minorities and building a common identity focusing on “group solidarity” (Ministry of Education, 2016a).

## **2. Freedom**

Second, participants express social cohesion and peace as “**freedom.**” Under “freedom” participants also used words, “**happiness,**” “**inner peace,**” and “**negative peace**” to express their perceptions on social cohesion and peace. First, under “freedom” different types of human freedom and human rights are expressed. Most Sinhala express it as “*freedom of living*” and “*freedom of thought/expression,*” Tamil see it as “*freedom of movement*” and Muslim prefer “*freedom of religion.*” The National Policy (2008) assumes the need of creating a citizen who is democratic in decision-making, while the Review of the ESCP (2016) suggest practical activities such as “student parliament” for learners to be knowledgeable about democracy.

Some participants assume “freedom” as “**happiness**” indicating many desirable factors needed for living. Happiness is expressed by most Sinhala research participants. A teacher trainer (Sinhala) says, “*All people need to have money and freedom to live happily. So, there should be an economic stability in the country as well a fair legal system which equally treats all persons. If people are happy, there is social cohesion and peace.*” This answer indicates some favorable factors need to establish positive peace. The National Policy (2008) does not mention about “happiness” directly, but says that a desired citizen through education for social cohesion and peace should have a peaceful and sustainable lifestyle. The Review of the ESCP (2016) makes more advanced proposition mentioning about achieving “positive peace” going beyond the National Policy (Ministry of Education, 2016a)..

Mostly Sinhala and a few Tamil participants, including state actors who are the policy and program makers of social cohesion and peace, as well as Buddhist and Roman Catholic religious leaders emphasize “freedom” as building “**inner peace.**” The National Policy (2008) in its objectives has given much importance in “building a citizen who has discovered inner peace.” “Inner peace” resemble “intra-personal peace” which has mentioned by Webel (2007) in line with “inter-personal peace” and “outer peace.” It was apparent in field observations that many government and private programs focus on building inner peace. For example, the Sister Schools Program for teacher trainees and the Leadership and Peace Development Program for youth leaders consisted of many events focused on building inner peace. The Mindfulness Program conducted by the NGO-Sarvodaya solely focused on building inner peace.

Some participants answered to the question “*What is social cohesion and peace?*” in negative sense (“**negative peace**”). For example, some Tamil teacher trainees say, “*There is no peace*” or “*Peace cannot be realized.*” A teacher (Sinhala) says, “*Social cohesion and peace is not there as all privileges are given to minorities while depriving the rights of the majority.*”

### **3. Favorable Environment**

Third, research participants mention “**favorable environment**” in the country as social cohesion and peace. Under this, they point out natural environment and economic and socio-political condition in the country favorable for citizens. “Favorable Environment” is discussed as a separate category in this thesis as participants put forward a large number of environmental, economic and

socio-political problems, although this category has a resemblance with “positive and negative peace” concerned under (2) Freedom.

Under “favorable environment” participants point out a wide array of present environmental problems and long-continuing social, economic and political problems including root causes of the internal war (1983-2009) of Sri Lanka. Accordingly, participants point out ethnic/ religious/ language problems, drugs, violence, post-war fear groups, corruption, competition and distortion of media and so on. Presenting these problems, participants highlight social cohesion and peace as an environment free from such problems. A teacher trainee (Tamil) says, *“If we can live in a clean environment without any disturbance, and without economic problems, political interference and social issues such as drugs and fear groups, it is the peace and it leads to social cohesion.”*

Teachers, teacher trainees and religious leaders especially mention about the importance of **“environment (peace).”** The National Policy (2008) in its objectives recognizes these facts as creating a citizen through education for social cohesion and peace who can transform conflict and who is environmentally friendly (Ministry of Education, 2008). The Review of the ESCP (2016) focuses on setting a favorable environment by building resilience to manipulation and extremism (Ministry of Education, 2016a).

Some participants emphasize the importance of **“(economic) development”** for a favorable environment. A policy maker (Sinhala) emphasizes, *“Social cohesion and peace cannot be established in Sri Lanka only through awareness programs like in the Western countries, but by economic development.”* Hence, the National Policy (2008) and the Review of the ESCP (2016) focus on providing vocational education at school to create a citizen who can participate in the development.

#### **4. Values**

Fourth, participants emphasize existence of good **“values”** as social cohesion and peace. In general they present a wide range of values including humanity, love, kindness, respect others, selflessness, sacrifice, sharing and trust. Some participants point out **“equality,” “attitudes,”** and **“recognition”** as good values of a society favorable for everyone. More Sinhala participants talk about **“equality.”** Some policy makers point out *“gender equality”* which is given higher priority

in policies related to social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka. Muslims talk about “*religious equality*” and “*equal opportunities*” while Tamils stress “*equal rights.*”

The National Policy (2008) affirms it as producing a citizen who obeys the law and has qualities beyond the rules and regulations, respects and ensures others’ rights, has civic virtues and is willing to sacrifice (Ministry of Education, 2008). It further emphasizes that a citizen should protect Sri Lankan traditions, culture and values.” The Review of the ESCP (2016) suggests to teach common values across religions (Ministry of Education, 2016a).

Although state actors, teacher trainers and NGOs talk about “**attitudes,**” relevant policies have not given a separate place for it in their objectives. Next, only a few Tamil NGO officials and a religious leader (Tamil-Hindu) stress “**recognition.**” An NGO officials (Tamil) say, “*We as minorities feel second-class citizens, we need recognition.*” On the other hand, participants (educators and students) at the Symposiums on Education for Social Cohesion demand a recognition for their work on social cohesion and peace. Accordingly, the Review of the ESCP (2016) put stress on recognition of minorities through history education and recognition of education for social cohesion and peace related work at school and provincial level.

## **5. Communication**

Finally, some participants, mainly Tamils think of social cohesion and peace as “**communication.**” Participants express it in different terms: interaction, understanding, respect others’ ideas and solve problems through discussion.

Inability to communicate in each other’s language is regarded as one of the root causes that kindle flames for internal war in Sri Lanka. A policy maker (Sinhala) says, “*In 1956 making Sinhala the only national language was a root cause of war.*” However, a provincial level policy maker (Sinhala) says, “*Trust cannot be built only through discussion (knowing each other’s language), social cohesion is an art of living, so we should introduce more (classroom) activities to promote it among children.*” Developing communication skills among children is one of the main area focused by the National Policy (2008) in building social cohesion and peace. Accordingly, many programs are being implemented to improve second national language skills of teachers and learners in the formal education system. Programs are also being conducted under the non-formal

education system to improve language skills in youth with the aim of developing inter-ethnic dialogue.

The National Policy (2008) recognizes this as creating a citizen who communicates well, in each other's language & an active listener (Ministry of Education, 2008). The Review of the ESCP (2016) shows the importance of media education for critical analysis to not to be bullied by distorted media messages (Ministry of Education, 2016a).

## **5.2 Existence or Non-existence of Social Cohesion and Peace in Sri Lanka**

The question “*Do people in Sri Lanka live in cohesion and peace?*” was asked of research participants fall under (B) Practitioners category (teachers, teacher trainers, teacher trainees, formal and non-formal students, NGO officials, and religious leaders). This question was asked in two parts. First, an open ended question was asked using dichotomous response format (yes/no) about social cohesion and peace status in Sri Lanka, based on real life experiences of participants. Subsequently, participants were asked to explain their answers descriptively. Participants' descriptive answers are divided as positive answers (yes) and negative answers (no) under five categories used in the previous section: (1) Togetherness, (2) Freedom, (3) Favorable environment, (4) Values, and (5) Communication. Table 5.3 presents participants' perceptions whether social cohesion and peace exist in Sri Lanka.

Table 5.3.

*Perceptions of Participants on Social Cohesion and Peace in Sri Lanka*

No	Participants' Perceptions	Total	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS							
			Sinhala		Tamil		Muslim		Total	
			Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Togetherness	81	28	15	10	12	12	4	50	31
2	Freedom	99	39	8	24	8	19	1	82	17
3	Favorable environment	96	6	25	2	42	1	20	9	87
4	Values	34	9	6	2	13	3	1	14	20
5	Communication	14	3	4	1	2	2	2	6	8
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>163</b>

*Note:* The same order of participants' perceptions mentioned in Table 5.1 and Table 5.2 are used in the Table 5.3 as it is easier to compare these three tables.

Little more than half of participants agreed that there is social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka. When it comes to the real situation in Sri Lanka “**freedom**” comes in first place as most participants (Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim) agree that there is “freedom” or “some kind of peace (negative peace)” in Sri Lanka. Participants from all three ethnic groups believe that different forms of freedom and human rights can be seen especially “after the end of the war.” A Teacher trainee (Sinhala) says, “*All are living happily after the end of vicious war.*” Another teacher trainee (Tamil) says, “*We are happy as now all people can visit all places in the country without any disturbance.*” A Teacher trainee (Muslim) says, “*People live happily without being aroused by religious extremists.*”

These statements show an interconnectedness and compatibility with perceptions of participants about social cohesion and peace pointed out in Table 5.1. For example, under “freedom,” more Sinhala think social cohesion and peace as *“freedom of living,”* Tamil think as *“freedom of movement,”* and Muslims think as *“religious freedom.”* This indicates that the present condition of “freedom” has a resemblance with their desired notions about “freedom.”

On the other hand, very few participants talked about “freedom” in a negative sense. A teacher trainee (Tamil) says, *“There is no independence for women, after 6PM women can’t go out.”* Sinhala-Buddhist and Sinhala-Roman Catholic religious leaders say, *“Now there is no peace in the hearts of people”* indicating inner peace.

Most Sinhala and Muslim talk about **“togetherness”** positively while more Tamils say “no togetherness.” A teacher (Sinhala) says, *“People in Sri Lanka get together disregarding differences to help each other and be empathetic, especially in disaster situations like flood.”* A teacher trainee (Muslim) says, *“All people live in unity, only two or three problems occur occasionally due to bad activities of bad people.”* A teacher (Sinhala) says, *“We (Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim) fought together against British colonists to get independence.”*

Contrarily, an NGO officer (Tamil) says, *“Tamil and Sinhala people have wounds in their minds due to war and segregation. Therefore, first minds should be cured to make them together.”* Next, different kinds of divisions such as ethnic, religious, language and class divisions are pointed out by participants to depict negative side of “togetherness.” A youth leader (Tamil) says, *“There is no cooperation as Sri Lankans, no administrative and political unity, division by ethnicity as Tamil North and Sinhala South is a challenge for social cohesion and peace.”* Two female NGO officers (Sinhala and Tamil) say, *“We experience hierarchical divisions (boss and subordinate) and sexism in our work place although it is an institution for building social cohesion and peace.”*

The highest number of participants from all three ethnic groups mention in the negative sense (No) about **“favorable environment.”** Even participants who think that there is social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka and answered positively (Yes) pointed out certain problems under this category. They express social, economic and political problems that hinder social cohesion and peace process. An NGO officer (Tamil) says, *“Problems among ethnic groups are less. But, there is no law & order in our area, there are para military groups, robbery and drugs, military doesn’t take necessary actions. It might create ethnic problems. There are even many problems in intra-Tamil*



*society, such as caste problems. Politicians try to stimulate Tamils against Sinhala people.”* A teacher trainee (Muslim) says, *“Some Sinhala extremist groups think that Sri Lanka should be a whole Sinhala country removing the Muslim minority.”* Some Sinhala participants showed the distress towards current social cohesion and peace building process. A teacher (Sinhala) says, *“They are (authorities) trying to build social cohesion by suppressing the Sinhala majority, special privileges are given only to minorities.”*

Most participants think politicians and their short-sighted agendas are a main hindrance for social cohesion and peace. An NGO officer (Sinhala) says, *“Only a few people have power in their hands, we are like puppets.”* A teacher trainer (Tamil) says, how external factors can affect “favorable environment” in Sri Lanka as, *“Economically we are weak and depend on other countries, foreigners interfere in our local affairs, and even World Bank changes our curriculum according to their wishes. We have very good local concepts such as building peace in family. So, we should strengthen such good things to make all say ‘we are Sri Lankan’ without hesitation.”*

Next, participants talk about the existence and non-existence of “**values,**” such as empathy, kindness, sharing, equality and sacrifice. Among Sinhala and Tamil participants who talk about values, more Tamils complain about the non-existence of values in the country while Sinhala participants keep their hope on developing values we had in the past or values still existing. A Teacher Trainer (Sinhala) & a religious leader (Buddhist) say, *“We had good values in the past and we were sharing things with others in the past.”* A Teacher trainee (Muslim) says, *“There is equality in religion, no domination by other religions.”* An NGO officer (Sinhala) says, *“Our people still have good values, we have to develop that.”* Some participants express negativity as decaying values in students and bad attitudes of people. A Teacher trainee (Tamil) says, *“All people are being affected due to problems made by some selfish people.”* Another teacher trainee (Tamil) says, *“Tamils don’t have equal opportunities. First chance is given to the majority.”* An NGO officer (Tamil) says, *“Our (Tamil) history is not properly represented in history books, we don’t need a separate land, but recognition.”*

In this research, I could observe that still people are executing many good values which the National Policy (2008) mention as ‘Sri Lankan values,’ such as empathy, selflessness and kindness. Students who attended programs highly respected elders and teachers, other participants

of programs were also very careful not to hurt feelings of people from other ethnic groups. Every place I visited for this research, I felt “Sri Lankan hospitality” without any difference.

Finally, some participants pay attention to “**communication**” pointing out more on its negative side. Two teachers (Sinhala) work in a Tamil medium school as Sinhala language teachers pointed out their opinions as, *“We have learnt about social cohesion and peace in teacher training school, it is in the curriculum of teachers. But, we can’t teach what we learnt to these Tamil students as we can’t speak Tamil language fluently.”* *“There is no time to teach extra things like social cohesion in the limited time allocated for the subject. Language classes are overcrowded. There are no proper resources like multimedia to teach the language. But, Tamil students are enthusiastic to learn the Sinhala language.”*

This shows that although the National Policy (2008) suggests to teach social cohesion and peace through all subjects, especially language and religion subjects, practically there are constraints in doing so. A youth leader (Tamil) says, *“Social cohesion is difficult due to mismatch of ideas.”* Therefore, the National Policy (2008) has recognized not only the importance of “communication,” but also “understanding” and “listening.” A teacher (Muslim) says, *“There are no problems among people from different ethnicities, but distortion of media create problems among them.”* Thus, the Review of the ESCP (2016) emphasizes on media education for critical analysis and effective interaction (Ministry of Education, 2016a). An NGO officer (Tamil) says, *“We trained youth, NGO workers, teachers, government officers and women to transform conflict by non-violent communication. Now they are using these methods.”*

### **5.3 Participants’ Willingness to Accept Others**

The question *“Do you like to teach/learn good values in religions other than yours?”* was asked of teachers and learners (teachers, teacher trainees, formal and non-formal students) to know whether they are ready to accept “otherness,” as teachers and learners are the mainly focused groups in education for social cohesion and peace. Accepting “otherness” is assumed as building trust among different groups. As Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country, it is imperative to build trust among different groups in the process of building social cohesion and peace. The Review of the ESCP (2016) has shown the importance of teaching deep commonalities

in values across ethnic and religious groups, instead of highlighting differences in cultures or emphasizing only the surface, ritualistic aspects of religions and cultures (Ministry of Education, 2016a). At present, intra and inter-faith dialogues and programs are being conducted by different groups, including NGOs. These activities are aimed to enlighten learners about others' religions and to respect them to build religious harmony. It is important to know perceptions of teachers and learners whether they would like to teach and learn about good values in other religions, to see the feasibility of implementing these programs.

Answers show that more than 90% of participants would like to teach/learn good values of other religions (Table 5.4). In this research, participants of three main ethnic groups: Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim represented four religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity (Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic [other Christians]). Most Sinhala are Buddhists and Tamils are Hindus. There are some Sinhala and Tamils who are Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic (other Christians) by religion. Muslims are Islam by religion and a few Muslims said they have no religion. All Muslims say they would like to learn about other religions and very few Sinhala and Tamils say "no."

As most participants like to learn about other religions, it is worth getting to know the characteristics of participants who are unwilling to learn about other religions. Sinhala-Buddhist and Tamil-Hindu, representing all four groups (teachers, teacher trainees, formal and non-formal students) and Tamil-other Christians representing formal school student group say they don't like to learn values of other religions. Most of these participants who say "no" represent homogenous areas in the Western province and the Northern Province where predominantly one ethnic/religious group live. Only a negligible amount of participants who live in multicultural areas, for example, the East and the Central provinces say they don't like to learn good values of others' religions. Perceptions of participants about teaching/learning values of other religions are presented in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4.

*Perceptions of Participants about Teaching/Learning Values of Other Religions*

GROUP	TOTAL		ETHNICITY AND RELIGION															
			Sinhala						Tamil						Muslim			
			Buddhist		R.C		Non R.C		Hindu		R.C		Non R.C		Islam		No religion	
			Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
Teachers	43	7	20	6	1	-	-	-	17	1	2	-	1	-	2	-	-	-
Teacher trainees	124	6	43	3	-	-	2	-	31	3	1	-	3	-	41	-	3	-
Students	107	14	47	3	-	-	1	-	41	8	3	-	6	3	9	-	-	-
Youth	36	2	13	1	-	-	1	-	18	1	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>

Note. R.C- Roman Catholic, Non-R.C- non-Roman Catholic (other Christians)

## 5.4 Discussion

In this chapter, first participants' perceptions on social cohesion and peace were divided into five categories: (1) Togetherness, (2) Freedom, (3) Favorable environment, (4) Values, and (5) Communication and depicted in Table 5.1. Second, these perceptions were compared with the objectives of the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (2008) and the Review of the ESCP (2016) and it is presented in Table 5.2. Third, the perceptions of research participants on existence or non-existence of social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka were categorized under above five categories and depicted in Table 5.3.

The highest number of participants (177) expected social cohesion and peace to be "togetherness." However, only 50 participants say that there is "togetherness" in Sri Lanka. An NGO official (Sinhala) says, "We have to develop this existing social cohesion (togetherness) in people." Most government officials put forward togetherness in their perceptions as important, attuned to the

main objective of the National Policy (2008) “national integration and coexistence.” In addition, popularity of this answer among educators (teacher trainers, teachers, teacher trainees) reflects the success of introducing social cohesion related concepts in teachers’ curriculum. Most participants (82) say that they feel freedom after the end of three decades of war. Tamils say they feel “freedom of movement,” Muslims say they have “freedom of religion” and Sinhala say they feel “freedom of living.”

Most participants (87) say that there is no “favorable environment” in Sri Lanka, pointing out many political and socio-economic problems. Three common features could be seen in problems pointed out by participants: commonality to the Sri Lankan society, area specificity, and inter and intra ethnic/religion specificity. Comparatively less emphasis is given to educational problems. However, participants ignored the commonality in problems and thought that their respective ethnicity/religion suffer, but not others.

Perceptions of participants indicate the existence of “negative peace” in Sri Lanka and “positive peace” cannot be built unless existing social, economic and political problems can be solved. The National Policy emphasizes inculcating “common Sri Lankan values” and most participants agree that still there are values in people which can be developed, keeping hope for future. Some participants think that lack of communication among ethnic groups as a main cause for inter-ethnic misunderstanding. “Communication” is mostly expressed in negative terms by all three ethnic groups due to language divisions. Language is regarded as an important factor in integration process, and will be explained in detail in Chapter 6 under “second national language.”

However, perceptions of participants on social cohesion and peace match with the objectives of the National Policy (2008) and the recommendations made by the Review of the ESCP (2016) which are depicted in Table 5.2. In addition, almost all participants seem ready to accept “otherness.” It showed by their willingness to teach/learn good values of other religions as depicted in Table 5.4.

Matching of participants’ perceptions with the objectives of the National Policy (2008) indicates that they are ready to accept related programs. This shows the sustainability of programs conducted under the National Policy (2008). However, policy and program makers of the Ministry of Education and the Office for National Unity and Reconciliation say, “*We make programs to give each student an opportunity to meet peers from other ethnic groups.*” This indicates that programs

are still in the initial stage of “getting to know about each other” rather than “be together” stage. It also has constraints as there are certain cultural and religious restrictions for some groups in mingling with others, for example, Muslim students have some religious restrictions to join some activities as explained above under “togetherness.” Also the National Policy (2008) does not address directly some issues such as drug menace and competition that affect school children and youth in turn disturbing the implementation of social cohesion and peace.

The next chapter discusses (2) Implementation of Programs, (3) Experience and Usefulness, and (4) Success and Challenges.

## Chapter 6: Implementation of Programs for Social Cohesion and Peace

In the previous chapter, I discussed about the perceptions of research participants among the four categories of my findings. This chapter presents remaining three categories: Implementation of Programs, Experience and Usefulness, and Success and Challenges. Finally, a discussion is presented at the end of this chapter.

According to the sequence of this chapter, under **6.1 Implementation of Programs**, two types of programs: (A) Government Programs and (B) Private (NGOs) Programs are discussed. This section answers sub research question, “*What are the programs implemented in building social cohesion and peace?*” Under **6.2 Experience and Usefulness**, first I discuss about experiences research participants obtained through these programs. Second, I discuss how participants assume about the usefulness of these programs, and how they practically use what they learnt.

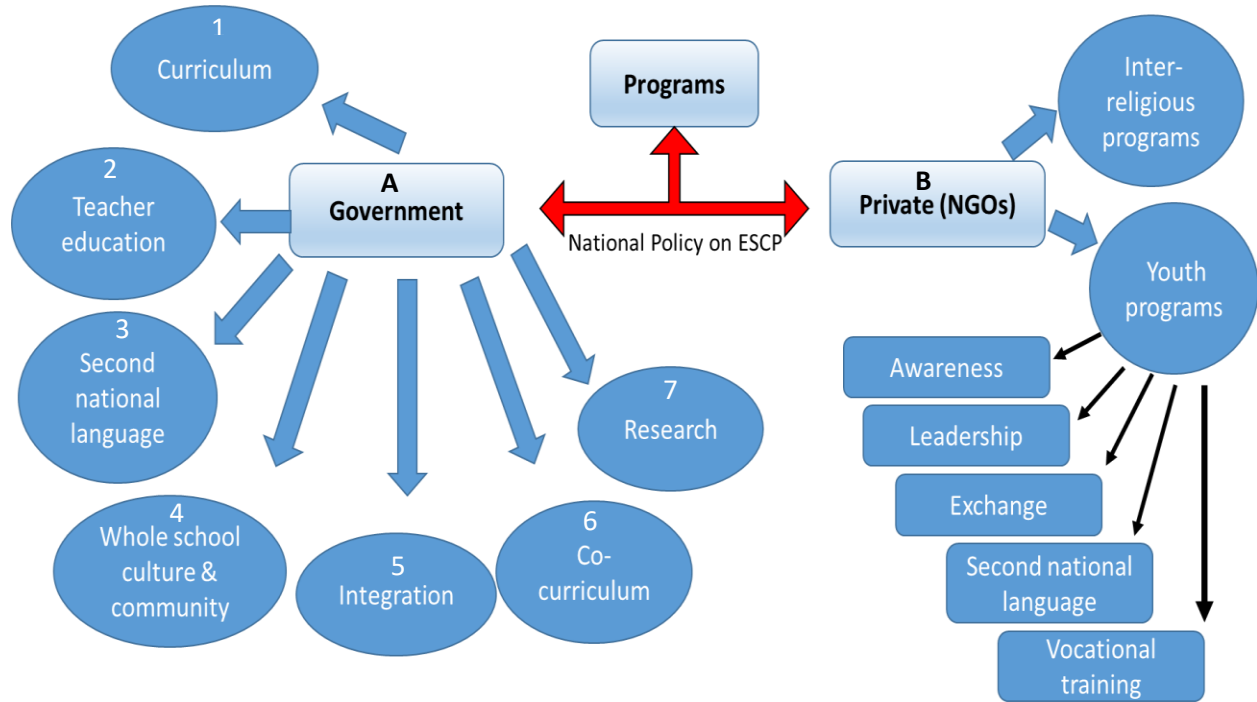
Under **6.3 Success and Challenges**, first I discuss overall success of these programs. Second, challenges in implementing these programs are presented. This section answers sub research question, “*What are the challenges in building social cohesion and peace?*” Under **6.4 Discussion**, a summary of the chapter is presented.

### 6.1 Implementation of Programs

**Sub Research Question Answered:**

*“What are the programs implemented in building social cohesion and peace?”*

This section discusses about social cohesion and peace programs covered in this research and the implementation process of these programs. Mainly there are two types of programs: (A) Government programs and (B) Private (NGOs) programs. Figure 6.1 shows programs conducted by the government and NGOs.



*Figure 6.1.* Programs Conducted under Government and Private (NGOs) Sector. Adapted from Ministry of Education (2008), and NGOs data obtained through interviews.

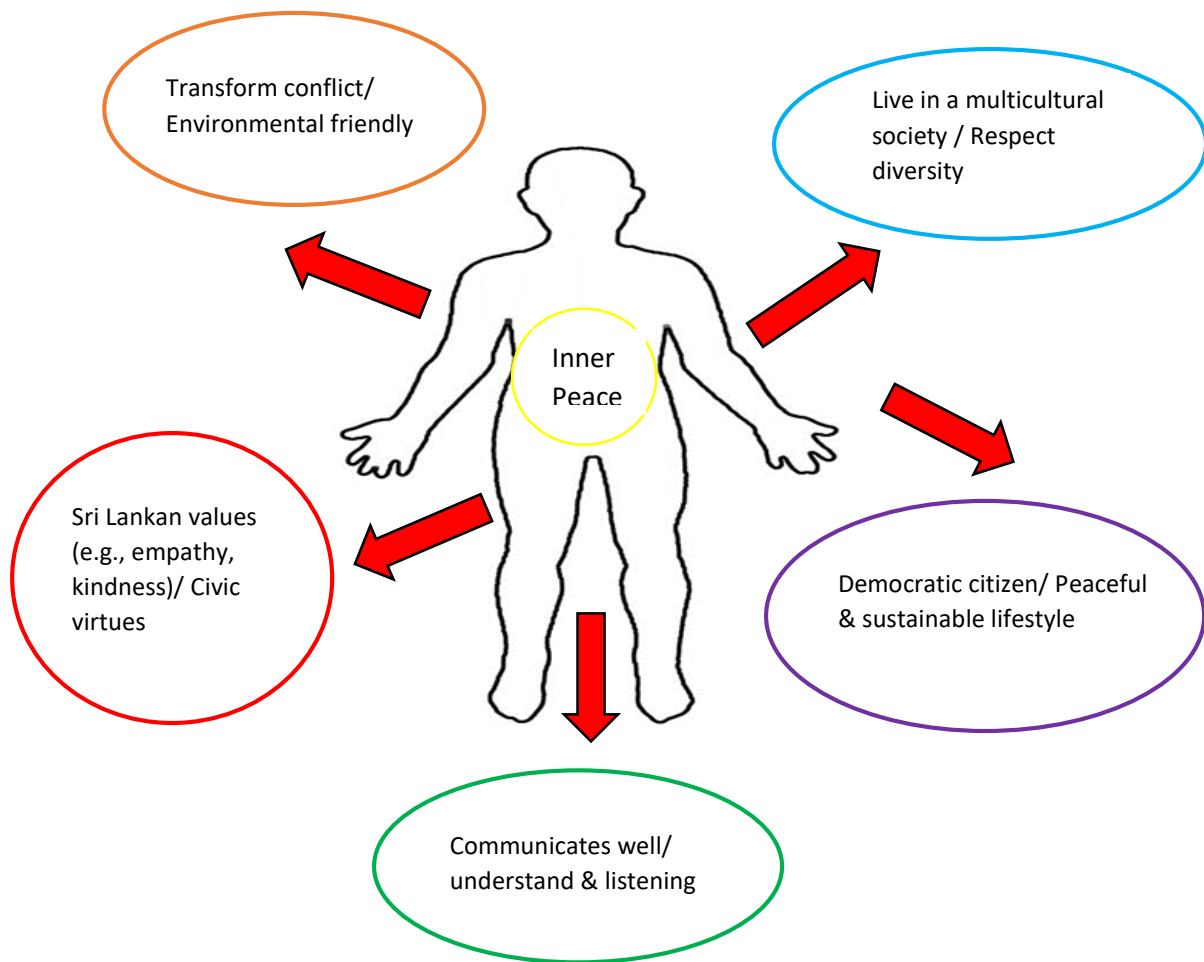
Government programs are conducted under seven categories suggested by the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (2008) and will be explained under (A) Government programs in detail.

The National Policy was formulated in 2008 with the aim of producing a citizen who has certain skills to build a peaceful and cohesive Sri Lanka. The skills the desired citizen should have through Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (ESCP) are depicted in figure 6.2 below. This research analyzed to what extent the objectives of the National Policy (2008) being achieved through these programs.

Then, private sector (NGOs) programs referred in this research were also analyzed under the objectives of the National Policy (2008) due to the similarity of these programs with the government programs conducted under “integration” and “co-curriculum” categories. According



to Ministry of Education (2016a), the National Policy had provided a backdrop for the activities of some INGOs or NGOs.



*Figure 6.2: The Skills the Desired Citizen should have through ESCP. Adapted from Ministry of Education (2008).*

## **(A) Government Programs**

This research mainly focused the government programs conducted under the recommendations of the National Policy (2008). This policy recognized seven areas to implement programs: curriculum, teacher education, second national language, whole school culture & community, integration, co-curriculum and research. Analysis of findings under each area is presented below.

### **1) Curriculum**

In 2007 a new curriculum was introduced for Life Competences and Citizenship Education (Grades 6-9) and Citizenship Education and Governance (Grades 10-11). This curriculum includes many peace related concepts, for example, multicultural society, conflict resolution, democracy and human rights, and interpersonal relationships. The National Policy suggests to reinforce the importance of education for social cohesion and peace existing in this new curriculum. The National Policy says that social cohesion and peace concepts should permeate the whole curriculum. A new curriculum or specific period on the timetable is not needed for social cohesion and peace education (Ministry of Education, 2008).

The Education Publication Department (EPD) of the MoE has its own program for promoting social cohesion and multi-ethnic understanding under two aspects. First, producing the second national language texts and ensuring that textbooks accommodate Sri Lanka's pluralistic society. A policy maker (Sinhala) says, *"We are highly concerned not to disturb social cohesion through publications. For example, there was an essay about a national hero and the writer has written it in a way that arouse patriotic feelings of Sinhala. So, I asked him to change it and re-write in a moderate way in which all communities can take good things from his character. We also think about gender balance and put names of men and women equally in textbooks. We deliberately include pictures and names of people of different ethnic groups, and stories that show how all worked together."*

Second, EPD concerns assessing sensitive issues in textbooks which may affect peaceful co-existence among students, ensuring that there is no discrimination or bias in the textbooks with regard to appearance, belief system, religion, race, gender, disability and family structure. A policy maker (Sinhala) said, *"We excluded killings and fighting of kings from history books, and only*

*included the names of kings, if students can get something good from their characters. Instead, we included ancient agriculture, medicine and cultures of different ethnic groups.”*

When I asked him the question raised by many Tamil participants in this research that their history is not properly represented in history books, the policy maker said, *“They are talking about Wannikings (provincial Tamil kings). We only included few important kings in textbooks, and main Tamil kings and kingdoms are there.”*

As I said earlier, the National Policy (2008) expects whole curriculum to permeate social cohesion and peace concepts. For example, language subjects can introduce critical media analysis, to ensure young people are able to analyze political messages not to be swayed by justifying violence (whether from terrorist groups or politicians). A policy maker (Sinhala) says, *“When we select stories for language textbooks we omit stories that violate human rights, social cohesion and other values. We include lessons on good values and practices. We also concern all groups in the society and produce special books for braille learners, and children with sight deficiencies.”* This indicates the use of multicultural concepts in text books as well as practically in education.

## **2) Teacher Education**

The National Policy (2008) proposed to develop curriculum, manuals and other materials for use in teacher training, to ensure that every teacher is exposed to the goals of education for social cohesion and peace, and can work to promote these concepts through their curriculum subjects and in classroom relationships (Ministry of Education, 2008). However, most participants of this research did not know about the National Policy. A provincial level policy maker (Sinhala) says, *“I have participated in many programs related to peace and social cohesion, but I have never heard about that policy.”*

Pre-service teacher education is being carried out at the NIE, NCoEs and in the Universities. This research focused on teacher education at NCoEs. The NIE carried out activities in peace education, conflict resolution, conflict transformation, and more recently, in life competencies, citizenship education and governance (Ministry of Education, 2008). The National Policy (2008) acknowledged that social cohesion concepts were in the curriculum for teacher education, but had doubts whether teacher educators were competent enough to impart this to the teacher trainees, with the result that it does not go to the child in the classroom (Ministry of Education, 2016a).

However, I observed that teacher trainers enthusiastically contribute their knowledge to teacher trainees in the Sister Schools Program, while gaining knowledge for themselves. In a group discussion and an interview, teacher trainers could explain clearly about social cohesion concepts, showing their knowledge about these concepts. A teacher trainer (Sinhala) says, *“Social cohesion is in the genes of all Sri Lankans, we learn good things from our religions. We need to brush it up through a systematic change.”* Another teacher trainer (Sinhala) says, *“A system should be made to give practical assessments on social cohesion to teacher trainees and marks should be added to their final reports, otherwise they will forget soon what they learnt.”*

The MoE also provided in-service training for teachers, for example, in highlighting existing peace concepts in textbooks (Ministry of Education, 2008). However, this research found that only 30% of in-service teachers have had training. Teachers’ manuals on social cohesion and peace concepts, such as that by UNESCO<sup>24</sup> have been developed and sent to schools in large quantities, but much work needs to be done to monitor and assess their implementation (Ministry of Education, 2008). A policy maker (Sinhala) of the NIE says, *“Social cohesion concepts added to the primary school curriculum. We made a teachers’ guide which has 16 themes such as gender equality, group work and social cohesion. Teachers have different educational levels and they rarely think and do things by themselves. Therefore, we included a chart at the end of the lessons mentioning competencies to achieve under each theme.”* This shows the inability of some in-service teachers of “creative and critical thinking” expected by the National Policy to have in teachers.

### **3) Second National Language (2NL)**

It is important for all Sri Lankans to learn a national language other than their own to live in a multi-ethnic multi-religious pluralistic society (Ministry of Education, 2008). The National Policy is aimed to strengthening the provision of 2NL, through the development of a clear policy on 2NL and the establishment of a specific National College of Education for 2NL teachers. The 13th Amendment to the Sri Lanka’s Constitution has made Sinhala and Tamil Official Languages and English as a linking language.

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<sup>24</sup> Learning the Way of Peace: A Teachers’ Guide to Peace Education by A.S. Balasooriya was referred in this research also.

“Second national language” was a main topic of discussion at the Symposiums on Education for Social Cohesion covered in this research. A provincial level policy maker (Sinhala) at a discussion with 2NL teachers in the Northern Province Symposium says, *“We have to initiate a mechanism to appoint 2NL teachers. We can concern in appointing school leavers as 2NL instructors, if they have passed examination with 2NL as a subject.”* 2NL teachers said that very few students take 2NL as a subject in the GCE (O/L) examination, as it is not a compulsory subject.

The EPD produces textbooks for 2NL. 2NL teachers at the Symposiums on Education for Social Cohesion (Uva, Central and Northern Provinces) presented innovative methods of teaching 2NL, focusing more on speaking rather than written grammar competence. A teacher (Tamil) says, *“New 2NL textbooks produced by EPD have included more dialogues to improve speaking skills and new books are easier to follow than previous textbooks. So, students are enthusiastic to learn.”* The statistics were shown at the Symposiums that there is a little increase in the number of students take 2NL for GCE (O/L) examination.

Only 36% participants of this research spoke a second national language and 64% did not. Second national language competency of Muslim, Sinhala and Tamil were 67%, 54% and 41% respectively.

English is recognized as a linking language, but according Ministry of Education (2016a), there is a shortage of qualified teachers. English language proficiency of participants of this research were 23%. 77% said they are poor at English. Next, English language proficiency of Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil were 28%, 24% and 16% respectively.

The Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (2011) has proposed trilingual education (Sinhala, Tamil and English) to build national integration in Sri Lanka. However, overall result of this research indicates that the government institutions have not reached the goals set for language education (2NL and English).

#### **4) Whole School Culture and Community**

The National Policy focuses on development of a school culture and ethos that fosters peace and respect for rights, in the school and the community (Ministry of Education, 2008). How curriculum and co-curriculum are delivered and received, taught and learned, depends relationships, values

and practices within the school as well as the school's relationship with the community. Schools selected for this research were non-pilot<sup>25</sup> schools in order to know how they practice social cohesion and peace concepts. Pilot schools are not selected as, a fair conclusion for all schools cannot be drawn through pilot schools as they are set up specially to promote social cohesion and peace.

97% of students in this research said that in school students live in harmony although they belong to different groups (class, cast, ethnicity and religion). One percent of students said that they have experiences being bullied at school. Among them were Sinhala and Tamil students studying in homogeneous schools having one medium of instruction. It seems that Sinhala and Tamil students are being bullied not by ethnic differences. Muslim students being bullied are studying at a multi-ethnic and religious school. A teacher (Sinhala) says, *"In our school there is a Tamil student studying in Sinhala medium. He won a national level competition. To take him to that place we tried hard without any discrimination by his ethnicity or religion, even spending our own money to make necessary documents for him. But, my daughter is studying in a university where the majority is Tamil. She is in university's karate team. The university didn't let this team to attend tournaments as Sinhala students are there. This team won at the national games, but the university doesn't appreciate it. That's how Tamil treat Sinhala students in their university."*

UNESCO (2015) mentions about a "hidden curriculum" in which students learn from the ethos of the school, from the ways in which they are treated, intentionally or unintentionally by their teachers and peers. A policy maker (Tamil) says, *"Some school principals don't like their teachers to carry out social cohesion activities at the school. They (principals) are not being enlightened about this concept. Therefore, programs should be implemented to teach school heads the importance of such concepts."*

The importance of peace school work with the community (e.g., parents, religious leaders and police) is emphasized in the National Policy (2008). A resource person (Sinhala) says, *"I ask my students in the university to do at least five social work projects. Students should inculcate good human feelings working with the community."* 88% of teacher trainees have engaged in social work projects. The Review of the ESCP (2016) says that community service and volunteering showed

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<sup>25</sup> All schools except 200 pilot schools made especially for implementing social cohesion and peace, are regarded as non-pilot schools in this research.

good potential for social cohesion work. Although no such social work assignments are promoted at formal school level at present, there is a possibility of introducing such assignments in the future using the knowledge of these teacher trainees.

## **5) Integration**

The National Policy suggests promotion of further integrated schools, and if not physically possible, more ways of linking schools to give every child a “peace experience” through exchange (Ministry of Education, 2008). The MoE, NIE and ONUR are conducting integration programs for students as well as teachers.

Most schools in Sri Lanka have one medium of instruction (Sinhala medium or Tamil medium-refer Table 3.1). Sinhala students study in Sinhala medium schools and Tamil and Muslim students study in Tamil medium schools. Tamil medium schools are segregated by ethnicity and there are separate schools for Tamil and Muslim students. However, there were very few Tamil and Muslim students study in Sinhala medium schools referred in this research. Schools are also divided according to religion such as Buddhist schools, Hindu schools, and Christian schools. Accordingly, school networks adjoining different ethnic and religious schools are promoted to carry out social cohesion activities.

In some provinces there are successful school networks adjoining Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim schools. There, the students together engage in many activities such as language learning and social cohesion work. At Symposiums on Education for Social Cohesion, I observed photos, work books and posters exhibited by these schools on their social cohesion work. A principal (Sinhala) at the Uva Province Symposium says, *“We borrow cricket equipment we don’t have from the Tamil school. We conduct sport tournaments mixing children from all ethnic groups and are very successful, and it avoids competition based on ethnicity.”*

Generally, co-curriculum activities are conducted by integrating different ethnic and religious schools to promote intercultural understanding.

## 6) Co-curriculum

Co-curricular activities are aimed to promoting intercultural understanding and skills of living in a democratic society through events and dialogues (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Co-curricular activities remain the most popular of the social cohesion and peace initiatives, with a wealth of festivals, religious events, competitions, as well as student exchanges (Ministry of Education, 2016a). A policy maker (Sinhala) says, *“In practice, almost all schools are conducting peace and social cohesion programs. There are many programs for cultural integration. A government circular has issued and sent to all schools to celebrate all religious festivals at schools.”* He showed me a video of a student exchange program and said *“We bring maximum 220 students to the camp and conduct the program for 7 days. One day each student take his/her friend, for example, Sinhala student take her Tamil friend, to her school and introduce to teachers and friends. Another day students’ parents come to the camp and students introduce the friend they made from another ethnic group to their parents. These programs are very successful. Problem is, we have to allocate a lot of money for these programs.”*

Then, student parliament program is conducted under co-curricular to give students practical knowledge of democracy. It is conducted similar to the national parliament appointing student representatives and they are asked to select an issue in the school or the community and find out solutions for it. I could observe demonstrations of student parliament by student representatives at the Symposiums on Education for Social Cohesion. A student representative (Sinhala) says, *“In the classroom students can’t get practical knowledge of citizenship education, but through student parliament I got to know how to practically apply many things which I learnt from the subject.”* Another student representative (Muslim) says, *“We found out many problems in the school, for example, shortages of some resources and found out solutions for them.”* A student representative (Tamil) says, *“I got the confidence in talking in front of large number of people. We also did many social cohesion work with other schools.”* However, not all schools are conducting student parliament program. Only 48% of students in this research have participated in the student parliament program.

Although co-curricular activities are very successful and the most popular of the social cohesion and peace initiatives, there are many constraints due to the lack of resources and coordination. A



resource person (Sinhala) says, *“Different social cohesion programs were conducted in the same day by two government institutions. Same people were invited to both programs and therefore, desired number of participants did not attend in each program. This is a wastage of resources and an overlapping of programs.”*

## **7) Research**

The National Policy (2008) has suggested the creation of a research network, to bring researchers in education for social cohesion and peace together. In document analysis, I found some research that done in this area. Monitoring and evaluation have also done for programs conducted by donors and private institutions. However, the Review of the ESCP (2016) reveals that research network to amalgamate related studies is yet to be established (Ministry of Education, 2016a).

### **(B) Private (NGOs) Programs**

Two types of private programs: youth programs and inter-religious programs referred in this research are explained in detail below. These programs conducted by NGOs covering non-formal students are similar to the programs conducted under “integration and co-curriculum” in formal education.

#### **1) Youth Programs**

Youth programs related to social cohesion and peace can be categorized under five topics: awareness, leadership building, exchange, second national language and vocational training. An NGO official (Sinhala) says, *“We conduct programs to develop existing peace and social cohesion to a better condition by changing the existing economy and political situation of the country. We enhance the strength of civilians, especially youth skills to take the leadership roles and change the society.”*

Both the government and private sector have recognized that mere awareness programs can’t build social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka, without satisfying economical and other needs of people. A head of an NGO (Sinhala) says, *“Economic problems can be regarded as a root cause of the conflict of Sri Lanka. No economic opportunities lead to violence.”* A government program maker (Sinhala) says, *“Sri Lanka’s main task is development. There are huge regional disparities. If*

*children don't have facilities in the classroom and no drinking water at school, no use of doing exchange programs."*

92% of youth leaders participated in the Leadership and Peace Development Program said that this program is useful for them. A youth leader (Tamil) says, *"I could improve my skills to talk to people about peace and unity as a youth leader, and be ambitious as a youth leader to make the society free from violence."* Another NGO officer (Sinhala) says, *"Government alone can't teach peace. It should be the responsibility of NGOs, and other private and government institutions."* Sometimes NGOs are working with the collaboration of the government in conducting programs for formal school students. A policy maker (Sinhala) says, that Save the Children Organization produced a book with human rights concepts and gave to the government to distribute in schools. I referred to this book in secondary data analysis process and found out that human rights concepts are presented in children's stories in an intriguing manner.

On the other hand, some government institutions also conduct youth and community awareness programs. Two government policy makers (Sinhala & Tamil) say, *"We (ONUR) do community awareness through films, street dramas and radio programs. For example, at the end of the drama, we conduct a discussion with participants to see how they have motivated. We also conducted a drawing competition under peace and social cohesion theme with the participation of 11000 children. Accordingly, 11000 children are compelled to think about peace and social cohesion and it is a success."* I could see the book compiled with selected pictures of this competition. It had interesting pictures about social cohesion concept. One picture shows that Sri Lanka is standing on four legs. These four legs represent Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim and other ethnicities. If one leg is broken, Sri Lanka will not be able to stand up. This indicates that social cohesion concepts have smoothly implanted in the minds of students.

## **2) Inter-religious programs**

This research referred to the inter-religious programs conducted by NGOs to make social cohesion and peace. First, intra-faith dialogue takes place to heal the minds and then go for inter faith dialogue. Workshops are conducted for young religious leaders to teach about other religions. An NGO official (Sinhala) says, *"After attending programs religious leaders say that they had wrong*

*opinions about other religions. They even personally change and say, we will teach what we learnt to the society.”*

Two NGOs referred to in this research have inter-religious committees. An NGO official (Sinhala) says, *“There are inter-religious committees in 16 districts regarded as hotspots that religious disputes can occur. There are religious leaders and civil society members in these committees and they are educated on peace related concepts, such as transitional justice and conflict resolution. Sometimes, a problem happen in an area may spread to other areas and can be a national problem. In such situations, they effectively intervene the community and do early warning to minimize the effect. Best practices were brought to the National Summit and three summits were held so far.”*

After a religious unrest occurred between Buddhists and Islamists, separate talks with religious leaders of both groups have been conducted by another NGO. Buddhist monks have given a set of problems they had with the Islam community for example, why Islamic groups don't get connected with the common Sri Lankan culture. An NGO official who worked as a mediator said Muslim priests are discussing how they can change accordingly, and ready to discuss with Buddhist monks about some things they can't change due to their religion.

An Islam (Muslim) religious leader who is a member of an inter-religious committee says, *“Different ethnic, religious groups live in my area. There are no problems among them, there is no drug menace in this area, and even cigarettes are not available in shops. We conduct social cohesion programs such as cleaning temples and mosques with the collaboration of different religious leaders and youth. So we can build good relationships.”*

## **6.2 Experience and Usefulness**

As this research is aimed at evaluating the progress of programs conducted for social cohesion and peace, it is important to know to what extent participants of this research have had relevant experiences through these programs. Next, whether these participants think these programs are useful and practically use what they learnt. These facts are important for policy and program makers to implement policies and programs. Therefore, this section discuss experience and usefulness of programs from the point of view of research participants fall under practitioners'

category (teacher trainers, teachers, and teacher trainees, formal and non-formal students, and religious leaders).

Citizenship education is regarded as one of the main areas that should be used to promote social cohesion and peace concepts. Therefore, it is important to know how teachers and formal school students accept and practice citizenship education.

96% of formal school students in this research have learnt citizenship education. As student parliament is being conducted to give students a practical knowledge about citizenship education, a question was asked to know whether these students have participated in the student parliament program. Only 48% of students said they have participated in the student parliament program. This indicates that students have had less practical knowledge on citizenship education. However, in the demonstrations of student parliament at the Symposiums on Education for Social Cohesion, I could observe student representatives from different schools skillfully demonstrating their roles (for example, as the speaker of the parliament, minister of social cohesion and minister of education). They presented projects they did, such as school gardening, school sanitation and making peace slogans and fixing boards in all three languages at school with the collaboration of all students. A resource person (Sinhala) says, *“The student parliament program is continuing since 2007, the problem is that not all schools are practicing it.”*

92% of all students agreed that citizenship education were useful for their lives, and they were able to give clear answers about what they can add to their lives through citizenship education. A student (Sinhala) says, *“I learnt to live in harmony with others, and treat all ethnic and religion groups equally.”* Another student (Tamil) says, *“I learnt to be a good citizen, be patriotic and find fair solutions to problems.”* A student (Muslim) says, *“I learnt to live without religious conflicts and to think all religions are good.”* According to the Civic Education in Sri Lanka – 2017 National Research Report, students’ content knowledge has increased, but their interpretive skills have decreased in 2017, compared with the same research done in 2003 (National Education Research and Evaluation Center, 2017).

Next, when it comes to general experiences needed to live in society, 94% of students said they have learnt and practiced methods of controlling anger and building inner peace. Next, they said how they practically implement what they have learnt. Accordingly, 92% of students said that they

mediate in problem solving and conflict transformation among their friends and other people they know. A student (Sinhala) says, *“I will solve a problem based on fair evidence, discussing with both conflicting parties, hearing their ideas without taking a side.”* 70% of students said, if their friends engage in illegal activities such as drug addiction and terrorism, they would like to advise them and help them get away from such illegal activities. Only 10% said they will inform police or other authority about such people, while only 5% said they will get away from them. A student (Tamil) says, *“First, I will advise them not to do illegal things; if they don’t heed to me I will inform teachers or police.”*

93% of students said they are ready to help any person in trouble disregarding his/her ethnicity, religion or other differences. This indicates that children are having skills put forward by the National Policy (2008) such as problem solving (interpersonal and intrapersonal), non-violent conflict resolution & mediation, communication and interpersonal relationships using empathy and respect for others, behaving assertively, not aggressively nor passively and working democratically (Ministry of Education, 2008).

The ability showed above by students in solving problems indicates that students have had practical knowledge about social cohesion and peace concepts, although half of them have not attended the student parliament program. This improvement can be regarded as a result of attending other programs for social cohesion and peace. 71% of students in this research have attended other social cohesion and peace programs conducted by the school or other educational institution. When these students practice what they learnt through these programs back in their schools, it automatically disseminates to their peers and to the whole school culture. I could also observe at the Symposiums on Education for Social Cohesion, the exhibition of many works done by students of all ethnic groups together under “integration and co-curriculum” programs. Different social cohesion programs have conducted together mainly focusing on festival celebration. For example, pictures of Taipongal celebration (A Tamil festival) by a school network in the Uva Province: Sri Sumangala Maha Vidyalaya (Sinhala school), Newburg Tamil Maha Vidyalam (Tamil school) and Al Yaseen Muslim Vidyalaya (Muslim school).

It is also important to know how educators have obtained relevant experiences and assume about usefulness of programs for social cohesion and peace, as they are the group ultimately responsible in transmitting these concepts to students.

98% of teachers of this research agreed that teaching social cohesion and peace to students is useful. A teacher (Sinhala) says, *“We had good values in our society in olden days. At present there is a big competition in education and many chaos in the society, values in students decay due to this. We should teach students to be truthful to the society to change this system. Therefore, values teach through social cohesion and peace concepts should inculcate in the hearts of children.”*

92% of teachers would like to teach social cohesion and peace concepts through their subjects, although they teach different subjects that are not directly linked with social cohesion and peace. However, only 28% of in-service teachers have had training in social cohesion and peace.

Also I could find out success stories of some teachers who are continuing inter-cultural relations made through these programs. I below present a story of a teacher (Sinhala) in the Western Province about how he practice social cohesion.

*“I made friends with a Tamil teacher of the Northern Province through a teacher exchange program. We visited each other’s schools with our students. We are teaching two different subjects, so there are so many things we can learn from each other. He doesn’t speak Sinhala and I don’t speak Tamil properly. But, we exchange ideas using our limited vocabulary and some English words. Now he started learning Sinhala and send me letters in Sinhala. He came with his family to my house and stayed with us, we took them on a tour and our families got very close. When he is having some work in Colombo he comes to my house and stay overnight. One day he came with a friend, who was a former terrorist and stayed in my home. I treated them very well and we enjoyed singing songs at night. I had to go to the Northern Province for an educational purpose of my child. The person who was a former terrorist let me and my family stay in his home very comfortably and treated us very well. I don’t think language is a barrier for good human relationships. Now I am trying to introduce social cohesion concept to universities in the Northern Province (where majority is Tamil). Once I tried to do a social cohesion program in a university in the Northern Province. But, authorities of the University (Tamil) refused to give permission saying, ‘Our students (Tamil) are sensitive. So we can’t give permission to do such programs.’ But, I will not give up. I try my best to introduce social cohesion concept to the universities in Tamil areas who refuse social cohesion. Now I have so many Tamil friends in those areas to support me.”*

However, teachers face many difficulties even in their own schools in popularizing social cohesion and peace concepts. Some principals don't like their teachers to practice these concepts at school due to many reasons. A principal (Sinhala) at a Symposium on Education for Social Cohesion says, *"There is no need to deliberately conduct social cohesion programs, because people already live in cohesion. I think there is a hidden purpose of conducting these programs, and it is a bad political game."*

Another principle (Sinhala) at an interview says, *"Tamils can buy land any place in the country. Muslims also buy land in Sinhala areas and Sinhala people don't oppose Tamil or Muslim. So, they can nurture their culture anywhere. But, Sinhala people can't buy land in the Northern Province. Is that social cohesion? The government is trying to implement social cohesion at the expense of Sinhala people. If they implement social cohesion, it should be equal for everyone. If we teach social cohesion, even the remaining patriotic feelings of our students (Sinhala) will be vanished."* This shows that although the national institution make policies and propose programs, there are constraints in applying them at the local level. The Review of the ESCP (2016) mentions that most principals have not had training on social cohesion and peace concepts (Ministry of Education, 2016a).

The National Policy (2008) proposes to make teacher guides on social cohesion concepts and the Review of the ESCP (2016) mentions a shortage of books on social cohesion and peace concepts at school. However, in this research I could refer to several teacher guides especially produced to promote social cohesion concepts. For example, I could refer the UNESCO teachers' guide that have been developed and sent to schools in large quantities. I also referred the NIE teacher guide with social cohesion concepts and the book produced by Save the Children Organization on human rights concepts. A policy maker (Sinhala) said that both teachers and students can refer the NIE teacher guide and the Save the Children Organization's book. However, I found that only 40% of teachers in this research are using teacher guides. When I asked about UNESCO's teacher guide most of the teachers said, *"We have not even heard about that."* Most teachers were reluctant to say that they don't use teacher guides and refrained from answering that question.

The 1997 General Education Reforms with regard to pre-service and in-service programs for teachers emphasized human values, human rights, conflict resolution and national cohesion (Ministry of Education, 2008). Therefore, teachers who graduated after 1997 have a general

understanding about social cohesion and peace concepts, although they have certain problems in practically using them. A second national language teacher (Sinhala) says, *“I have learnt about social cohesion and peace. It was in our curriculum. But, teachers have to cover the syllabus during limited time given for the language subject. So, no time is there to teach social cohesion.”*

It is necessary to explore whether teachers graduated before introducing social cohesion concepts in 1997, are having preliminary knowledge on social cohesion concepts to impart them to students.

All teacher trainers (100%) covered in this research (at the Sister School Program for teacher trainees) have attended programs for social cohesion and peace and had training before. They could describe social cohesion concepts very well. Although they believe that these programs are useful, they point out certain problems about sustainability of programs. A teacher trainer (Sinhala) says, *“I have attended many programs conducted in my NCoE. When they (authorities) get funds they conduct programs and after that no review is done. But, the knowledge teacher trainees obtain should be updated again and again. Otherwise, they will forget soon what they learnt and will not use practically.”* Another teacher trainer (Tamil) says, *“Success of these programs depend on the attitude of the teacher trainees. They should implement what they learnt through these programs in their respective places. However, when these teacher trainees get permanent appointments they focus on earning money and thus, don’t allocate their extra time on teaching social cohesion. If authorities do follow ups, teachers will be motivated to continue these programs in their future schools.”*

Another teacher trainer (Sinhala) says, *“These programs are a good start in addressing problems based on ethnic, religious, caste and class differences among different groups. But, unless these programs go to teacher trainees’ curriculum practically, results will be minimal. For example, Sinhala teacher trainees should be sent to training colleges in Tamil and Muslim areas and vice versa. Then, they will actually build ability to live cohesively.”* This shows that unless the follow ups and practical implementation of social cohesion concepts in teacher trainee curriculum will be done, sustainability of these programs will be minimal. However, a policy and program maker (Sinhala) says, *“Our intention is to give all teacher trainees and students a chance to interact with peers from other ethnic groups. Therefore, if they make problems in the future with other ethnic groups they will think twice before harming them recalling good memories they had before with people from other ethnic groups.”*



It is also important to know to what extent teacher trainees have had experiences related to social cohesion and peace and how practically use their experiences. Although only 36% teacher trainees have participated in social cohesion programs prior to the Sister Schools Program, 88% of them have worked in social work projects. Most of them mentioned about traditional social work activities practiced in Sri Lanka since old times. A teacher trainee (Hindu) says, *“I have participated in Shramadana<sup>26</sup>, blood donation, and providing free tuition classes for students.”* Next, I observed at the Sister School Program conducted for five consecutive days that teacher trainees of similar ethnicities sit together at the beginning without talking to peers of other groups. However, they were divided into groups mixing all ethnic groups. Three teacher trainees belonged to three ethnic groups-Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim had to share the same room. After the second day teacher trainees were trying to speak each other’s languages and enthusiastically engaged in making their group the best. A policy and program maker (Sinhala) says, *“Teacher training schools are very strict and teacher trainees are highly controlled there. Even at the canteen female and male can’t sit together. We didn’t have such unnecessary disciplines before and those are introduced by British colonists. Therefore, I wanted to change this strict culture and let them do activities freely in this workshop. We encourage boys and girls to work together and they are not scolded for speaking loudly, because they need to get away from stress. Otherwise they will impose stressful disciplines on their future students.”*

97% of teacher trainees think that the social cohesion program they participated is useful. When I asked teacher trainees about the practical implementation about what they learnt, 91% of them said they will teach what they learnt to their future students. A teacher trainee (Tamil) says, *“I hope to do socialization programs in the future for my students. I make all of them involved and invite friends from other ethnic and religious groups to this program.”* Although most teacher trainees will work in the future as science, mathematics and technology teachers, 81% of them are willing to teach social cohesion and peace through their respective subjects. This shows the fulfilment of the National Policy objective of teaching social cohesion and peace through all subjects.

The National Policy (2008) emphasizes that teachers should possess the same skills as would be expected from a student, including, problem solving (interpersonal and intrapersonal), creative

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<sup>26</sup> Shramadana means providing one’s labor at free of charge to community works such as cleaning environment, making water wells and roads in villages.

thinking, critical thinking, non-violent conflict resolution and mediation (using counselling skills where appropriate), decision-making, protecting others' rights, communication and interpersonal relationships, using empathy and respect for others, behaving assertively, not aggressively nor passively and working democratically (Ministry of Education, 2008). In this research, I found that 71% of teacher trainees have learnt methods to control negative feelings and inner peace building activities. When it comes to the conflict resolution, 84% of them mediate in solving problems in the society. When consider about more complex situations, 92% of teacher trainees would like to intervene in changing illegal behavior, if they see it in their friends and people they know. These findings shows that teacher trainees possess to above mentioned skills accepted by the National Policy, giving the hope that they will transmit these skills to their future students.

The non-formal students (youth leaders) are a special group trained to work in the community to enlighten people on social cohesion and peace. 84% of youth leaders referred in this research have attended several social cohesion and peace programs prior to the Leadership and Peace Development Program. I observed that these youth leaders had significant knowledge about social cohesion and peace concepts. Some of them even clearly defined the difference between negative peace and positive peace. 92% of them assert the usefulness of the Leadership and Peace Development Program. A youth leader (Sinhala) says, *"I could develop my knowledge on how to be and work with different ethnic groups and how to solve problems and conflicts."* However, I observed in this program that these youth didn't mix with peers from other ethnic groups except at group work activities. The main reason was the language barrier. I observed that organizers and resource persons have also not focused on this matter. Instructions were given in English and a Tamil NGO officer interpreted to Tamil language. A basic explanation was done in Sinhala at a request made by Sinhala youth leaders. A youth leader (Sinhala) says, *"I don't understand what they are saying in English and Tamil. They should explain in Sinhala language as well, otherwise how do we go to the society and teach other people."* When I ask about practical knowledge and its implementation from youth leaders, 76% of them said they have learnt anger management techniques and inner peace techniques. 84% of them said they have been involved in problem solving. 92% of youth leaders are willing to interfere in hard matters such as mediate in conflict transformation and stopping illegal activities in the society. An NGO official (Sinhala) says, *"Youth leaders are encouraged to start projects in their areas. We monitor what they do and if*

*these projects are successful, we provide funds to continue such projects. Some youth leaders we trained before are now doing successful projects.”*

All religious leaders (100%) referred in this research have had training in social cohesion and peace. Two NGOs referred to in this research have created inter-religious committees covering many areas in Sri Lanka. For example, one NGO has inter-religious committees in 16 out of 25 districts in Sri Lanka. An NGO officer (Sinhala) says, *“People in Sri Lanka usually listen to what their religious leaders say. People also respect religious leaders of other religions. So, it is easier to enlighten the society through religious leaders. We ultimately hope to build religious harmony through religious leaders and they (religious leaders) are successfully doing it.”*

In a group discussion, religious leaders (Hindu and Islam) say, *“We have stopped many religious conflicts being spread wider.”* In an interview another religious leader (Buddhist) says, *“We could stop present conflict between Sinhala and Muslim by educating religious leaders through inter-religious programs.”*

### **6.3 Success and Challenges**

**Sub Research Question Answered:**

*“What are the challenges in building social cohesion and peace?”*

In this section, I present overall success of programs referred to in this research. Subsequently, I present challenges I found in this research in implementing social cohesion and peace programs. It is revealed that the government has been able to fulfil some recommendations made by the National Policy (2008).

First, the curriculum for students and teachers has changed including social cohesion concepts. The civic education and life competences secondary curriculum and the primary curriculum have been revised to include concepts relevant to cohesion (Ministry of Education, 2016a). As a result most school students in this research were able to clearly define social cohesion and peace concepts. Some activities such as student parliament have been introduced to give a practical knowledge to students on what they learnt through citizenship education. However, the student

parliament is not practiced by all schools, even schools which are practicing having certain issues. A student representative of a student parliament (Muslim) at a Symposium on Education for Social Cohesion says, *“It is very difficult to find time for the student parliament program. Therefore, we engage in related activities sometimes on weekends. It is also very difficult to get the help of teachers as they are busy in covering the syllabus.”* A policy maker (Sinhala) says, *“Main challenge for social cohesion and peace programs is the time. Teachers and students don’t have time to allocate for extra-curricular activities as they only focus on passing exams.”*

Then, biases in history books are being revised as suggested by the National Policy. A policy maker (Sinhala) says, *“All things regarded as discriminatory or an injustice against a certain group were excluded from history books. But some incidents such as Sinhala-Muslim conflict in 1915 was included with the vision that students learn from these incidents and refrain from doing such things in the future. Our ultimate aim is national integration.”* Revised history books show the root causes of ethnic conflict, but also how people lived together amicably in the past (Ministry of Education, 2016a). However, this message has not gone to the society and even educators properly, as many Tamil participants complained about misrepresentation of history books. A teacher (Tamil) says, *“Civics syllabus is 100% good, but history gives 50% of wrong information. For e.g., Kandalai dam was built by Kulakottam (a Tamil king). But, now they say, it was built by king Rajasingha the second (a Sinhala king).”* Although the changes are done, it is not successful unless the relevant parties (especially educators) are properly enlightened.

Measures have also been taken to depict Sri Lanka’s pluralistic society in textbooks. A policy maker says, *“We included stories in Sinhala language textbooks that how people belong to different religions go to worship some common places of worship such as Kataragama and Sri Pada in Sri Lanka.”* However, I was not given Tamil language textbooks by an officer at the Tamil language section of the EPD, saying that there are no such concepts in Tamil language textbooks. A resource person (Tamil) told me that social cohesion concepts are in the Tamil language textbooks. As mentioned earlier also, some Sinhala participants including educators complained that authorities are trying to implement social cohesion only at the expense of the Sinhala community. These problems indicate that there is no transparency and no awareness has done about these programs to all educators and the community.

2NL books have changed, making them easier to refer to and focusing more on spoken language. The teachers made presentations about innovative methods of teaching 2NL at the Symposiums on Education for Social Cohesion. However, 2NL is not taught at all schools due to the shortage of teachers. I observed that national and provincial level policy makers, resource persons and 2NL teachers who discussed at the Symposiums that there is a shortage of 2NL teachers which is difficult to fulfill. Ministry of Education (2016a) affirms it saying that, the problems of teacher shortage have remained since 2008, and achievement is patchy, therefore this shortage is unlikely to be met. I observed performances of students in their 2NL at these Symposiums. Their pronunciation skills were poor and it seemed that students just repeat the words remembered without actual speaking skills. A resource person (Sinhala) said, *“There is a little progress in 2NL, even in pilot schools<sup>27</sup> although they have 2NL teachers. Reason is that only reading and writing are focused due to exam oriented education. However, Tamil students learn and speak Sinhala language is better than Sinhala students learn and speak Tamil language.”*

Although, the National Policy proposes to develop a clear policy on 2NL and establishment of a specific National College of Education for 2NL teachers, these tasks have not being achieved by the time of this research in 2018. In some teacher training colleges there are no 2NL teachers having proper skills to teach. A teacher trainee (Sinhala) says, *“There is a Tamil language teacher in our college (NCoE). But, that teacher speaks only in Tamil and we don’t understand anything. So, students are sleeping during the class.”* Then, although the 2NL (Tamil) words are included in primary school textbooks, teachers don’t have the ability to teach. A policy maker (Sinhala) says, *“We included simple Tamil words such as greetings in Sinhala language textbooks in primary. But, the same primary class teacher teaches these Tamil words and these teachers don’t know how to pronounce words correctly as they don’t have Tamil language skills.”* A teacher trainer (Sinhala) says, *“My promotion was halted as I have not passed Tamil language exam. It is very funny to ask us to learn a new language at this age; language teaching should start at primary level.”* This shows that some educators are not willing to upgrade their knowledge, in turn hinder success of measures taken to promote the 2NL.

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<sup>27</sup> 200 pilot schools are set up mostly in formerly war affected areas in Sri Lanka with the assistance of the donor agency GIZ to promote education for social cohesion and peace.

Although it is expected by the National Policy (2008) that every teacher should be exposed to social cohesion goals and can work to promote through their subjects, only a few in-service teachers have had training on these concepts. Some in-service teachers showed less-enthusiasm and trust on these concepts. A teacher (Tamil) says, *“I have had war experience. So, I am not sure these things (social cohesion) will work well. People over 30 years of age having war experiences are suspicious about these things.”* However, the willingness of most teacher trainees (91%) to teach social cohesion and peace concepts they learnt through programs to their future students is a positive sign for the future.

Next, this research found that there is a conducive environment at schools to foster peace and ethos. 97% of students said that all students in their respective schools live in harmony. “Psycho social care” for students is regarded as an important component to make a peaceful school culture and thus, a main topic covered under social cohesion. I observed discussions held under “psycho social care” at the Symposiums on Education for Social Cohesion. There, teachers and provincial policy makers together discussed about new measures that can be introduced to enhance “psycho social care” at schools. They discussed about important things such as how to dispatch limited number of existing professional counsellors to schools in need. This research found that 88% of students have a teacher in their school whom they can discuss their personal problems. Therefore, such teachers can be trained as counsellors to solve some minor problems at school level and to direct difficult problems to professional counsellors, to fulfil the shortage.

70% of teachers agreed that there is a positive change in students of their respective schools after studying social cohesion and peace concepts. This is a good achievement as the whole school culture and the community they are involved in will be peaceful. In addition, the willingness of 70% of students to mediate in illegal activities done by peers, is an indication of their positive contribution to the school as well as the community. A policy maker (Sinhala) says, *“Elephant Pass railway station (in Northern Province where most Tamil live) was built by money donated by students of south (area predominately Sinhala live). It is a gift of love from students of south to north people.”* This indicates that there is an overall success in the proposal of the National Policy of making a peaceful school culture and spread that to the community.

Being most popular among social cohesion and peace programs, integration and co-curriculum programs have achieved many successes. The National Policy expects through integration to

guarantee every child a ‘peace experience’ such as an exchange, and to promote intercultural understanding through co-curricular activities. An officer (Sinhala) of the ONUR says, *“For three years we conducted 441 celebrations of festivals with the participation of 500,000 students of different ethnic-religious groups. They could get an understanding about others’ culture, rituals and interact with each other through these festivals. We hope to continue these programs to cover 50% of students.”*

85% of formal school students, 94% of youth leaders and 98% of teacher trainees in this research said they could make friends of other ethnic groups through exchange programs. A teacher trainee (Tamil) says, *“I attended this program reluctantly. I have not had interactions with Sinhala people before. Now I am very happy here, I could make Sinhala and Muslim friends. I will teach mathematics in the future, but I hope to teach my future students about the importance and beauty of harmony.”* A policy maker says, *“Student and teacher exchange programs are very successful, some relationships continue for a longtime. I met two families of two students-Sinhala and Tamil made friends at an exchange program, going on a tour.”* The programs dispersed to local levels show higher level of sustainability, for example, school networks made with different ethnic-religious schools conduct many programs together. A resource person (Sinhala) who was a consultant in main government educational institutions including MoE, NIE and the donor agency GIZ says, *“I have worked in the education field for several decades. There is a change in people to a certain extent. They live together. Some programs on social cohesion and peace are continuing for a longtime. The donor agency (GIZ) was supporting social cohesion and peace programs since 2005 and decided to stop their assistance in 2019, as they think that relevant government institutions can continue these programs by their own. Social cohesion programs have even added to the annual school programs list. Programs are also being continued at school level. So, there is a sustainability of programs amidst some challenges.”*

Ministry of Education (2016a) emphasizes the importance of strengthening decision making power at the local level. However, it is not possible in some places and in some situations. A teacher (Sinhala) and a teacher counsellor (Sinhala) say, *“We had to go through a hard procedure to get permission for a student exchange program. Some officials at zonal-level didn’t like to give permission to take Sinhala students to former war-affected areas bothering about the safety of Sinhala students as the Tamil school to go situated in a village dedicated before for families of*

*'Black tigers' (a specific unit under the LTTE)."* A resource person (Sinhala) says, *"Many programs for social cohesion and peace are conducted by the government and NGOs. But, there is no coordination of these programs even among government institutions. If all the programs are coordinated by one body, very good results can be obtained. So, the MoE is having the responsibility in coordination of government as well as NGO and INGO programs."*

In this research private (NGOs) programs are also referred to under integration and co-curriculum categories due to the similarity of programs and their objectives with the government programs under these categories. Successful results have been achieved through NGO programs as they have access to a wider community (youth, religious leaders and the community) with less regulations compared to the government institutions. An NGO official (Sinhala) says, *"We can't accept success quickly, but there is a difference when we compare the present condition with the period during the war. Youth and religious leaders who were extremists before have changed. Some Tamil boys who were to join the terrorist group changed their mind after attending our programs."* Another NGO official (Sinhala) added, *"We are continuing youth exchange programs since war period. Tamil youth stay with Sinhala families and vice versa. So, we could make a big difference in Tamil and Sinhala houses by changing their opinion about others."*

Talking about success of inter religious programs an NGO official (Sinhala) says, *"At the beginning they (religious leaders) didn't even sit together. We taught them "pluralism" as a subject and now they enthusiastically intervene in conflict resolution and transformation."* Indicating the sustainability of inter-religious programs, a religious leader (Islam) says, *"Now religious leaders are friends with each other and we get together in solving issues in the society without waiting relevant authorities ask us to do so. We continue programs even without funds."* This shows the success and the sustainability of inter-religious programs.

However there are many challenges in implementing NGO programs as well. An NGO official (Sinhala) says, *"Participation of people for these programs are less, because they don't get any remuneration. In the present economic world, people don't have time to spend without any payment. So we have to think about innovative methods to give this message to the community deviating away from traditional programs."* A head of an NGO (Sinhala) says, *"The main challenge for implementing social cohesion and peace is politics. Ethnicity and religion are used*



*by politicians to gain power. They want people to be divided by ethnicity and religion to nurture their party politics.”*

As discussed earlier, under research, no significant measures have been taken to achieve recommendations made by the National Policy (2008). A coordinating base for researches have not set up. And lack of monitoring and evaluation remains a challenge especially for government programs. However, evaluation and monitoring have done for some private (NGOs) programs conducted.

## **6.4 Discussion**

This chapter presented findings under three topics, “Implementation of Programs,” “Experience and Usefulness” and “Success and Challenges.”

Under “Implementation of Programs,” this research focused on the nature and implementation of programs for social cohesion and peace. It answered sub research question, “*What are the programs implemented in building social cohesion and peace?*” “Experience and Usefulness” explored to what extent participants have obtained experience and how they assume the usefulness of programs and apply learned experiences to their lives. “Success and Challenges” discovered overall success of programs conducted from 2008-2018 and challenges in program implementation. It answered sub research question “*What are the challenges in building social cohesion and peace?*” after scrutinizing all findings under above categories.

Under “**Implementation of Programs,**” this research found two types of programs for social cohesion and peace: government programs and private (NGOs) programs. Government programs centered around seven areas suggested by the National Policy (2008): curriculum, teacher education, second national language, whole school culture & community, integration, co-curriculum and research. The private (NGOs) programs are divided in this study to two main groups: youth programs and inter-religious programs. Youth programs are centered on five main areas: awareness, leadership building, exchange, second national language and vocational training. The government programs are conducted under formal school system and the private (NGOs) programs focus on non-formal education system including youth, religious leaders and the community. Private (NGOs) programs had a clear resemblance with government programs

conducted under “integration” and “co-curriculum.” Both government and private programs are aimed at building national integration through different spheres, mainly including education. A clear compatibility is found in these programs and their relevant objectives with the perceptions of participants presented in chapter 5.

Under “**Experience and Usefulness**,” this research found that most school students have learnt social cohesion and peace concepts through citizenship education. Some students have had practical experience through student parliament programs and a significant number of them have attended other social cohesion and peace programs. Therefore, students have values that the National Policy expects in them (e.g., conflict resolution, accepting diversity and inner peace). On the contrary, very few teachers have had relevant training and only less than half of teachers are using teacher guides although most of them are willing to teach social cohesion and peace to students. Teacher trainers in this research had practical knowledge on social cohesion concepts than teachers and they suggested innovative methods for future development of this area. Although few teacher trainees have had prior training on social cohesion and peace, most of them have worked in social work projects and showed many skills emphasized by the National Policy to have in teachers such as problem solving, creative and critical thinking. Also they are ready to teach their future students social cohesion and peace although their subjects. The youth leaders and religious leaders have had prior experience on social cohesion and peace and already engaged in community projects. Most of participants agreed with the usefulness of programs and are willing to practice these concepts in the future signaling a positive impact in the future.

Under “**Success and Challenges**” many success factors are found indicating overall success of programs conducted by the government and NGOs. There are many challenges in implementing these programs as well. First, curriculum for students and teachers have been revised adding social cohesion and peace concepts. Biases in history books has also been revised. Textbooks created in a way that represent Sri Lanka’s pluralistic society and 2NL books have changed focusing more on spoken language. Social cohesion concepts have added to the annual school events. School networks have created and social cohesion and peace programs are conducted adjoining different ethnic-religious schools. When considering private programs, most programs are conducted for a long period, even during the war such as youth exchange programs. Religious leaders are successfully engaged in conflict transformation and building religious harmony. Almost all formal

and non-formal students, teacher trainees have made friends from other ethnic groups. Some teachers have built longtime inter-cultural relationships through programs. These factors indicate that in overall, programs have made a significant impact on the research participants.

However, many organizational challenges are noted in this research. The exam oriented education system limits time that can be allocated for social cohesion and peace programs. Lack of coordination and monitoring of programs, segregated school system, lack of resources and lack of willingness to implement these programs at school level are other challenges found.

The next chapter answers the main research question “*What is the progress of the programs in building social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka?*” by presenting important findings under sub research questions. Evaluation methods used are presented to justify findings.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

The final chapter presents a summary of all research findings. First, all chapters 1-6, are briefly reviewed to justify research findings, Then, the main research question is answered based on research findings presented in chapter 5 and 6. Finally, this chapter presents limitations of this research, contribution to knowledge and recommendations.

Accordingly, Chapter 7 is presented under three sections: **7.1 A Review of the Research**, **7.2 Evaluation of the Research**, and **7.3 Limitations, Contribution to Knowledge and Recommendations**.

First, under **7.1 A Review of the Research**, all chapters of this thesis 1-6, are briefly reviewed. Under **7.2 Evaluation of the Research**, first research findings are presented under sub research questions and then, main research question is answered based on all research findings presented under sub research questions. Finally, under **7.3 Limitations, Contribution to Knowledge and Recommendations**, first limitations of this research are discussed. Second, new knowledge created based on the previous knowledge is presented. Finally, recommendations for further development of social cohesion and peace education is presented.

### **7.1 A Review of the Research**

This research was conducted to discover the progress of programs in building social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka. I was motivated to do this research due to direct and indirect war experiences I had being born and brought up in Sri Lanka, which had a 26 years long war.

Today many international organizations including the UN have emphasized the importance of peace education to achieve positive peace. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka has recognized the importance of education for social cohesion and peace to accommodate the pluralistic society of Sri Lanka. Therefore, the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace in 2008 was formulated to strengthen social cohesion and peace programs. In addition, private institutions such as NGOs are also conducting social cohesion and peace programs in Sri Lanka.

Although many programs are conducted, less research and monitoring have been done in this field and therefore, acceptability, effectiveness, sustainability and success of these programs are yet to be investigated. On this ground, this research will be important to the policy and program makers involved in this field to get a clear knowledge about the progress of programs conducted from 2008-2018.

With the intention to justify this research, theories regarded as relevant to the Sri Lankan context are presented. Consequently, the theoretical framework is presented under three topics: “concepts of peace and multiculturalism,” “evolution and role of peace and multicultural education,” and “implementation of peace and multicultural education.”

This research is mainly a qualitative research. Data was collected through interviews, questionnaires, observation and analyzing secondary data. Different stakeholders of education including, policy and program makers, donors, educators and formal and non-formal students of five provinces of Sri Lanka that belonged to different ethnic-religious groups were covered in this research.

Data was analyzed to see to what extent have the objectives of the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (2008) being achieved through these programs. Theory of change, four levels of Kirkpatrick Model: reaction, learning, behavior, results, and five OECD/DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability are used to evaluate the overall result (OECD.org, n. d.).

Research findings are presented under four topics: “perceptions,” “implementation of programs,” “experience and usefulness,” and “success and challenges.” As this chapter answers the main research question, research findings are discussed below under research questions.

## **7.2 Evaluation of the Research**

The main research question is answered in this section, based on research findings presented in chapter 5 and 6. Therefore, first, the important findings presented under sub research questions are discussed to support answering the main research question.

### **Main Research Question:**

*What is the progress of the programs in building social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka?*

### **Sub Research Questions:**

- *What are the perceptions of research participants on social cohesion and peace?*
- *What are the programs implemented in building social cohesion and peace?*
- *What are the challenges in building social cohesion and peace?*

### **What are the Perceptions of Research Participants on Social Cohesion and Peace?**

Participants of this research put forward a variety of perceptions on social cohesion and peace which fall under five categories: (1) Togetherness, (2) Freedom, (3) Favorable environment, (4) Values, and (5) Communication. Under these five categories participants covered all elements desired to build positive peace such as cohesion, a common identity, freedoms of speech, movement, live and religion as well as inner peace (intra-personal peace as mentioned in theory), an environment free from social, economic, political and environmental problems, no divisions based on ethnic, religious, class, caste, area differences, values such as equality and respect, intercultural communication and understanding.

Next, perceptions of participants were compared with the objectives of the National Policy (2008) and the suggestions of the Review of the ESCP (2016) and a clear compatibility was drawn. Participants' perceptions are regarded as a self-evaluation assuming that their respective actions on social cohesion and peace are based on their perceptions. Self -evaluation undertaken by persons will help them to better understand the causes for their own actions to arrange future actions more reasonably (The EURED Teacher Training Programme, 2002).

The National Policy (2008) has focused on producing a desirable individual who can live in a pluralistic society. The Review Report (2016) goes beyond focusing individual and proposes collective measures, including inclusion of all minorities for achieving positive peace. Participants also mentioned the importance of collective achievements for example, building "a common Sri

Lankan identity” rather than individual development. The participants covered additional elements of “inner peace,” “environmental peace,” and “recognition” that are not directly defined in the positive peace concept, which defines as absence of direct, structural and cultural violence. However, based on many philosophical, religious and cultural traditions Webel (2007) denotes positive peace as simultaneous presence of many desirable states of mind and society. Therefore, “inner peace” “environmental peace,” and “recognition” can added to the theory under “desirable states of mind and society.”

Next, participants mention about existence (yes) or non-existence (no) of these perceptions: (1) Togetherness, (2) Freedom, (3) Favorable environment, (4) Values, and (5) Communication in Sri Lanka. Participants agreed that there is some kind of peace in Sri Lanka (the way an NGO official described negative peace) such as “freedom to live,” “freedom of movement,” and “freedom of religion” especially after the end of war in 2009. However, most of the participants said there is a little togetherness, favorable environment, values, and inter-cultural communication in Sri Lanka. They justify their answers talking about intra and inter community divisions based on ethnicity, religion, caste and class, social issues like drug addiction and para-military groups, no economic opportunities and equality and lack of understanding among people. This denotes the existence of negative peace in Sri Lanka. Participants didn’t mention “educational problems” at large affirming the possibility of using education as a means to promote social cohesion and peace. The Review of the ESCP (2016) has emphasized the importance of vocational education, inclusion of all minorities and recognition that have not covered in the National Policy.

91% of participants in this research agreed to accept “otherness” by showing their willingness to learn good values in other religions. Participants’ perceptions are matching with the National Policy objectives. This indicates that “**reaction**,” the degree to which participants find programs are favorable and relevant to them, is in a higher level (“Reaction” is first level of the Four Levels of the Kirkpatrick Model-Table 4.4).

### **What are the Programs Implemented in Building Social Cohesion and Peace?”**

This research found two types of programs for social cohesion and peace: government programs and private (NGOs) programs. Government programs are conducted under seven major areas: curriculum, teacher education, second national language (2NL), whole school culture &

community, integration, co-curriculum and research. Programs implemented under each area are as follows. Under **curriculum**; add social cohesion and peace concepts in students and teachers' curriculum, change biases in history books against certain groups, under **teacher education**; enhance pre-service and in-service teacher training to ensure all teachers are exposed to social cohesion and peace goals, and develop teacher guides, under **second national language**; programs to popularize 2NL among teachers and students, under **whole school culture & community**; create a school culture and ethos that fosters peace and respect for rights in the school and the community, under **integration and co-curriculum categories**; integration programs including celebrate festivals together, school exchanges and school networks adjoining different ethnic and religious schools, and student parliament to give students practical knowledge on citizenship education. No measure has been taken under **research** as proposed by the National Policy.

The private (NGOs) programs can be divided in to two groups: youth programs and inter-religious programs. **Youth programs** are divided as awareness, leadership building, exchange, second national language and vocational training programs. Under **inter-religious programs**; intra-faith dialogue and inter-faith dialogue are promoted and given religious leaders training on concepts such as pluralism, social cohesion and peace with the aim of deploying them in community awareness and conflict resolution. The government programs are conducted for formal school students and the private (NGOs) programs focus non-formal students including youth, religious leaders and the community.

According to OEDC/DAC evaluation criteria, the “**relevance**” is the extent to which the programs and their design respond to beneficiaries (OECD.org, n. d.). The programs described above show a higher “relevancy” with national policy objectives and participants' perceptions (refer Table 5.2).

### **What are the Challenges in Building Social Cohesion and Peace?**

“Experience and usefulness” and “success and challenges” are concerned to finalize an answer to this sub research question.

“Experience and usefulness” concern to what extent participants have had experience on social cohesion and peace and how they assume usefulness of programs and use practically in their lives.



“Success and challenges” concern the overall success of these programs and challenges in their implementation.

When considering “**experience and usefulness**” most school students (96%) have learnt social cohesion and peace concepts through citizenship education and think it useful (92%). Then, most students had the knowledge on values a good citizen should have according to the National Policy. Only a few students have had experience in student parliament (48%) to get practical knowledge about citizenship education. However, students engaged in student parliament program have done successful projects such as, solving problems at school (e.g., sanitation programs) and community (e.g., drug awareness programs).

71% of students have attended other social cohesion and peace programs. Therefore, they had the knowledge in practical implementation of anger management and inner peace building (94%), conflict resolution (92%) and are ready to help others (93%) disregarding differences. 70% of students are ready to interfere in hard matters such as helping peers engaged in illegal activities like using drugs. According to the national survey conducted in 2017 on civic education, students’ content knowledge has increased, but their interpretive skills have decreased compared with the same research done in 2003. However, I argue that practical skills of students in implementing what they learned through citizenship education have increased based on above findings.

Most of the teachers (98%) think that teaching social cohesion and peace to students is useful, and are willing to teach through their subjects (92%). However, only few in-service teachers have had training (28%) and necessary skills. Some in-service teachers showed less enthusiasm and less trust in these concepts, and a few of them (40%) were using teacher guides. However, teachers are successfully continuing intercultural communication through the connections they made in student exchange and teacher exchange programs. A success story is presented in chapter 6. All teacher trainers (100%) referred in this research have had training on social cohesion and peace, but none of them had proper 2NL skills. One out of five teacher trainers interviewed was conducting social cohesion related programs at NCoEs and the universities. Although most of teacher trainees (36%) have not had prior training on social cohesion and peace, many of them (88%) have worked in social work projects.

Most of the teacher trainees (97%) think that the social cohesion program they participated in all useful. 91% of them are willing to teach what they learnt to their future students. Although most

teacher trainees of this research are future mathematics, science and technology teachers, 81% of them said they can teach social cohesion and peace through their respective subjects. This shows the fulfilment of the National Policy (2008) objective of teaching social cohesion and peace through all subjects. When it comes to practical implementation, 71% of teacher trainees have learnt methods to control negative feelings and inner peace building techniques, 84% of them mediate in solving problems in the society and 92% would like to interfere in more complex problems of the society including terrorism.

The National Policy (2008) emphasize that teachers should possess the same skills as would be expected from a student, including problem solving (interpersonal and intrapersonal), creative thinking, critical thinking, non-violent conflict resolution and mediation (using counselling skills where appropriate), decision-making, protecting others' rights, communication and interpersonal relationships, using empathy and respect for others, behaving assertively, not aggressively nor passively and working democratically. I presented through research findings above that students and teacher trainees have these skills to a desirable level.

84% of non-formal students (youth leaders) have attended several social cohesion and peace programs and 92% of them assert the usefulness of programs. 76% of them have learnt anger management and inner peace building techniques, 84% of them are already involved in problem solving and 92% of youth leaders are willing to interfere in hard matters such as mediate in conflict transformation and stopping illegal activities in the society. In addition, all religious leaders (100%) referred to in this research have had training on social cohesion and peace. Two NGOs referred to in this research have created inter-religious committees covering many areas of Sri Lanka, for example, one NGO has inter-religious committees in 16 out of 25 districts in Sri Lanka. Youth leaders and religious leaders are already engaged in building social cohesion and peace in the society.

When considering about **“learning”** the degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in programs and **“behavior”** which indicates the degree to which participants apply what they learned during programs to their lives (“Learning” and “Behavior” are second and third levels of the Four Levels of the Kirkpatrick Model-Table 4.4), the following conclusions are made.

Most students, teacher trainees, teacher trainers, youth leaders and religious leaders have acquired the knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in programs and apply or are willing to apply what they learned during programs. However, most of teachers don't have the necessary knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment due to low participation in programs. Government actors and NGO officials were highly confident and committed about their work.

Therefore, there is a higher “**effectiveness**” of programs except in the case of teachers. The OEDC/DAC evaluation criteria defines “effectiveness” as the extent to which the objectives are achieved (“OECD.org,” n. d.).

Under “**success and challenges**” overall success of programs and challenges in implementation are considered.

It is found that some of the recommendations made by the National Policy (2008) have been achieved. First, the curriculum for students and teachers has changed including social cohesion concepts. The civic education and life competences secondary curriculum and the primary curriculum had been revised to include concepts relevant to cohesion. Student parliament is regarded as a venue to promote students' decision making, participation of women in decision-making, gender equality and democratic values promoting the concept “multiculturalism.” However, the student parliament is not practiced by all schools, even schools which are practicing have certain issues such as limited time and lack of teachers to support. Next, biases in history books against certain groups have been revised and include representation of minorities in history textbooks. However, this message has not gone to the society and the educators properly, as many Tamil participants complained about biases in history books. Measures have also been taken to depict Sri Lanka's pluralistic society in textbooks. In addition, special attention has been given to produce textbooks for braille learners and students with sight deficiency going towards more multicultural level. An officer (Tamil) said such concepts are not in Tamil language textbooks. However, a resource person (Tamil) said that social cohesion concepts are in the Tamil language textbooks. The Review of the ESCP (2016) presents a narration of a Tamil teacher, “*Some of the poetry in Tamil was 'racist', and it was hard for a Tamil teacher to teach that to Sinhala students. Yet it was compulsory to teach it, as it was in the textbook.*” This indicates that biases in Tamil textbooks have not changed yet.

2NL books have changed, making them easier to refer to and focusing more on spoken language. I observed teachers presenting innovative methods for teaching 2NL. However, 2NL is not taught at all schools due to the shortage of teachers and this shortage is unlikely to be met. Performances of students in their 2NL showed that pronunciation skills are poor and students were reciting the words remembered without actual speaking skills. Neither clear policy on 2NL nor a specific National College of Education for 2NL teachers have been established. In some teacher training colleges there is no 2NL teachers having proper skills to teach. Simple Tamil words such as greetings have been included in primary textbooks, but primary teachers do not have Tamil language skills to teach. Only 36% participants of this research spoke a 2NL. 2NL competency of Muslim, Sinhala and Tamil were 67%, 54% and 41% respectively. Although English is recognized as a linking language, and trilingual education is proposed to build national integration in Sri Lanka, there is a shortage of qualified teachers. English language competency of participants of this research were 23% and for of Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil it was 28%, 24% and 16% respectively. In overall it indicates that the government institutions alone can't reach the goals set for language education (2NL and English).

This research also discovered that there is a favorable environment at schools to foster peace and ethos. 97% of students said that all students in their respective schools live in harmony. Only 1% have had bullying experience at school. "Psycho-social care" is regarded as a main component under social cohesion to make a peaceful school culture and community. This research found that 88% of students have a teacher in their school they can talk personal matters with. Therefore, such teachers at schools can be trained as counsellors to fulfil the shortage of counsellors. Next, 70% of teachers agreed that there is a positive change in students of their respective schools after studying social cohesion and peace concepts. Social cohesion concept has added to the annual school events list is a sign of sustainability.

Integration and co-curriculum programs have achieved many successes. The ONUR has conducted 441 festival celebrations with the participation of 500,000 students for three years and hope to continue these programs to cover 50% of students. 85% of formal school students, 94% of youth leaders and 98% of teacher trainees in this research said they could make friends of other ethnic groups through programs attended. This indicates success of efforts in achieving the objective to guarantee every child a 'peace experience' to promote intercultural understanding through co-

curricular activities. And the objective of making every teacher exposed to social cohesion and peace.

Private (NGOs) programs have achieved successful results as they have access to a wider community (youth, religious leaders and the community), for example, Tamil youths after attending programs have stopped their decision to join terrorist groups, religious leaders have successfully interfered in stopping or minimizing conflicts in the society. Inter-religious programs are being conducted even without funds, marking the sustainability. However, political interference, less community participation due to “no payment” and lack of funds are regarded as issues.

It is found that no coordination among the institutions involved in conducting programs sometimes caused overlapping of programs. It is also difficult for teachers to get permission to implement programs at school or arrange inter-school activities due to lack of consent from principals and sometimes zonal officers. Suggestions made by the National policy (2008) to establish coordination mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation and a research network have been revised in the Review of the ESCP (2016). However, again none of these measures have been implemented by 2018 at the time of this research. Finally, the National Policy (2008) is a self-contained policy and was never fully implemented.

“**Results**” indicates the degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the programs (“Results” is the fourth level of the Four Levels of the Kirkpatrick Model-Table 4.4). Accordingly, the conclusions below can be made.

Programs suggested in the National Policy (2008) under curriculum, whole school culture & community, integration and co-curriculum have achieved their targets to a certain extent. 2NL and teacher education do not show targeted outcomes. Measures suggested under research have not been implemented. However, private (NGOs) programs have achieved targeted outcomes to a great extent.

### **What is the Progress of the Programs in Building Social Cohesion and Peace in Sri Lanka?**

Perceptions of participants are matching with the objectives of the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (2008). Participants’ perceptions are regarded as a self-evaluation

assuming that their respective actions on social cohesion and peace are based on their perceptions. Accordingly, matching of participants' perceptions with the National Policy objectives and their willingness to accept "otherness" indicate that participants are ready to accept programs implemented to achieve objectives of the National Policy. This indicates that "**reaction**" the degree to which participants find programs are favorable and relevant to them is in a higher level. When considering about, "relevance," the extent to which the programs and their design respond to beneficiaries, the government and private programs referred to in this research show a higher "**relevancy**" with the National Policy objectives and participants' perceptions.

"**Learning**" is the degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in program and "**behavior**" indicates the degree to which participants apply what they learned during programs to their lives. Accordingly, the following conclusions are made based on "learning" and "behavior."

Most students, teacher trainees, teacher trainers, youth leaders and religious leaders have acquired the skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in programs and apply or are willing to apply what they learned during programs. However, most of the teachers referred to in this research didn't have intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment and their participation in programs was low. Government actors and NGO officials were highly confident and committed to their work.

"Effectiveness" is the extent to which the results or objectives achieved, or is expected to achieve, including any differential results across groups. In this sense, there is a higher "**effectiveness**" of programs.

"**Result**" indicates the degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the program. Accordingly, it can be concluded that programs suggested in the National Policy under curriculum, whole school culture & community, integration and co-curriculum have achieved their targets to a certain extent. However, 2NL and teacher education do not show targeted outcomes. Measures suggested under research have not been implemented. However, private (NGOs) programs have achieved targeted outcomes to a great extent.

Overall, a final conclusion is made to the main research question, "*What is the progress of the programs in building social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka?*" based on the five OECD/DAC

evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability as follows. There is a higher “**relevancy**” and “**effectiveness**” of programs implemented in achieving objectives of the National Policy (2008). Some programs are “**sustainable.**” Programs have also made a positive “**impact**” on participants.” However, “**efficiency**” is low, considering the extent to which the intervention delivered so far.

### **7.3 Limitations, Contribution to Knowledge and Recommendations**

#### **Limitations**

This research has certain limitations as described below.

There are many programs and policies related to social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka conducted by different government and private institutions. However, this research concerned only programs suggested by the National Policy on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace (2008). In addition, only five out of nine provinces were covered in this research.

This research focused only secondary school students under formal education. However, social cohesion concepts have also added to the primary curriculum, and I could not cover primary students in this research due to the limited time. Youth leaders and religious leaders referred to are especially trained to build social cohesion and peace in the society. Therefore, the findings of these two groups cannot be generalized to all youth and religious leaders who have not had training on these concepts. I couldn't do observations at the five schools covered to clarify whether they keep school as a peace school. I could observe only successful activities displayed by schools at special social cohesion programs. I could not cover in this research, how the community involves with schools activities within the limited time frame of three months.

This research is a onetime research. However, a longitudinal research done at different times is needed to draw a fair conclusion. The timeframe of three months was not enough to cover some programs causing loss of data.

Although this research had above mentioned limitations, it also created new knowledge based on the previous knowledge. Accordingly, contribution to new knowledge is presented below.

## **Contribution to Knowledge**

The gradual development of education for social cohesion and peace in Sri Lanka shows that focus on individual, “building a favorable citizen who has certain values” transfers to a collective level, “a common identity.” Sri Lankan policies emphasize “cultural pluralism,” in which many groups exist while supporting and developing a cohesive society by sharing widely divergent ethnic experiences (as cited in Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997). In the Sri Lankan context, pluralism is referred to as “social cohesion and peace.” In a gradual expansion of education for social cohesion and peace, special attention is given to add more groups including women and physically disabled, in addition to traditionally focused ethnic-religious groups.

Participants put forward “inner peace,” “environmental peace,” and “recognition” needed to achieve positive peace. These concepts are not directly defined in the positive peace concept as positive peace is defined as absence of direct, structural and cultural violence. However, based on many philosophical, religious and cultural traditions, Webel (2007) denotes positive peace as the simultaneous presence of many desirable states of mind and society. Therefore, “inner peace” “environmental peace,” and “recognition” can be added to the theory under “desirable states of mind and society” in the positive peace concept. The compatibility of participants’ perceptions with the objectives of the National Policy (2008) indicates the relevance of programs implemented to achieve objectives.

Educationist Paulo Freire (1970) in his pedagogy “critical consciousness or conscientization” emphasizes the need of equity between students and teachers in which both learn, both question, both reflect and both participate in meaning-making, going away from the traditional “banking model of education” in which authoritarian teachers fill knowledge on students considered as empty bank accounts. In the Sri Lankan case, most programs conducted under “integration & co-curriculum” and “whole school culture & community” showed the use of “conscientization” pedagogy. This was not limited only to students and educators, but community as well, especially through exchange programs adjoining students, teachers and parents through activities.

There were doubts in government documents as to what extent teacher guides are used, and what happened to the teacher guides distributed to schools in large quantities. This research found only



40% of teachers are using teacher guides, but what happened to the teacher guides distributed are yet to be discovered.

There are suggestions to remove some words such as “unity” in textbooks, but, I argue that these words can be used as most participants of this research used such words as “unity” “cohesion” “integration” without any hesitation. Sri Lanka succeeds in social cohesion and peace building through “religious reconciliation” by adjoining religious leaders from different faiths. This is a special trend that can be applied to multi-religious countries having conflicts. This research also found most participants are willing to learn good values of all religions. That indicates relevant programs have been able to inculcate in participants values such as accepting others.

### **Recommendations**

I would like to make some recommendations from my findings.

First, I recommend to make local coordinating committees combining local government education institutes, schools and NGOs and other necessary bodies, as the creation of a national level coordinating committee has failed.

Second, I recommend to conducted school integration programs adjoining different ethnic-religious schools in the same area (local level), as exchange programs conducted adjoining faraway schools are expensive and often conducted as one-off events. Vocational education and language learning can also be promoted through these local school networks taking the assistance of local NGOs.

Third, I recommend the government to work with NGOs in providing language education and vocational training to fill the gaps. As NGOs are conducting second national language programs, qualified youth can be promoted to work as instructors at government schools.

Fourth, as most learners are willing to learn good values of other religions, religious-leaders trained for social cohesion and peace can be invited to local inter-school activities to promote religious harmony.

Fifth, more community awareness programs should be implemented through religious leaders as the programs conducted by religious leaders showed higher success rate and sustainability.

Sixth, I recommend to introduce social work assignments for students and teacher trainees and add marks to their overall performances. Otherwise they will soon forget what they learn.

Finally, I recommend to do ethnographic research in the future especially focusing teachers and learners to explore success of the social cohesion and peace programs.

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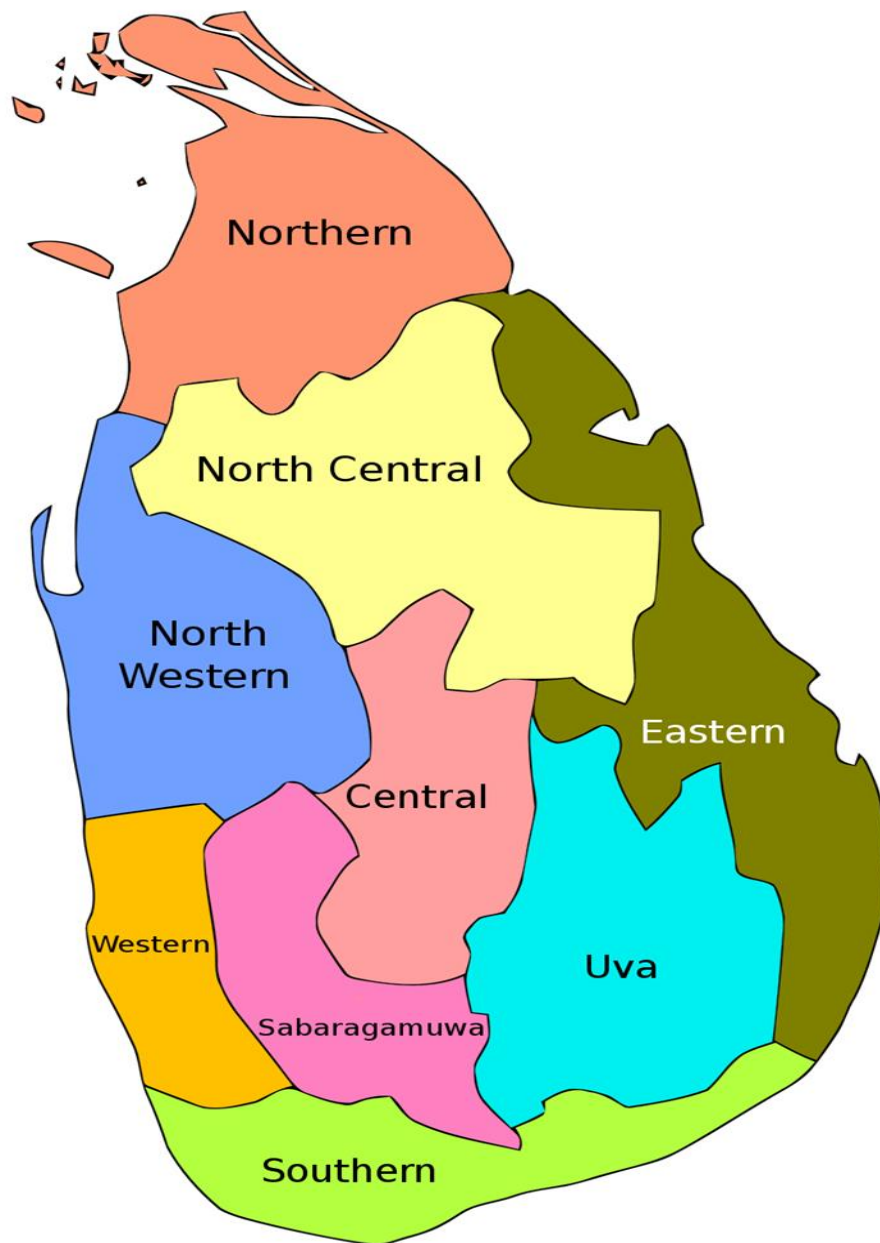
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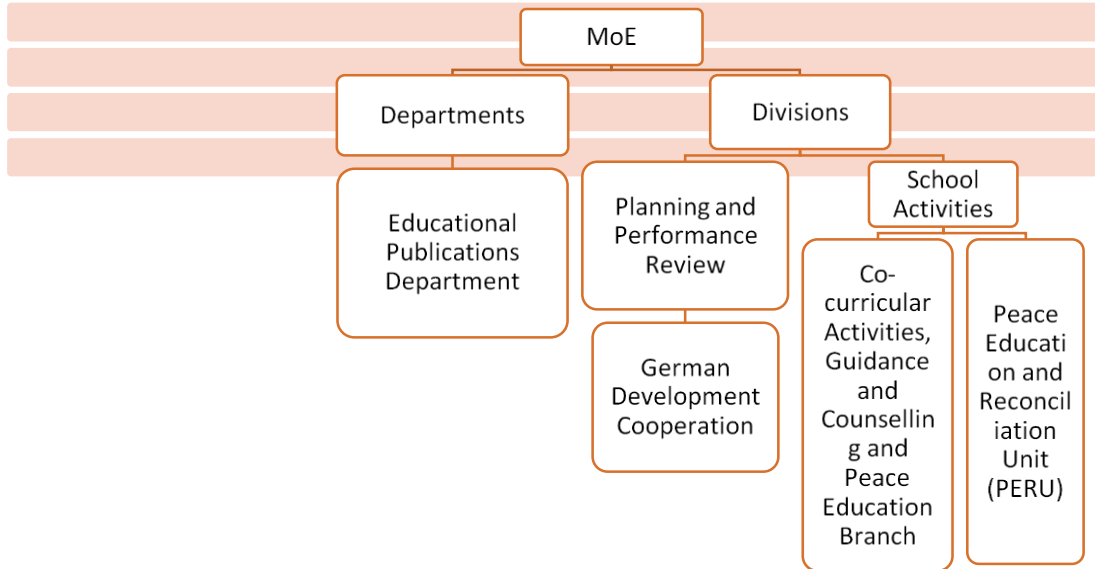
## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Sri Lanka's Map Illustrating Nine Provinces



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provinces\\_of\\_Sri\\_Lanka#/media/File:Sri\\_Lanka\\_provinces](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provinces_of_Sri_Lanka#/media/File:Sri_Lanka_provinces)

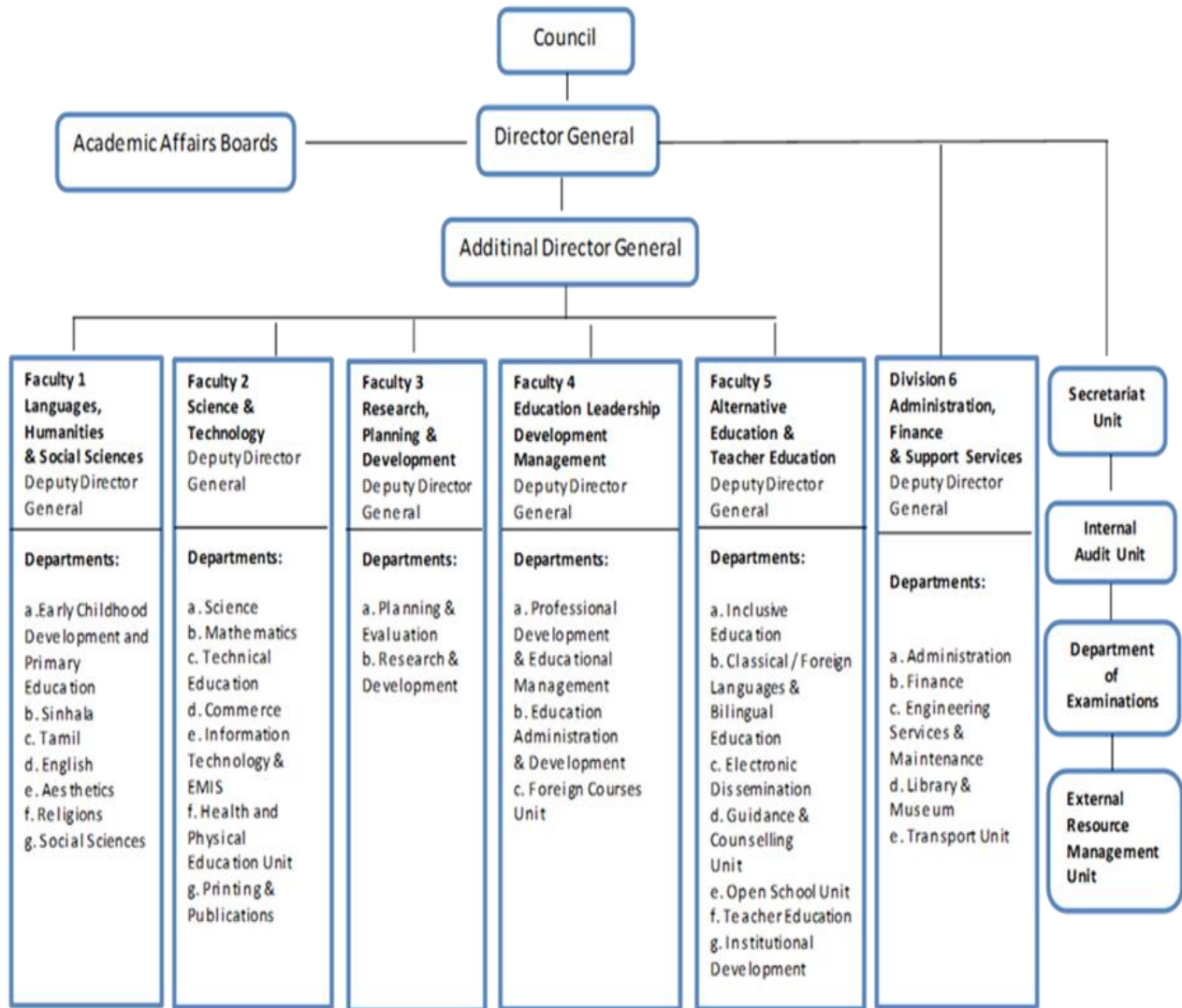
## Appendix 2: Structure of the Ministry of Education



*Source: created by the author in accordance with MoE data retrieved from <http://www.moe.gov.lk/english/index>.*

*Only the department and divisions which are presumed as relevant to this research are depicted.*

**Appendix 3: The structure of the NIE**



Source: created by the author in accordance with NIE data retrieved from <http://nie.lk/>.

## Appendix 4: Questionnaires

### Student (formal and non-formal) Questionnaire

*(These questionnaires were originally made in Sinhala and Tamil languages)*

1. What language do you speak/ read/ write?
2. Do you speak/ read/ write a national language other than yours?
3. Rate your English language competency  
Poor          Good          Very good
4. What do you think as social cohesion and peace? Please explain your answer.
5. Do people in Sri Lanka live in cohesion and peace? Please explain your answer.
6. Have you studied citizenship education? If yes, explain some good values you learnt that you can apply to your life.
7. Do students of your school live in harmony?
8. Have you attended student parliament program?
9. Have you attended any program conducted for social cohesion and peace by the school or any other institution?
10. Do you think this program (or programs attended before) is useful? If yes, how can you practically apply what you learnt to your life? Please explain your answer.
11. Did you make friends of other ethnic groups through the program?
12. Have you ever been bullied at school?
13. Is there any teacher in the school you can talk personal problems with?
14. Have you ever learnt any method to control your negative feelings (for e.g., meditation)?
15. Do you like to learn good values of other religions?
16. Do you mediate in solving problems of your friends or other people? Please explain your answer.
17. What will you do if your friends or other people engage in illegal activities (for e.g., drugs and terrorism)? (a) I will advise them to stop such activities (b) I will tell police or any other authority (c) I will get away from them
18. Have you done any social work? Please explain.
19. Do you like to help people in trouble disregarding their differences (e.g., ethnicity and religion)?
20. Please write your personal information below.  
Age: --- Gender: --- Ethnicity:--- Religion:--- Education:-----

## **Educators (teachers and teacher trainees) Questionnaire**

*(These questionnaires were originally made in Sinhala and Tamil languages)*

1. What subject(s) do you teach? To which classes?
2. What language do you speak/ read/ write?
3. Do you speak/ read/ write a national language other than yours?
4. Rate your English language competency  
Poor            Good            Very good
5. What do you think as social cohesion and peace? Please explain your answer.
6. Do people in Sri Lanka live in cohesion and peace? Please explain your answer.
7. Have you attended any program for social cohesion and peace or had training? If yes, do you think that program/training is useful?
8. Do you like to teach your students what you learnt through these programs?
9. Do you think social cohesion and peace can be taught through your subject?
10. Do you use teacher guides on social cohesion and peace?
11. Do you think teaching and learning good values of other religions are useful?
12. Do students of your school show a positive change after learning social cohesion and peace?
13. Have you done any social work? Please explain your answer.
14. What are the challenges in teaching social cohesion and peace at school? Please explain your answer.

### **Questions asked only from teacher trainees**

15. Have you ever learnt any method to control your negative feelings (for e.g., meditation)?
16. Do you mediate in solving problems of your friends or other people? Please explain your answer.
17. What will you do if your friends or other people engage in illegal activities (for e.g., drugs and terrorism)? (a) I will advise them to stop such activities (b) I will tell police or any other authority (c) I will get away from them
18. How do you practically use what you learnt through this program? Please explain your answer.

Please write your personal information below:

Age: --- Gender: --- Ethnicity:--- Religion:--- Education:-----

Please write additional comments below: