

# INCLUSION OF ISLAMIC PEACE CONCEPTS IN SCHOOL CURRICULA

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**Abstract:** Building peace and sustaining it has been a priority for many since violence prevents people and nations from achieving their goals. The roadmap to peace starts from the school. It is necessary to instil peace in students' hearts by including it in the school curricula. That is to prevent extremism and achieve human security. This research looks at the importance of integrating peace from the Islamic perspective into the school curricula at all levels. It also investigates how the concept reflects on the individual and societal levels. The research examines peace in the Qur'an and Sunnah. It reviews some educational models and theories that support peace and suggests ways to include it in school curricula. The study proposes an Islamic model of peace education by analysing the concepts of peace in the Qur'an, Sunnah and Hadith and how can they be applied in school curricula. The model is designed by considering four dimensions: classroom, school environment, the wider community, and environment.

**Keywords:** Qur'an, Sunnah, Peace in Islam, Peace with Oneself, Peace with Family, Peace with Society, Peace the World.

## 1. Introduction

Peace is a life goal, and people defend and protect it. Peace helps spread tranquillity, happiness, and harmony with others and oneself (Rosa 57). According to Islam, peace does not change with the change

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of modern life requirements because Allah has commanded all people to live in peace, as He said: "O you who believe, enter into peace, all of you" (Al-Baqarah QS 2: 208). To emphasise peace on a daily basis in Islam, performing prayers at least five times a day and reading and listening to the Quran was instructed upon Muslims. The following helps the psychological state of the Muslim to keep him at peace (Kamran 46). It was interpreted that those values reflect and inspire people to interact and participate in social activities based on the principles of freedom, justice, and human rights. They reject violence and attempt to prevent conflicts (Adams 9).

The Barcelona Conference, organised by UNESCO, held in 1994, discussed the role of religion in spreading the culture of peace and agreed to direct their religious pulpits to develop peace programmes. As a result, there emerged a network of communication among religious scholars, peace researchers, and activists in the field of human rights (Al-Sindi 60). Lately, there seems to be a great deal of interest in peace culture, particularly with the efforts of the United Nations to promote a culture of peace and to turn away from violence for the world's children. In addition, peace education encourages students to settle disputes peacefully and establish an environment conducive to personal and social peace in private and public realms (Adams 13).

Reviews of the literature indicate that violent, aggressive behaviours and bullying are still prevalent in schools (Alikasifoglu et al., 173; Kaya, Bilgin, and Singer 56). The research suggests a new model that effectively advances peace education with a multi-faceted approach that considers the psycho-socio-political dimensions and pedagogical implications. Accordingly, the model was designed with four dimensions: classroom, school environment, the wider community, and environment. This multi-faceted approach promotes an overall peaceful school culture, with formal-informal collaboration and linking peace education to policy and legislation. This approach addresses how to build healthy school environments following critical questions: How can we sustain peace in schools and eliminate violence against children? How can we make peace using more child-centred rather than punitive and authoritarian methods? How can we build peace and move towards an inclusive and cohesive school community? How can this approach reflect on society by instilling the concept of freedom and encouraging the

students to innovate? (Brooks and Hajir 7-11). The study examines peace in the Qur'an, Sunnah, and Hadith that can be included in educational curricula and instilled in the hearts and behaviours of students. It also shows the importance of developing a peace curriculum for teachers and learners, balancing the demands of the soul and the body, promoting moral commitment and disseminating higher values in society.

## 2. Islamic Peace Framework

Peace is an authentic and fundamental value in Islam, and Muslims are motivated by their religion to seek and achieve peace as a major goal. According to the Islamic perception, peace is a human act; at the same time, it promises the grace of Allah to humans. It is the regime and the norm in Islam; violence is a deviation from the normal human life and the opposite of what Islam commands the believers to practice in their lives (Kotop,15). In addition, peace is one of the names of Allah, which means that Allah prevents injustices and brings security, safety, and tranquillity to people (Al-Qurtubi, 20:390). "Allah says: He is Allah, there is no Allah but He, the Sovereign, the Holy, the Author of Safety, the Giver of Peace, the Protector, the Mighty, the Mender, the Majestic. Hallowed be Allah from all that they associate" (Surah Al Hashr QS 59: 23). Peace, the name of Allah, came at the forefront of the most beautiful names of Allah to emphasise the necessity of peace and its maintenance and work to spread it and achieve it among all peoples, the states and nations, and on the earth in general. Islamic Sharia law is legislated to achieve the interests of the people in the present and the future, justice and equality among them, and ward off evil and harm from them.

Allah described Prophet Mohammed as the Messenger of Peace and sent him to people to bring His mercy on them and to spread peace among them. Allah the Almighty said: "We have sent Prophet Mohammed forth as a mercy to all people" (surah Al Anbiya QS 21: 107). Prophet Muhammad preached the provisions and laws of Islam for the sake of human care and their natural rights because, without Him, there is no way for people to live (Al Tabari, 331).

Al Khamlishi classified peace into four categories: Peace with the Creator, oneself, family, and the world. As he points out, peace begins with the relation with Allah – love and surrender to Him

throughout one's life. Through this relationship, a Muslim has all the meanings of peace in life – to be at peace with oneself, family, society, and the universe around him (99-110). Allah said: "Yes/certainly, who surrendered his faith to Allah, and he is good doer, so for him his reward (is) at his Lord and no fear/fright on them and nor they be grieving" (surah Al Baqarah QS 2: 112).

### **2.1 Peace with the Creator in Islam**

Therefore, a Muslim must obey His Lord and be at peace with His commands in order to live with himself and those around him in peace. This condition is one of the principles of the Islamic faith that protect the individual from all harm (Jalal 123). Also, the purposes of Islamic Sharia came to preserve the five necessities – religion, soul, offspring, mind, and money. According to Al-Shatibi, "The major sins are limited to violation of the considered necessities in every religion, which are: religion, self, offspring, mind, and money" (1.15).

The relationship with the Lord begins by following His Law because the legal prescriptions are the way for the individual to preserve health from all harm and guide morals and values in dealing with others. It is certain that Allah encourages us to conduct good deeds and that following His legislation protects humanity and regulates people's behaviours, and this divine system is the best for oneself and the world around us because Allah knows the condition of his servants (Al-Sindi 60). Prophet Muhammad said: "Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you" (Al-Tirmidhi No. 2516/4.667).

### **2.2 Peace with Oneself in Islam**

On the other hand, Allah commanded the balance between the requirements of religion and the requirements of self. Allah said in surah Al Qasas QS 28: 77: "And seek by means of what Allah has given you the future abode, and do not neglect your portion of this world, and do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you, and do not seek to make mischief in the land, surely Allah does not love the mischief-makers." It is the way to the individual's comfort and reassurance and to be at peace with oneself so that one does not inflict harm and does not burden oneself beyond his ability. Allah said: "Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity" (surah AL Baqara 286-2), and He said: "Do not throw yourself into destruction"

(surah AL Baqara 195-2). It was also narrated about the Prophet Mohammed, who said: "Your Lord has a right over you, your self has a right over you" (al-Bukhari 67,133). All these verses indicate that a person should be kind and compassionate to oneself and that the individual recognises one's abilities and personality and tries to monitor one's thinking and behaviour.

Abraham Maslow stated that "a humanistic approach of education would create individuals who are stronger, healthier, and would take their own lives into their hands to a greater extent. With increased personal responsibility for one's personal life, and with a rational set of values to guide one's choosing, people would begin to actively change the society in which they lived" (195). As one moves from peace of mind to peace with the family, one learns to respect and appreciate parents. "Prophet Muhammad said (O young people! Whoever among you can marry should marry because it helps him lower his gaze and guard his modesty (al-Bukhari 5066: 67,4). One finds in marriage stability, comfort, and calm: Allah said: "the spouses are each other's clothes" (surah AL Baqara QS 2: 187).

### **2.3 Peace within Family in Islam**

Islam begins with the family because it is the basis of society, as the Qur'an indicated that it must be preserved and that it should be one comfortable unit based on cooperation between all its members. Allah said in (surah An Nahl QS 16: 80), "Allah Who made your habitations homes of rest and quiet for you." Also, Allah commanded kindness to parents and made honouring them one of the most important duties after obeying Him, where Allah said: "Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him alone and treat parents with the best of kindness. Should one of them, or both, attain old age in your lifetime, do not say "Ugh!" to them (as an indication of complaint or impatience), nor push them away, and always address them in gracious words" (surah Al Isra QS 17: 23). If the family is reformed, society will be reconciled, so Allah commands the husband to be peaceful with his wife and reassure her, wherein Allah said: "Allah created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect." (Surah Al Rum QS 30: 21).

After these Qur'anic directives to take care of the stability of the family, the verses moved to talk about establishing peace, security, and stability among societies of different genders and races. Allah said: "O you mankind, surely We created you of a male and a female, and We have made you races and tribes that you may get mutually acquainted. Surely the most honourable among you in the Providence of Allah are the most pious; surely Allah is Ever-Knowing, Ever-Cognizant" (surah Al Hujurat QS 49: 13). That acquaintance is necessary for human beings so that they may cooperate, support, and complement each other despite their differences in their races and ancestry. Once a man came to Prophet Mohammed and asked him what the best Islamic traits are? He said: "Feed the food and recite the greetings of peace to those you know and those you do not know" (Al-Bukhari 2631). Peace among people is the essence of brotherhood, love, and security.

#### **2.4 Peace with the World in Islam**

These principles have been formulated in human history because the call here is general and includes all human beings, Muslim and non-Muslim, as Prophet Mohammed said: "This nation is still fine if it says the truth, and if it judges it is just, and if it begs for mercy, it is merciful" (Al-Razi, 1:141). And he said, "Whoever wrongs a covenant, or detracts from him, or burdens him beyond his ability, or takes something from him without his consent, then I will plead against him on the Day of Resurrection" (Al-Bayhaqi, 9; 205: 1).

The Qur'anic experience and the Sunnah have brought systems to manage peace and security among people. Peace is in the conscience of the human individuals to reassure their hearts, then in the family environment because it is essential in building a secure society, then among the community to which individuals belong and among nations and peoples in the spirit of tolerance. It can be said that the Islamic religion is the establishment of principles and laws that help people to live in peace. It explains how people could live in peace regardless of religion and race, wherein Allah said: "O humanity! Indeed, we created you from a male and a female and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may 'get to' know one another. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware" (surah Al-Hujurat QS 49: 13)

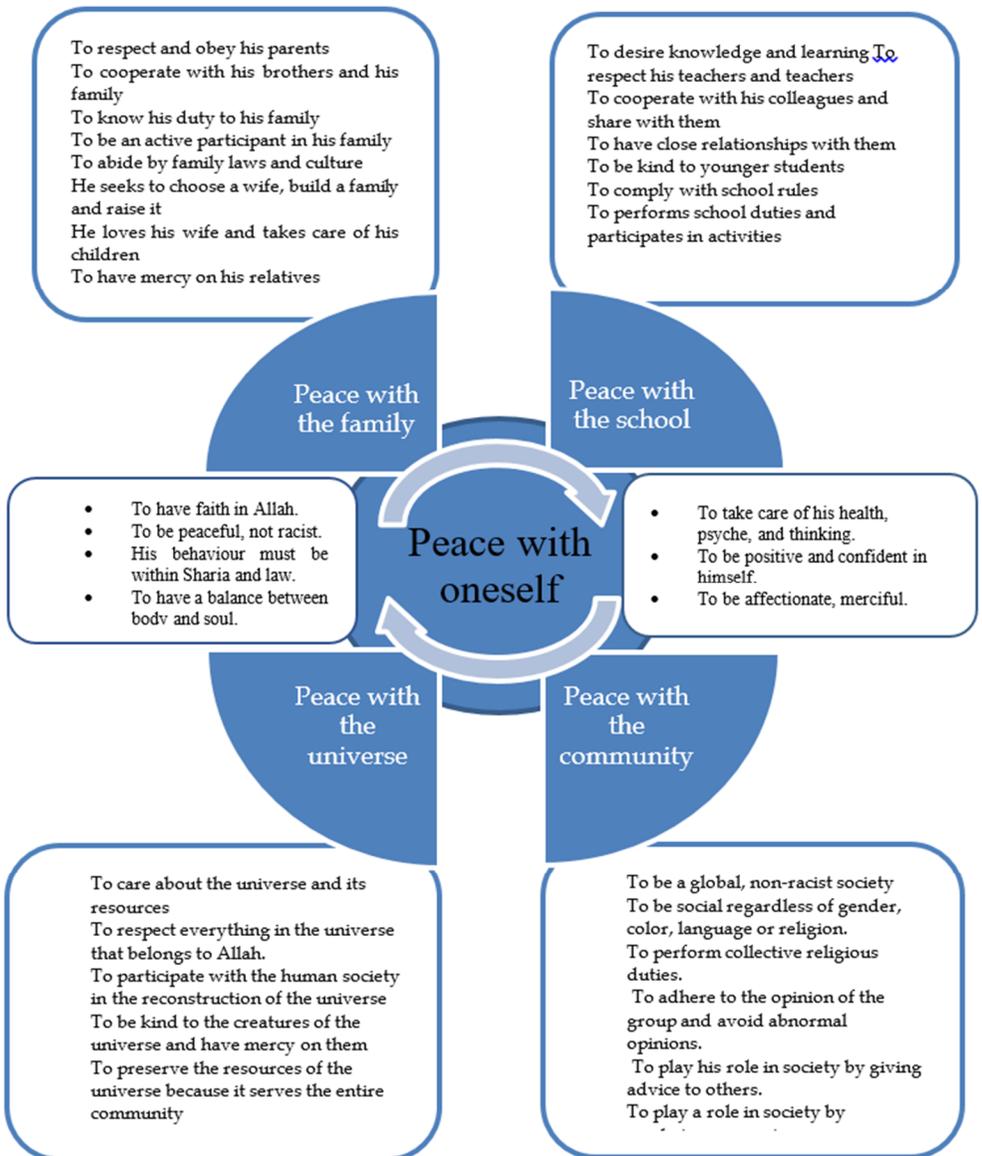
The discourse in this verse refers to all people, as the Holy Qur'an sets clear rules for the human race, which is that all people are created from one soul, and this means the unity of human origin. The nature of people leans toward happiness and harmony which can only be achieved by peaceful coexistence among peoples through love, mercy, justice, equality, honour, and tolerance. The basis of the relationship between Muslims and others is one of peace and security. Muslims are commanded to treat their opponents with kindness and act with justice and benevolence (Jalal, 126). Allah said: "Allah does not forbid you from dealing justly and kindly with those who did not fight against you in the matter of religion nor drove you out of your land. Surely Allah loves the doers of justice" (Surah Al Mumtahinah QS 60: 8). Allah also guides in the pursuit of peace with non- Muslims: "If the enemy is inclined towards peace, make peace with them. And put your trust in Allah. Indeed, He alone is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing" (Surah Al-Anfal QS 8: 61).

The concept of peace is an urgent necessity in our time. It helps to aspire and contribute to progress societies. Peace is a human right that includes all people and many aspects of life. Some people may think of peace primarily as the prevention of war; however, peace is the goal that people seek in order to enjoy a safe life of intimacy, tolerance, and love. It is important to spread the concept of peace while raising generations and be aware of this concept and adopt it in order to reform the behaviours of individuals (Al Pamari 8-10). It is also necessary to include peace in the school curricula to develop students' behaviour and confidence. The learners, as peace agents, can live peacefully with oneself, others, and society, promoting human rights and democracy (Akudolu 6).

### **3. Application of Islamic Peace Framework**

Islamic education instils the concepts of peace in the individual and respect towards humanity; it urges one to preserve life, health, and sanity and calls to think about life (Al Pamari, 8-10). The very first verse revealed in the Qur'an was to read in (Surah Al-'Alaq QS 96: 1) "Read: In the Name of your Lord, who created." Reading is the basis of thinking about Allah, how He created us, and why we worship Him. "Our Lord, you did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing" (Surah Al Imran QS 3:191). According to Islamic teachings, people are free to accept religious beliefs (Yazdani 1).

Qur'an says: "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error: whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that never breaks. And Allah hears and knows all things" (Surah AL Baqara QS 2: 256). Allah has commanded humans to think about Him and His creation before obeying and submitting to Him. Only when individuals are confident in their relationship with the Creator, they find peace and happiness within themselves.



The figure above presents the steps of the Qur'an and Sunnah in raising the concepts of peace in humanity, where peace begins with the individuals and then moves to those around them (friends, family, community, and the world) (Al Khamlishi 99).

The main aim of education in Islam is to produce a good person. The description of a good person has two dimensions: the relationship between a person and his Creator and the relationship with others. Performing the rituals of religion helps to refine the soul and get rid of evil, thus becoming a reassuring soul that leads its owner to do good and feel peaceful with others (Bidmos 53-55) So, as the individuals believe in the Lord and adhere to His law, they are required to live in peace in a non-violent society.

Islam is a religion of balance in life. Extremism is rejected in Islam and leads its doer to doom. Abd Allah b. Mas'ud reported Prophet Mohammed saying: "Beware! The extremists perished, saying it three times" (Abu Dawud 4608: 42, 13). Again, it is narrated about Prophet Muhammad that on one occasion, A group of three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet asking how the Prophet worshipped (Allah), and when they were informed about that, they considered their worship insufficient and said, "Where are we from the Prophet as his past and future sins have been forgiven." Then one of them said, "I will perform the prayer throughout the night forever." The other said, "I will fast throughout the year and will not break my fast." The third said, "I will keep away from the women and will not marry forever." Allah's Apostle came to them and said, "Are you the same people who said so-and-so? By Allah, I am more submissive to Allah and more afraid of Him than you; yet I fast and break my fast, I do sleep, and I also marry women. So, he who does not follow my tradition in religion does not belong to me (not one of my followers) (al-Bukhari 5063: (7,1). Prophet Mohammed denounced the actions of these three men because the Islamic religion does not accept their extreme actions; everyone is responsible for oneself and gentle, kind, merciful.

Islam is a religion of mercy, and Allah the Almighty has prioritised the interests of humanity over everything. The Prophet referred to this in his saying, "Killing a believer is more grievous before Allah than the extinction of the whole world" (an-Nasa'i 3989: 37, 24). Islam does not permit killing and calls for peace and adherence to Allah's law. In the same regard, Allah commanded

believers and advised them to promote goodness and prevent badness, referring to the Islamic religious resources, mainly the Quran and Hadiths. Allah said: "You are the best' Ummah ever raised for mankind. You bid the Fair and forbid the Unfair, and you believe in Allah. If the people of the Book had believed, it would have been better for them" (Surah Al Imran QS 3:110). Islam was not only urging to practice mercy on people but also encouraging mercy on animals as reasons for admitting believers to Heaven. Prophet Mohammed said: "A prostitute was forgiven by Allah because she passed by a panting dog near a well and saw that the dog was about to die of thirst; she took off her shoe and tied it with her head-cover she drew out some water for it. So, Allah forgave her because of that" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3321: 59,127). Although prostitution is one of the major sins in the Islamic ethical system, providing food for hungry animals and saving a life are considered greater than the sin. On the other hand, Islam made ruthlessness a reason for entering Hell: "A woman was admitted to Hell because of a cat whom she had tied, and thus it could not eat, and she did not let it free so that it could devour the vermin of the earth until it died" (Muslim 2619: 45, 176).

These hadiths will have an impact on the students. The role of the teacher here will help in the process of transferring those hadiths to the students. The teacher will link these concepts of peace to life and explain the importance of the application to establish peaceful coexistence. Therefore, the responsibilities of teachers in Islamic education are great. It is the teachers' duty to teach the faith, morals, and social skills and equip students in the physical, intellectual, and social aspects (Nourhadi and Hara, 490-494). It is also necessary to develop training programmes and activities to reduce aggressive behaviour and ensure peaceful living. The school must be balanced in meeting its psychological, cognitive, social, and physical requirements, and the teacher should be a religious and social guide for his students, not just a tutor of knowledge because the students need to communicate using good interpersonal skills and to feel compassionate in order to make them understand, respect and value themselves.

The existing school curricula do not teach these concepts to the students, nor do they link these concepts to the reality of daily life, which is full of unsafe and violent events for the peaceful coexistence of students, peoples, and societies. The absence of these principles

from the curricula and the lack of commitment to Islamic education lead students and youth to misunderstand Islam, and in some cases resort to violent and extremist behaviours. Formal and informal educational curricula in schools, universities, and other educational institutions are the basis of instilling the values of peace and harmony among students, and these values would be transmitted to society through them. According to the study of Nuri Sadida and Arif Triman, there is a significant correlation between faith education and social and emotional skills; hence, there is an increasing trend among Muslim parents nowadays to choose Islamic elementary school (108-110).

The curriculum must contain lessons urging the students to preserve life and health and balance the materialistic and spiritual requirements of the soul and the body. Consequently, the curriculum moves from peace of mind to peace with the family, respecting parents and other family members. The teachers familiarise the students with their duties towards their family and encourage them to establish stable families later in their adult lives. Teachers could discuss with students some family issues and how they can be addressed according to the Quran and Sunnah instructions and Islamic law. Students should learn how to take responsibility and face the family challenges and to preserve them because destroying the family is like destroying society. Every individual is responsible for the stability and safety of society; as Prophet Muhammad said, "The similitude of believers regarding mutual love, affection, fellow-feeling is that of one body; when any limb of it aches, the whole body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever" (Muslim 2586: 45, 84).

Students will realise that most of the Islamic duties such as prayer, Hajj, almsgiving for the poor, fasting the month of Ramadan, and other religious and social practices are social and are collectively practised so that people learn the principle of brotherhood and feel sympathy and harmony among themselves. For example, the mosque brings together different races and ethnicities in prayer, zakat teaches the rich ones how to be kind to the poor, and the Hajj brings the whole world together under a unified dress and one goal.

The student should also learn that one of the most important foundations and pillars of peace that Islam established in the Muslim society was related to multi-culturalism, multi-religions, customs and traditions. Those are the consolidation and links for the

relationship among the Muslims and the non-Muslims. Allah said: "This day [all] good foods have been made lawful, and the food of those who were given the Scripture is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. And [lawful in marriage are] chaste women from among the believers and chaste women from among those who were given the Scripture before you" (Surah Al maaida QS 5: 5). One of the goals of peaceful education is to learn coexistence with once surrounding. To coexist with every gender, race, and religion. Islam does not forbid dealing with non-Muslims, but rather encourages kindness and benevolence to them whether they are inside the Muslim community or outside the Islamic community.

Developing the concepts of peace in the curricula is important to include quality and distinction standards. Rushdi Taaima suggested five models to achieving quality concepts in curricula as follows: designing a specific unit, multi-branch merging (infusion), multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary (83-87). Based on these models, the concept of peace can be included in the curricula as follows:

i. **Specific Unit:** It includes a study unit or a group of lessons in one of the subjects; for example, a unit on peace education in Islam in the book on Islamic culture and a unit on international and regional peace treaties in the history book.

ii. **Multi-Branch Merging (Infusion):** This model includes examples of peace education as part of the subject, according to the nature of the existing topics in the current curriculum.

iii. **Multidisciplinary:** It is called independent as if (independent curriculum). In other words, it is the application of integrated study programs for peace education or a stand-alone curriculum. Furthermore, the researchers believe that it is possible to apply this approach in education through an independent unit titled "Unity of Peace."

iv. **Interdisciplinary:** it includes topics on peace education, without a specific time or topics for peace education, but integrating and complementing the curricula with peace education. It is possible to apply peace education concepts during the core units that are offered to students. It is strengthened through class and extra-curricular activities at school.

v. **Transdisciplinary:** It works on organising peace concepts in one independent unit. This unit will link among the foundations of

peace concepts and peace education. It can be taught as an independent course at one or more educational levels that can be allocated in specific weekly classes and specific school schedules. Therefore, we can apply this model at any stage of the study, including pre-school education.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The foundations of peace are very clear in the Holy Qur'an, which calls for tolerance, justice, and mercy. Islam has equated all human beings based on the unity of human origin, fought hatred and disharmony among racial and tribal societies. The whole society - starting with the family, the school, universities and media - should carry the responsibilities of educating Islamic values of peace as stipulated in the Holy Qur'an. Teaching students about peace aims not only to bring about a profound change in the short term but to make a positive long-term impact, promoting opportunities for peace and reconciliation later. This research stresses the importance of instilling Islamic peace in the hearts of students and including its contents in the school curricula to raise a generation that lives with inner and outer peace.

In addition, the view of peace must be a holistic view that falls within a coherent social system and that peace can be achieved at its best through a comprehensive approach that includes all dimensions of belief systems, social, economic, political, and educational. Official and non-official institutions are also concerned with spreading the culture of peace, especially educational institutions. Accordingly, the school has a role in raising and nurturing students and addressing some of the negative aspects by instilling correct educational practices that promote a culture of peace and reject all manifestations of violence.

The current research came to consolidate the culture of peace in school curricula according to religious laws in the Qur'an and Sunnah in order to create a peaceful environment in schools with all students of different races and beliefs. The literature discussed in the research indicates that a person who reaches inner peace will live peacefully with himself and others. This peace is divided into four basic categories: peace with the Creator, peace with oneself, peace with the family, and peace with society. The research also showed that the culture of peace expressed in the educational curricula have

the possibility of solving many contemporary human problems resulting from the lack of positive coexistence among people. Thus, a culture of peace becomes important to return man to his peaceful nature.

The research proposes a new model that effectively develops peace education within public schools through a multi-faceted approach that considers psychological, social, political dimensions and pedagogical implications. Accordingly, the model is designed with four dimensions: the classroom, the school environment, the wider community, and the environment. This multi-faceted approach promotes an inclusive and peaceful school culture, with formal and informal collaboration and linking peace education with policy and legislation.

The current study also clarified the concepts of peace in the Qur'an, Sunnah, and Hadiths that can be included in educational curricula and instilled in students' hearts and behaviours. The Peace Education Curriculum is developed for educators and learners who have a high level of balance between the demands of soul and body, promoting moral commitment and the dissemination of higher values in society and the world.

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