

## **Indonesian Muslim Students' Perception on the Concept of Peace, Characteristics of Peaceful People, and Non-Peaceful Experiences in *Madrasah Aliyah***

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### **Abstract**

Peace education holds a crucial position within UNESCO's four pillars of education. Promoting peace was identified as the primary focus in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Peace serves as the ultimate objective of education, the agenda set forth by SDGs, and is the core principle taught by religious teachings. Despite its significance, achieving complete peace remains elusive within the realms of schools, communities, and world at large. To date, no study has been conducted to investigate the understanding of peace among Muslim students in Indonesia. Therefore, this study aims to explore the concept of peace, the characteristics of peaceful people, and non-peaceful experiences in schools encountered by students. This study employed a qualitative research approach, utilizing phenomenological methods. A total of 28 students (13 males and 15 females) were selected from *Madrasah Aliyah* as participants of this study. The data in this study was collected through structured interviews and analyzed qualitatively, using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The findings of this study revealed that students' understanding of peace included elements of self-acceptance, maintaining harmonious relationships with others, and experiencing tranquility. Muslim students acknowledge that maintaining peace requires the individuals to practice the art of patience and composure, self-acceptance and understanding, and the ability to control their emotions. Non-peaceful experiences emerged as a result of various factors, such as favoritism and punitive actions towards students by teachers, including conflicts among students, and as well as instances of bullying, racism, and exclusion. This research finds that it is evident that there is a need for further improvement in implementing a peaceful environment within schools. Teachers play a vital role by creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for students, encouraging their active participation, and facilitating social engagement among students from diverse backgrounds to promote a peaceful school environment.

**Keywords:** *concept of peace, Muslim students, school climate*

## Introduction

Peace and harmony are crucial aspects in the contemporary world and require the involvement of all sectors, including in the field of education (Setiadi et al., 2017). The role of education in achieving peace and harmony is evident through the four pillars of UNESCO education: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together in peace and harmony, and learning to be (Delors et al., 1996). The value of education diminishes if it fails to equip individuals with the necessary skills and attitudes to live in peace and harmony (Setiadi & Ilfiandra, 2019). The objective of education should be to cultivate both students' self-acceptance and social integration into society. Peaceful living constitutes a fundamental element of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) agenda (United Nations, 2015).

Peace is not only imparted through education but also taught through religion which emphasizes its significance for humanity and the universe (Ilfiandra et al., 2021). According to Köylü (2004), religion has been associated with both the commencement of conflicts and the promotion of peace. In Islam, guidance for living in peace and harmony is derived from the terminology of Islam itself, rooted in the word *salaam*. One of the significances of greeting in Islam is the expression of peace (Ilfiandra et al., 2021). According to Mahmoud Abedin in Ilfiandra et al. (2021), the five pillars of Islam are essential elements that contribute to fostering peaceful values. These pillars commence with the creed which serves as an expression and declaration to submit to Allah and acknowledge the prophethood of Muhammad, as His messenger. In Islam, the concept of *shahada* signifies the effort to make peace with Allah, and wholeheartedly submitting to His every commandment. Congregational prayers conclude with greetings, symbolizing the act of spreading peace to everyone present. *Zakat* highlights the concern for others. Fasting, as an act, encourages empathy and tolerance, and pilgrimage embodies the journey or search for moral or spiritual significance. The verses of Quran also exalt the virtue of embracing a life, rooted in peace. For example, Surah Al Hujurat, verse 13 promotes the acceptance and appreciation of diversity, and Surah Al An'am, verse 108 teaches the importance of religious tolerance. Even the greeting in Islam, such as *Assalamu alaikum* (peace be upon you), carries the connotation of spreading messages of peace, prayer, and respect.

While education aligns with the agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and religion promotes peace as an ideal outcome, the attainment of peace has presented challenges in various contexts, including schools, communities, and the global atmosphere. These challenges align with Galtung's peace paradigm theory (1967), which acknowledges the elusive nature of peace. Non-peaceful situations can be classified into two categories. The first category is

negative peace, which refers to the absence of direct physical violence and can manifest as war, violence, torture, or harassment within local and global societies (Castro & Galace, 2010). Secondly, positive peace is characterized by the presence of an enlightened self and healthy relationships (Galtung, 1967). In traditional societies, non-peaceful situations may involve various phenomena, such as racism, sexism, and religious intolerance (Castro & Galace, 2010). In the school context, non-peaceful situations can manifest as instances of bullying, physical conflicts, and an atmosphere characterized by excessive competitions (Balasooriya, 2001).

To foster peaceful coexistence among individuals, it is crucial to minimize and eliminate the acts of violence. The role of education in achieving this objective has been emphasized by UNESCO (1996, 1998). It is particularly significant compared to other fields as stressed by Chowdhury (2010). The practice of peace education which refers to the educational approach, aimed to cultivate a culture of peace, has gained recognition as a highly effective strategy (Harris, 2008). Peace education serves as a preventive measure to protect children from the prevalent acts of violence within societies (Ilfiandra et al., 2021). Peace education helps children in identifying challenges to peace, acquiring non-violent conflict resolution skills, and cultivating a peaceful attitude. Therefore, peace education is recommended to be introduced at an early stage (Saripudin et al., 2022a).

According to Carter (2022), the primary objective of peace education is to nurture knowledge in understanding the essence of peace and enhance skills, and display peaceful behavior through a non-violent learning process. It implies that the initial phase of peace education involves engaging students in the exploration of peace concept. Even Günçavdı (2020) highlighted that comprehending the meaning of peace and war is a critical component for teachers aspiring to become peace educators. For students, their understanding and perspectives on peace and war can significantly influence their thoughts, emotions, actions, and way of life (Castro & Galace, 2010).

According to Galtung (1981), a pioneer in peace education, investigating the meaning of peace is crucial in the realm of peace research. This has led to ongoing research on the importance of peace and war from the late 20th century to the present day – with these studies evident in the existing literature. For example, Hakvoort and Oppenheimer have conducted regular research in various countries to explore the meaning of peace according to children and adolescents – particularly in European and Asian nations (Hakvoort, 1996; Hakvoort & Hägglund, 2001; Hakvoort & Oppenheimer, 1993, 1998). Recent research was also conducted by Deveci et al. (2008), Lasi et al. (2017), Akane (2018), Nisa et al. (2019), Ay & Gökdemir (2020) have focused on exploring the meaning of peace among teachers in Pakistan, Turkey, and Nigeria. Akhmad (2016) conducted a study examining the

concept of peace and conflict resolution among high school students. Calp (2020) delved into the significance of peace and the ideal school according to students and teachers, whereas Saripudin (2022) investigated the concept of peace in early childhood.

However, despite the fact that numerous studies have been conducted on the meaning of peace, there still exists a research gap when it comes to exploring the perspective of Muslim adolescents, especially those studying at Islamic school (*Madrasah Aliyah*). Given the fact that these adolescents are exposed to the Islamic teachings, it is crucial to instill in them the culture of peace. This study aims to bridge this gap by exploring the meaning of peace and non-peaceful experiences from the perspective of these students. This study also aims to identify the characteristics of individuals who personify peace and their contributions to a peaceful environment, which can be widely applied in *Madrasah Aliyah*. These characteristics will be determined based on the values that students desire to have in their ideal school setting. Creating a peaceful classroom environment can foster a positive and sustainable atmosphere (Thapa et al., 2012) that nurtures the growth and acquisition of knowledge necessary for a fulfilling life (Calp, 2020). Eventually, establishing a framework for a peaceful classroom climate can contribute to the cultivation of a culture of peace (Saripuddin, 2022), which is the ultimate objective of this research.

To accomplish the research objectives, this study addresses the following research questions: (1) How do students of *Madrasah Aliyah* (senior high school) define peace? (2) What are the characteristics that define peace according to students of *Madrasah Aliyah*? (3) What non-peaceful experiences have students of *Madrasah Aliyah* encountered within their school setting? (4) What characteristics do students of *Madrasah Aliyah* believe constitute a peaceful school?

## Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative research approach employing the phenomenological method. A qualitative approach involves the analysis of in-depth meanings assigned by people or groups to social and human situations (Houser, 2020). The phenomenological method aims to comprehend individuals' perceptions, emotions, or ideas about peace and non-peaceful school experiences.

The process of research on peace education using a phenomenological method involves the following steps:

- 1) Identifying the scope or aim of the phenomenon to be studied. The researchers in this study, aimed to examine the perceptions and lived experiences of

*Madrasah Aliyah* students in regard to peace education within their school environment.

- 2) Developing a research instrument: The instrument used in this study was an interview guide that the researchers created. The guide was designed based on a theoretical analysis of peace and aimed to explore the perspectives of students regarding the concept of peace, the characteristics of peaceful individuals, and instances of non-peaceful experiences within the school settings. The interview guide consisted of 4 open-ended questions: (a) *What does peace mean to you?*; (b) *What characteristics in your opinion do peaceful individuals possess?*; (c) *According to you, what are the qualities of a peaceful school?*; and (d) *Can you share an experience that made you feel uncomfortable or uneasy at school?*
- 3) Collecting data: The researchers gathered data through structured interviews to gain a deeper understanding of participants' subjective experiences related to peace education in schools. The participants in this study were 28 students from class XI and XII at the State *Madrasah Aliyah* in Serang City of Banten. The participant selection method employed a convenience sampling technique. The profiles of participants are presented in Table 1 below:

**Table 1.** Profiles of Participants

Variables	Category	F	%
<b>Gender</b>	Male	13	46
	Female	15	54
<b>Age</b>	16 years old	14	50
	17 years old	14	50
<b>Class</b>	XI	23	82
	XII	5	18

- 4) Data analysis: The researchers analyzed the data using the phenomenological method, which involved identifying themes and common patterns emerged from the participants' descriptions. The researchers carefully examined and interpreted the data to identify the important qualities and structures related to peace education in schools. These findings were then explained in detail, providing a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences. Three levels of qualitative analysis were conducted on the research data. The initial step in the data analysis process was data coding. At this stage, the researchers examined each interview response individually and assigned a code to specific definitions and characteristics of peace found in the text. Coding helps to create distinct categories and extract the essence of each type for

further analysis. In the second stage, the researchers employed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to delve deeper into the data (Eatough & Smith, 2017). The third stage involved presenting and discussing the research findings. Finally, the researchers reported the results of their research.

## Literature Review

### Meaning of Peace

In Bahasa Indonesia, the term *damai* means peace, conveys the meaning of no war, no riots, safety, peacefulness, tranquility, non-hostility, and harmony (KBBI, 2023). In Latin, the word peace comes from the word *pax* which means settlement, mutual understanding, cessation of hostility, and avoidance of conflict. In Arabic, the term *salaam* refers to peace or harmony (Nadhirah, 2015). Understanding the concept of peace is the first step in organizing peace education. This notion is widely supported by peace researchers.

As Galtung (1967) stated that the occurrence of war or conflict lies within the human mind. So, the establishment of peace must begin within the human mind too. Carter (2021) reinforces this idea by positioning peace as a state of being. Kartadinata, Affiandi, Wahyudin, and Ruyadi (2015) explain that peace refers to the concept which embodies the development of thoughts (state of mind), behavior, value orientation, and efforts to improve situations and resolve conflicts. Similarly, according to Ilfiandra, Saripah, Nadhirah & Suryana (2021) peace is perceived as an internal state of being that reflects an individual's objectives and goals.

As emphasized by Galtung (Carter, 2022), the initial objective of peace education is to understand the essence of peace. Knowing the main objective of peace education is to help people understand the fundamental concept of war and peace. Jabbar & Betawi (2019) also expressed a similar idea that the first step in developing a culture of peace in children is to help them understand the concepts of war and peace. Understanding of peace as a core value cannot be underestimated because it can shape one's thoughts, feelings, and actions (Castro & Galace, 2010). This means that children's understanding about peace influences their thoughts, emotions and actions, including their problem-solving abilities.

### Peace Education

According to Ilfiandra et al (2021), peace education is a process and practice in identifying obstacles to achieve peace, cultivate skills, resolve conflicts without violence, and learn to demonstrate a peaceful attitude. Peace education is learned through both formal and informal means, including at home, school, through interactions with peers, and media exposures. According to Salomon (2002), peace

education is a dynamic process that involves the acquisition of values, knowledge, and the development of attitudes, skills, and behavior of individuals to enable them to live in harmony with themselves, others, and their environment.

Peace education can be incorporated into the curriculum either as a separate subject or integrated into various subject areas (Ilfiandra et al., 2021). Peace education is more effective when it is delivered through experiences and activities (Synott, 2005; Wintersteiner & Spajić-Vrkač, 2003). Ilfiandra et al. (2021) emphasizes that peace education exists beyond a subject and includes the overall climate of teaching and learning interactions. This means that the application of peace in education is not only reflected in the choice of teaching methods but also in the formation of a peaceful atmosphere in classrooms and schools (Ilfiandra et al., 2021).

## Results

### Definition of Peace

Peace definition varies across different age groups, including among Muslim students. Based on the results of the interview analysis, the students' perspectives on peace can be classified into three categories: (1) Peace is calmness, (2) Peace is the absence of conflict, and (3) Peace is the act of self-acceptance.

Students interpret peace as serenity, which can be seen in the interview results below:

*P1: Calmness, peaceful, absence of disputes. P12: A state where we feel calm. P13: Being calm or in a relaxed state. P23: A state of calmness. P15: Being calm.*

Another definition of peace stated by the students is the absence of conflicts, problems, or disputes. The problem lies either within oneself or with others. The understanding emerged from the interviews are as follows:

*P6: When there are no arising problems. P10: When there is no dispute or hostility between 2 or more people. P20: When going through the day without any problems. P7: When there is Calmness, and no conflict, P11: When there are no riots, but calmness, peacefulness. P16: When there is no commotion and fighting. P17: When there is no difference of opinion between the two parties. P28: When there is no division, whatsoever. P14: When there is no commotion and peace. P7: When there is calmness, and no conflict. P9: A situation in which there is harmony between individuals and groups. P18: I believe peace is to have good relations with all people to avoid conflict, so things stay calm.*

Other students interpreted peace as a state of self-acceptance, accompanied by gratitude for what happens in life. Based on this perspective, peace is centered around one's own being. The following descriptions are the students' answers illustrating this viewpoint:

*P3: Accepting yourself with a happy heart, and being grateful. P5: When we are able to embrace what God has outlined, and express gratitude for every blessing that He bestowed upon us. Laughing freely, and not arguing with reality. P22: Being in a state, where heart and mind are in the same place, allowing you to react to something with an open heart and mind. P26: Calm heart, and calm mind, always remember Allah.*

Based on the findings of the interviews, it is evident that students of *Madrasah Aliyah* define peace as a state of inner calmness with no internal or external conflicts. This state of peace emerges through the practice of self-acceptance, and is associated by a grateful heart.

### Characteristics of Peace in Students

After discussing the meaning of peace, students were also asked to share their perspectives on the characteristics of peace. According to students of *Madrasah Aliyah*, there are six characteristics that define peaceful individuals. These characteristics include: calmness, emotional control, self-understanding and acceptance, not being hostile towards others, patience, and being respectful to others. These characteristics are described in more detail in the following table:

**Table 2.** *Characteristics of Peace According to Students*

No	Characteristics	Code Used	Person	Frequency (F)
1	Calmness	Being calm, relaxed, doing things calmly, not feeling anxious, doing everything in a relaxed and calm manner, deals with matters calmly, being able to react to things with a calm/open heart and mind	(P13), (P19), (P24), (15), (22)	5
2	Emotional control	A relaxed person who does not easily get emotional, and has control over emotions and anger	(P14), (P23), (P25), (28)	3



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3	self- understanding and acceptance	Understand themselves, accept their shortcomings, make peace with themselves, and willingly accept the outcomes	(P27), (P3), (P11), (P5)	4
4	Non-hostility towards others	Does not fight or being hostile, stays out of troubles, does not have problems with others or being confrontational, has agreement on both sides of a thing	(P4), (P12), (P9), (P16), (P26), (P17)	6
5	Patient	Being patient and tolerant towards people	(P23), (P7), (P25), (P26)	4
6	Respectful	Shows mutual respect, has good relationships, and maintains healthy communication with others, is always helpful and can settle things down	(P18), (P9), (P28), (P6)	4

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Based on students' perspective, the characteristic of not being hostile towards others is considered the most peaceful behavior. They believed that individuals who do not engage in conflicts, have no problems, refrain from fighting with others, and embody peace. This perception was expressed by six students during the interviews. Another characteristic mentioned by the students is calmness, which is predominantly an internal trait manifested as a sense of peacefulness. The characteristics of peace expressed by these students, are not much different from the definition of peace itself. The students further emphasized that the internal aspects of peace include the ability to control emotions, show patience, and respect towards others.

### Unpeaceful Experiences at School

Based on the analysis of students' interviews, it was revealed that non-peaceful experiences at school emerged from various factors including the behavior of teachers, the school system, and interpersonal disputes among friends and students. The relationships between friends are identified as the most common source of non-peaceful experiences for Muslim students at school. Following is the context and description of these instances:

**Table 3. Unpeaceful Experiences at School**

No	Context	Description
1	Teacher	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teachers favor certain students. (P4)</li> <li>2. Problems with teachers: blaming the whole class even though one person caused the problem (P9)</li> <li>3. Dispute between students and teachers (P1)</li> </ol>
2	School System	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Over inspection (P2)</li> <li>2. Non-peaceful experiences over differences of opinions between the school and students (P16)</li> <li>3. Announcements using a speaker during class hours can distract students (P26)</li> <li>4. Non-peaceful experiences during campus study tours due to unclear decisions disadvantaging students (P14)</li> </ol>
3	Between Friends	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unpleasant treatment received from friends (P6)</li> <li>2. At that time, I felt I was bullied by my friends because I was not easy to get along with (P12)</li> <li>3. Non-peaceful experiences arose when a racist friend called my friend 'boo' (P18)</li> <li>4. Isolation and feelings of jealousy towards friends also contribute to non-peaceful experiences among students (P.27)</li> <li>5. The presence of non-genuine friends can be a source of non-peaceful experiences (P5)</li> <li>6. For example, problems between friends arise when there is a lack of harmonious communication between people (P9)</li> <li>7. Noisy children who are unaware of appropriate time and place, particularly when they are in the classrooms (P15)</li> <li>8. When I was ostracized by my friends, I no longer knew how to control my heart/mind in that particular moment. So, I assumed a lot of negative assumptions (P22)</li> <li>9. When I have an issue with a friend, and I am not in a peaceful state of being, it is difficult to focus what I say. So, the tone of my voice goes even higher (P28)</li> <li>10. When my classmates play <i>lato-lato</i> (P20)</li> </ol>
4	Personal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When there is a problem, especially when it is caused by me (P13)</li> <li>2. When there are many problems, and friends do not care (P3)</li> </ol>

## Characteristics of Peaceful Schools According to Students

A study was conducted to explore the perspectives of students regarding the characteristics of peaceful schools. The interview findings revealed that the characteristics of peaceful schools can be classified into three categories: (1) School, (2) Teachers, and (3) Students. A more detailed description of these aspects is presented in the following table:

**Table 4.** *Characteristics of Peaceful Schools According to Students*

School	Teacher	Learners
1. Schools that provide adequate facilities for the students and implement freedom of learning (P6)	1. Students and teachers understand each other (P1)	1. Having a positive social environment and being away from juvenile delinquency (P6)
2. A comfortable and safe school environment (P12)	2. The teachers demonstrate fairness and avoid favoritism (P4)	2. Students who express a willingness to cooperate are not bullied (P27)
3. Institutions provide adequate facilities and infrastructure services (P11)	3. Schools that foster an atmosphere of mutual support and understanding between teachers and students (P18)	3. There is no violence, and everyone is encouraged to express their opinions. No voice goes unheard, and no one feels ashamed or afraid to express their opinions (P5)
4. Politeness, courteous manners and morals are upheld (P15)	4. When the teachers do not burden students with assignments (P20)	4. Schools that maintain a peaceful environment without unnecessary noise or disturbances between classes, grades, students, and teachers (P17)
5. Schools where students feel comfortable with their environment (P19)	5. Teachers pay attention to students' aspirations, and students respect their teachers (P11)	5. The students are friendly with each other and demonstrate mutual respect (P25)
6. Schools are not too demanding on students	6. The teaching and learning process is effective, and	6. No noise, no problem (P10)

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<p>while still maintain adherence to existing regulations (P22)</p> <p>7. In my opinion, a peaceful school is one where students feel comfortable and are not unnecessarily restricted by the existing rules unless someone violates them (P28)</p>	<p>the learning atmosphere fosters a safe and comfortable environment (P26)</p> <p>7. The instructor is approachable, open to communicate with, and displays a positive attitude while teaching without taking things personally or becoming moody (P28)</p>
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Based on these interviews, students identify peaceful schools with the following characteristics: to have adequate facilities, provide a comfortable and safe environment, have reasonable expectations from students, and uphold etiquette and moral values. On the teacher's side, the characteristics of peaceful schools, according to students, include: teachers who understand students, do not show favoritism, appreciate and value their students, promote an open and a comfortable communication space, and do not overburden students with excessive assignments. On the friendship side, peaceful schools are characterized by the absence of students bullying, prevention of violence or disputes, and the cultivation of mutual respect among students.

## Discussion

### Meaning of Peace

The findings of this research on the meaning of peace, as perceived by students of *Madrasah Aliyah*, align with and share similarities to various theories and other research findings. Students define peace as calmness, absence of conflict, and self-acceptance. The definition of peace as calmness and self-acceptance, is in line with Spinzola's philosophy. According to Spinzola in Ilfiandara et al. (2021), peace is not just the absence of war but also a virtue of the soul, a condition of the soul, and a disposition of goodness and virtue. This means that peace can be in the form of calmness that individuals obtain. Calmness is the state of being free from external and internal disturbances and conflicts that occur in interactions with others. This sense of calmness can also emerge when individuals are able to fully accept themselves.

The findings of this study align with Johan Galtung's theory (Galtung, 1967; Webel & Galtung, 2007). First, the concept of peace refers to internal conditions, encompassing calmness and self-acceptance within individuals. Secondly, it is associated with the absence of collective violence, perpetrated by the community. This collective violence has emerged as a significant concern among several research participants. They hold the belief that peace can be achieved when there are no problems or disputes, no differences of opinion, fostering harmonious living, and cultivating positive relationships with others. Thirdly, peace is connected to all that is good. Students perceive peace as starting with self-acceptance, gratitude, contentment, happiness, and remembrance of Allah. The students' understanding of peace aligns with Kartadinata's theory (Kartadinata, 2020; Kartadinata et al., 2018), which highlights peace as a mindset, behavior, value orientation, efforts to enhance circumstances, and conflict resolution. Calmness and self-acceptance originated from the individual perspective. The perception of finding peace as the absence of conflict aligns with the traditional definition. Peace is commonly defined as a state in which there is no war or conflict. This definition is the primary one and has emerged due to historical disputes. Such a perception is understandable since the initial meaning of peace in the Online Indonesian Dictionary is absence of war, damage, and hostility (BPPB Ministry of Research and Technology, 2016). The Indonesian Dictionary indicates that peace is predominantly perceived as the absence of war. From a psychological standpoint, the findings of this study are in line with the perspective of Anderson (2004) and Castro & Galaces (2010). These researchers categorized peace into five levels. The first level refers to harmony with self by Castro & Galace, and intrapersonal peace by Anderson, emphasizes the individual's ability to accept oneself. The second level focuses on interpersonal peace, which encompasses fostering positive relationships with others. The third level, intergroup/social peace, pertains to harmonious relations within the broader community. The fourth level, global peace, encompasses fostering positive relationships between countries. The final level is peace between individuals and God, which is interconnected with achieving peace through environmental preservation and adhering to God's commandments. Despite the analysis yielding three distinct definitions, all these levels are evident in the responses, provided by research participants. For example, one student believed that peace can be attained through the remembrance of Allah.

When comparing the findings of this study with other research, they align with the work of Nadhirah (2015), Akhmad (2016), and Saripudin (2022). Nadhirah (2015) concluded that peace is a state of contentment, which fosters self-acceptance. In Akhmad's (2016) study, it was discovered that high school students prioritize peace in relation to themselves, others, the environment, and God.

Saripudin's research (2022) study found that teachers define peace as a state of comfort, calmness, peace, and happiness characterized by the absence of coercion, discrimination, or riots.

### **Characteristics of a Peaceful Individual**

There are six characteristics of peaceful individuals, according to students of *Madrasah Aliyah*. These include being calm, being able to control emotions, understanding and accepting oneself, not being hostile to others, and being patient and respectful of others. This characteristic represents the ideal values of peace that reflects how students strive to live a harmonious life. This notion of peace aligns with the findings of Kartadinata et al. (2016). Kartadinata et al. (2016) identified six peaceful values within Indonesian society, which include religiosity, spirituality, tolerance, empathy, respect, and collaboration. When comparing these values with the characteristics mentioned by students, it is evident that patience aligns with the values of religiosity and spirituality. Similarly, respecting others is encompassed by the significance of tolerance and empathy. Calmness, understanding and the ability to control oneself can be associated with the value of religiosity – as a belief in oneself and as a creature of God, often leads to self-introspection. Additionally, not being hostile towards others can be attributed to the value of respect, as it involves nurturing mutual feelings and fostering positive relationships. However, this study did not find any evidence of the existence of a collaborative value.

According to Anderson (2004), there are two categories of peace levels: (1) intrapersonal, and (2) social or interpersonal peace. In the context of intrapersonal peace, there are four peaceful values or characteristics: calmness, emotional control, and patience. On the other hand, at the level of interpersonal and social peace, two values are presented: respecting others, and not being hostile towards others. The four values of peace at the intrapersonal level reflect individuals who have a willingness to coexist with others harmoniously, originating from within themselves. Students recognize that in order to maintain peace, individuals must understand and accept themselves, cultivate calmness, control their emotions, and practice patience. Similarly, the two values at the interpersonal level signify those individuals who show a willingness to live alongside others and understand that to achieve peace, they must respect others and foster positive relationships. By respecting and nurturing these individual connections, human rights are being greatly honored (Mukhopadhyay, 2005).

## Unpeaceful Experiences Students Have

Students often encounter distressing experiences that arise from both direct and structural violence. This concept can be further understood by examining the Galtung theory, as synthesized by Castro and Galace (2010). According to Galtung, non-peace is a consequence of violence. In the paradigm of negative peace, direct violence is frequently observed, such as in instances of war and child abuse. Conversely, in the positive paradigm of peace, different forms of violence exist. These include structural violence like hunger, and poverty – social-cultural violence such as racism and intolerance, and ecological violence like pollution and unsustainable food consumption. These findings revealed the violence experienced by students can be categorized into four types of violence or conditions of non-peace. Firstly, it can arise from the actions of teachers, such as favoritism, punitive measures, and conflicts between students and teachers. Secondly, the school system itself may contribute to violence through practices like excessive surveillance, raids and harmful policies. The third source of violence occurs among peers involves issues such as bullying, racism, exclusion, and imposition of opinions. Lastly, personal experiences of violence can stem from a lack of friends to confide in, leading individuals to carry the burden of their problems alone. In comparison to Galtung's theory, the violence experienced by students tends to be more direct in nature involving incidents, such as physical fights, bullying, and punishment. However, structural violence manifests in the form of unfavorable policies and excessive surveillance within the school system. Lastly, social-cultural violence includes acts like racism, exclusion, the imposition of opinions, and the burdening of individuals' minds with problems.

Excessive rumination and preoccupation with problems can lead to inner turmoil and distress. According to Karadinata (2020) peace itself is a way of thinking, and how individuals respond to situations can impact their inner and overall peace. The influence of thoughts on peace can be understood by examining personal peacefulness. This concept is closely related to consistency in behavior, psychological well-being, and peaceful attitude (Alfonso, 2014; Ilfiandra et al., 2021). Achieving a state of peacefulness, such as peace of mind, entails finding harmony within oneself. As a result, peace can have an impact on both the individuals and their relationships (Ilfiandra et al., 2021). To illustrate this, Ilfiandra et al. (2021) refers to findings of Lyubomirskiy et al.'s research, which demonstrates that personal peacefulness positively influences one's physical health. This implies that peace has the potential to influence individual psychology, which in turn can indirectly impact physical health.

Overall, the forms of violence experienced by research participants exhibit similarities with the types of violence proposed by UNESCO. According to UNESCO, school violence can be categorized into five distinct types (Balasooriya, 2001) 1) Verbal violence, such as insulting/bullying, calling names, threatening, cursing, offending, shouting, and labeling; 2) Psychological violence, manifested through blame, ridicule, mockery, humiliation, and seeking revenge; 3) Physical violence, involving actions such as slapping, whipping, torturing, hitting, assaulting, and pulling ears; 4) Criminal violence such as stabbing, shooting, stealing, property destruction, rape, child abuse, vandalism, and gang attack; 5) Structural violence, characterized by continuous encouragement of competition among students, comparison that undermines individuals' passive treatment of children, teacher-centered instruction, disregarding students' needs, the establishment of inappropriate rules, and forced discipline.

## **Characteristics of Peaceful Schools and Their Implications for Promoting a Climate of Peace**

Based on the research findings presented in Table 4, the characteristics of the school climate mentioned by students, emphasize their desires for an ideal environment. These desires are influenced by the experiences of violence that students have encountered at school. This assumption is based on the connection between the violence experienced by students and their expectation for a peaceful school climate. For instance, students perceive multitasking and favoritism as forms of violence or disruptive to peace. During interviews regarding a peaceful school climate, students expressed their desires for reduced assignment loads and impartial treatment from teachers.

The issue of favoritism among teachers deserves serious attention. The desire of children to be cared for, highlights the significance of universal values such as attention and love in fostering a peaceful school climate. This notion aligns with the findings of Calp's research (2020) which emphasizes that the establishment of a peaceful school climate is contingent upon the presence of love, respect, and tolerance (Calp, 2020). Teachers should refrain from granting privileges to specific students, ensuring that all students feel equally important within the classroom. In order to cultivate a peaceful learning environment, it is essential for teachers to recognize and appreciate students when they achieve something positive.

Another issue that contributes to an uncomfortable school climate is the burden of excessive assignments. Finnish schools are known for not overwhelming students with excessive assignments. This system has been found to have a positive impact on the overall classroom climate (Federick, 2020). With Finland ranking as



the 14th most peaceful country in the world as per the Global Peace Index (World Population Review, 2023), provides an important lesson to be learned. Schools and teachers should strive to offer assignments that are appropriate, proportionate and manageable for students, thereby avoiding excessive burdens on their mental well-being. In addition, students believe that schools with a peaceful climate should have rules that uphold high societal norms and values. This is consistent with Castro & Galace's theory of peaceful classroom climate (2010), which highlights the significant role of school rules in establishing a peaceful learning environment. By adhering to school rules, students acquire valuable lessons in coexisting harmoniously with others. Therefore, it is important to foster their ability to apply rules in society and promote the culture of peaceful coexistence.

Calp's (2020) research indicates that school rules can effectively discourage undesirable student behavior. Over all, the peaceful school climate observed in this research aligns with the findings of Calp (2020), and Castro and Galace's Peaceable Classroom Theory (2010). Drawing from a synthesis of these findings and comparisons, it becomes evident that the role of teachers is of a significant importance in establishing a peaceful classroom climate. Peace education cannot solely rely on theoretical instruction; rather, it must be imparted through experiential activities and modeled through the behavior of teachers (Ilfiandra et al., 2021; Saripudin, 2020). Teachers also should possess awareness and a genuine commitment to becoming proficient peace educators, which includes having the required knowledge about fostering peaceful classrooms.

According to the analysis conducted by Wibowo's (2022), there are eleven essential characteristics that teachers must possess to become effective peace educators. (1) Teachers should have the motivation to serve the community both at local and global levels; (2) Teachers should consistently engage students in personal reflection and actively participate in continuous learning activities; (3) Teachers are ready to serve as examples, inspiring and motivating their students; (4) Teachers must possess interpersonal peace, fostering harmonious relationships with others; (5) Teachers should have the ability to think critically and to do in-depth analysis, enabling them provide comprehensive and well-rounded perspectives to their students; (6) Teachers should have the ability to foster cooperation and collaboration; (7) Teachers should have strong commitment to the value of non-violence; (8) Teachers must practice the art of non-violent communication; (9) Teachers must have an awareness of diversity, recognizing and appreciating the unique backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives of their students; (10) Teachers should be environmentally aware of the situation around them; (11) Lastly, the teachers should have a commitment to be lifelong learners.

Creating a peaceful school environment that prioritizes the safety and comfort of students is of utmost importance. It is crucial that schools and teachers actively discourage and address any form of direct violence, such as bullying and physical fights. Normalizing violence against children is not only detrimental, but also potentially dangerous (Saripudin et al., 2022b; Saripudin & Sunarya, 2022). It is important to note that exposure to violence may lead to a culture of violence, encouraging children to become active participants in brutal behavior within societies (Bacchini & Esposito, 2020).

The findings of this study highlight the importance of enhancing the implementation of a peace school climate, considering the concept of peace, experiences of violence in schools, and individual characteristics. It is evident that there is a clear need for improvement in this area. The findings of this study hold a significant implication reference for teachers, as they can serve as a valuable resource for creating peaceful schools. A peaceful school climate can be fostered by placing emphasis on creating a supportive learning environment, and promoting positive relationships. This can be achieved by establishing a comfortable and safe atmosphere within the classroom, teaching students to uphold norms and values and reducing the workload of assignments. Teachers and students should practice the art of mutual respect for one another. While teachers must actively engage in listening to students and avoid favoritism, students on the other hand should foster friendship and uphold mutual respect among their peers. It is essential to create an environment where noise or disruption are minimized, rules are followed, and instances of violence among students are non-existent.

## Conclusion

According to this study conducted on students of *Madrasah Aliyah*, peace is defined as a state of tranquility and the absence of conflict with others. It can also be attained through self-acceptance. Peaceful individuals are characterized as calm, emotionally controlled, understanding, and accepting of themselves. They demonstrate non-hostility towards others, show patience, and respect. The absence of peace in schools can be attributed to various factors, including teacher favoritism, punitive measures, conflicts between students and teachers, as well as peer-to-peer issues like bullying, racism, and exclusion. Students express a great desire for a caring school climate that values universal principles such as care, attention, and love.

Peace education seeks to cultivate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to foster harmonious relationships, prevent violence, conflict, and war. Its foundation lies in the principles of nonviolence, social justice, human rights, and

sustainability. The ultimate goal is to empower individuals and communities to effectively address conflicts and construct peaceful and equitable societies. Peace education finds applicability in diverse settings such as schools, universities, community organizations, and non-governmental organizations. This study's findings highlight the importance of establishing a peaceful school environment and emphasize the value of integrating peace education into educational institutions. Through the integration of peace education into schools, we can cultivate positive relationships among students, teachers, and staff, resulting in a stronger sense of community, decreased conflict rates, and a more positive learning environment.

Peace education equips students with essential conflict resolution skills, such as active listening, empathy, and negotiation. These skills enable students to address conflicts peacefully, not only within the classrooms, but also in their broader interaction outside of the classrooms. In addition, peace education plays a pivotal role in promoting critical thinking concerning social issues like violence, discrimination, and inequality. It serves as a catalyst in inspiring students to actively engage in initiatives that bring about positive change. Through peace education, students cultivate empathy and a deeper understanding of individuals from diverse cultures, backgrounds, and experiences. This fosters a culture of tolerance and respect, and leads to the creation of stronger and more cohesive communities. Following that, peace education can cultivate a culture of peace within schools that prioritizes non-violent conflict resolution and upholds human rights. This culture extends beyond the numb walls of schools, and has the potential to foster peace and harmony in wider communities.

To effectively implement peace education in schools, it is important for teachers to treat all students with fairness and create a welcoming and inclusive environment. Teachers can also facilitate meaningful connections among students to promote a peaceful school climate based on mutual respect and understanding. Above all, further research is needed to explore additional factors and provide diverse solutions to address non-peaceful experiences for students in Indonesia.

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