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Programming for Change

Media and Peace Education in Shaping Young People's Attitudes to Peace

Introduction

The success of liberal peacebuilding lies in the dissemination, and ultimately the internalization and acceptance, of the values and norms underpinning the liberal peace. Various tools of social, attitudinal, and normative influence are employed as part of liberal remedies in countries recovering from conflict. How effective these tools are in securing long-term conflict transformation depends in part on the extent to which transmitted norms are successful in shifting attitudes towards more peaceful ones (Petty and Briñol, 2015: 268). In this chapter, I explore this question of attitude change. Through second-order interpretations of the meta-data, I analyse whether the processes of persuasion and norm transmission through the youth focused media and education projects contributed to attitude change; and how far the adopted norms and behaviours were retained over time. The results do not purport to offer scientific claims as to the views of the youthful population in the two countries as a whole, but rather seek to present the variety of young people's experiences following their exposure to the peace education and media persuasion initiatives studied.

The chapter is organized as follows. I begin by examining existing approaches to the study of young people's attitudes towards war and peace. Drawing on a range of disciplines, the process of attitude formation and the various environmental influences are debated, before examining the role of media and peace education in norm persuasion and attitude change. The literature on norm persuasion suggests that normative influence is often easier compared with attitudinal influence because individual's normative perceptions can be more malleable than their attitudes. Two prominent models of norm change—first, 'a social norms and group influence model' and second, 'the model of individual beliefs and learning'—guided the analysis for Sierra Leone and Macedonia respectively. Through the second-order interpretation of the evaluative data, I coded the norm concepts associated with the various projects in each case. These guide the analysis on whether

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the youth-focused media and education norms contributed to more peaceful attitudes and how far the adopted norms and learnt behaviours were retained over time. The main findings with regard to norm persuasion and attitude change are summarized in the final part. The concluding discussion highlights the limits of media and education-based norm persuasion in shaping young people's attitudes towards peace.

Children and Young People's Attitudes to War and Peace

In simple terms, an individual's attitude constitutes their beliefs or views towards different aspects of the world, and is the result of their own experiences and upbringing (Crano and Prislin, 2006: 347). Attitudes present general and relatively enduring evaluations that people have of other people, objects, or ideas. These overall evaluations can be positive, negative, or neutral, and can vary over time, and in response to specific events (Petty, Wheeler, and Tormola, 2003: 354). Attitudes can be conceived along a continuum ranging from non-attitudes to strong attitudes (Converse, 1970). The latter influence thought and behaviour, are persistent over time, and are resistant to change (Krosnick and Petty, 1995). People act favourably towards things they have a positive attitude towards and negatively towards things they do not like (Petty, Wheeler, and Tormola, 2003: 354). In this, attitudes serve both symbolic and instrumental functions.

Attitudes serving symbolic functions are focused on what the object symbolizes or represents. Attitudes serving instrumental functions are focused on the intrinsic properties of the object, i.e., appraising the object in terms of their intrinsic attributes or consequences (O'Keefe, 2009: 271). Attitude formation is grounded in different types of information. These include cognitions or beliefs, affect or feelings, and actions or behaviour. Individuals are not always aware of the basis of their beliefs. Information that confirms previously held beliefs and attitudes is more readily accepted as valid (Ryffel et al., 2014: 402). Alternative information that is inconsistent with prior beliefs and attitudes is likely to be ignored, rejected, and/or simply misinterpreted (Kruglanski, 2004a, 2004b; Kunda, 1990). Highly heritable attitudes in particular have been found to be more resistant to change than less heritable attitudes (Petty, Wheeler, and Tormola, 2003: 354).

Young people's attitudes are of interest to peace and conflict researchers because they drive both violent and peaceful behaviours during and after conflict. Studies suggest that the meaningfulness and images of both war and peace shift in line with the developmental stages in children and young people, and become more profound with age (see Cooper, 1965; Alvik, 1968; Haavelsrud, 1970; Hall, 1993; Lernon, Ferguson, and Cairns, 1997; Maoz, 2000; McEvoy, 2000; Gillard, 2001; Kirpitchenko and Mansouri, 2014; King, 2018; Taylor, 2020; Warshel, 2021). For

example, preschool children are known to internalize images of war and respond to them in morally relativist categories of 'good' or 'bad' due to their limited ability to verbalize their attitude (Rodd, 1985). Gender matters as well, with girls less interested in war and less attuned to viewing war as necessary or justifiable (Hall, 1993: 183–4).

Child behaviour and child development is nested in, and shaped by the context of the family, school, peer group, the community, and the larger society (Wessels, 1998; Wessels and Monteiro, 2004). Amy Jordan (2005), in her extension of Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (1998) ecological conception of child development, outlines the broader ecosystem of social relations that shape young people's attitudes. The ecosystem consists of (a) a macrosystem, i.e. the larger cultural context that shapes attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours; (b) the exo-system, i.e. the formal and informal social structures that indirectly influence children, such as the mass media; (c) the middle level of the family and the community, which constitutes the mesosystems; and finally (d) the individual level or the microsystem. Values and norms within these groups and the interactions between the different systems shape young people's behavioural development. Developmentally, children's peacebuilding potential is anticipated to increase as their agency grows (Taylor, 2020: 130). Adolescents and teenagers generally have greater autonomy in moving through their environments and may encounter more systems within their social ecologies compared with children. Because of their ability to exercise agency, they can potentially become influential agents and crucial partners for peace (McKeown and Taylor, 2017; Taylor et al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2019).

To be persuasive, media and education interventions must occur on a continuing basis throughout the diversity of these cultural subsystems and not just at the level of children and young people (Salomon, 2002: 4; Danesh, 2006; Messenger Davies, 2010). Without promoting change in the exo-, and macrosystem, without restructuring relevant institutions, simply targeting or influencing interpersonal (i.e., microsystem), or pro-social behaviours may not promote the necessary structural and cultural (i.e., exo- and macrosystem) changes that can support transformative effects (Bar-Tal and Halperin, 2009; Taylor, 2020: 132). To reorient the values, practices, norms, and beliefs around peace, reconciliation, and tolerance for future generations, the mindset of the older generation should also be targeted (Bandura and Walters, 1977). The agents of formal and informal education together support how or in what ways children develop the capacity to act in social life through exercising critical understanding and applying moral judgement (Friere, 1970; Lemish, 2008: 283). How far did the media and peace education efforts in Sierra Leone and Macedonia align with this logic of norm persuasion? I explore the persuasive appeals of these efforts and their long-term effects on attitudes next.

Media and Peace Education: Norms, Persuasion, and Attitude Change

Media and peace education efforts form part of a 'programming for change' approach. It involves changing young people's mental states as a precursor to changes in their behaviour through norm persuasion. While media does not directly inject specific behaviours, the effects of media are not negligible either (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955; Klapper, 1960; McQuail, 1987). In social psychology, persuasion is understood as a form of social influence, by which people are convinced to adopt a certain type of thinking or attitude, through information-sharing or educational entertainment formats (O'Donnell and Kable, 1982: 9). Persuasion refers to a favourable change in individual attitudes and behaviours based on receptive messaging from an influential source. Theories of attitude offer insights into the persuasion process. From the perspective of belief-based models of attitude, persuasion efforts either add some new salient beliefs about an object, change the evaluation of some existing beliefs, or change the strength or conviction with which some existing beliefs are held (O'Keefe, 2009: 269–70). Sometimes information about which beliefs are the most appropriate is also used to influence attitudes (Ryffel et al., 2014: 401). Field studies indicate that emotionally arousing messages are more effective in changing affect-based attitudes than cognition-based attitudes (Edwards and Von Hippel, 1995; Fabrigar and Petty, 1999; Mayer and Tormala, 2010). Persuasive appeals that match the pre-exisiting attitude base were more effective when attitudes were held with high certainty (Clarkson, Tormala, and Rucker, 2011). In contrast, attitudes held with low certainty were more open to mismatching persuasion (Ryffel et al., 2014: 398).

Most media and education focused peacebuilding projects seek to effect change across the individual, group, and structural levels. Their aim is to transform conflicts and encourage peaceful and non-violent behaviours (Lederach, 1995). These projects rarely act as a sole agent of change. They serve as a prominent influence factor in complex social systems that together can induce change (Severin and Tankard, 1992). How attitudes are structured and how they change, or resist change over time is understood through the study of various elaboration and validation processes. When people think carefully about a communication, their attitudes are influenced by their assessment of the substantive argument provided. When people are relatively unmotivated or unable to think, attitudes are influenced by simple cues in the persuasion setting that allow for a quick judgement (Petty and Briñol, 2015: 269). The amounts of consideration or deep thinking that is invested in the process determines not only the shift in attitudes but also their long-term retention (Petty and Krosnick, 1995). Differently put, the effectiveness of persuasive communication lies in the acceptance and internalization of the content and its messages. Acceptance is both a function of learning and retention (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, 1953; Miller and Campbell, 1959; Watts and

McGuire, 1964; Greenwald, 1968; McGuire, 1968). Cognitive dissonance theory suggests that people will prefer to be exposed to information that is supportive or consistent with their current attitudes (Festinger 1957; Harmon-Jones, 2002). People might also seek out information that confirms with their prior beliefs. Conversely, people may seek out information that is non-supportive of prior beliefs if they are viewed as useful (O'Keefe, 2009).

In Macedonia, a 'building bridges theory' was at the heart of the programming focus around intercultural communication by the partner INGO. The media messages and peace education norms aimed at facilitating transformation in the attitudes held by children and young people across the ethnic divide (Salomon, 2011). Their aim was to build more frequent and positive intergroup interactions. In intergroup conflicts, changing attitudes can be challenging (Bar-Tal and Hameiri, 2020). Intergenerational trauma and personal as well as collective memory has a stronghold on the attitudes of the young (Bar-Tal, Diamond, and Nasie, 2017; Albarracin and Shavitt, 2018). In some respects, individual attitudes can become frozen and hard to reset.

In Sierra Leone, 'a shift in consciousness theory' was adopted by the country office to encourage a shift from violent to more peaceful behaviours at both the individual and the group levels (Allen Nan, 2010). High levels of violence witnessed during the civil war generated personal transformations for both civilian communities, and for the ex-combatants. People who share a significant experience like a civil war are known to develop a shared sense of social and political consciousness (Mannheim, 1988). Media messages around peace and reconciliation were intended to trigger a more collective transformation. Both individual attitudes and community attitudes were targeted through radio participation and open deliberation over the years. A collective consensus regarding peaceful behaviour was encouraged. How far were these efforts successful? Before examining this question, it is necessary to understand the differences between changes in norms and the shift in people's attitudes.

Norms and Attitude Change

Education and media-based sensitization, as part of attitude change campaigns that attempt to change individual feelings about specific behaviours, need to be distinguished from norm change campaigns that attempt to change the perceptions of others' feelings or behaviours (Tankard and Paluck, 2016: 187). Psychologists prioritize normative influence over attitudinal influence because individual's normative perceptions can be more malleable than their attitudes (Tankard and Paluck, 2016: 187–8). This is because individual attitudes are developed over a long period of time, and are closely linked to personal experiences or other well-developed religious or ideological beliefs. Attempts to counteract personal experience or longstanding beliefs can be more difficult and time consuming (Wicker, 1969).

Therefore, rather than attitude change, most post-war peace interventions seek to influence community members' perceptions of specific norms. Changing norms involves changing the normative belief ascribed to, and the motivation to comply with, existing referent objects (Tankard and Paluck, 2016). Adherence to a perceived norm is a more complex psychological phenomenon than simple observational learning (Bandura, 1971) or behavioural mimicry (Chartrand and Bargh, 1999).

Distinguishing attitude change from norm change can be critical for producing lasting peacebuilding legacies. Changed attitudes are not always reliable precursors of normative shifts. To change behaviour, perceptions of norms rather than the precursors of behaviour such as attitudes need to be targeted. Norm perception is a dynamic process. Social norms are standards of typical or desirable behaviour, and individuals' perceptions of these norms guide their personal behaviour. Therefore, influencing these perceptions is one way of creating social change (Chartrand and Bargh, 1999: 181). For the most part, individuals are motivated to understand what is normative in their home communities to create a sense of belonging; and to avoid social rejection (Blanton and Christie, 2003; Cialdini and Goldstein, 2004). Norms are not static rules of behaviour, learned once and internalized for posterity (Paluck and Shepherd, 2012).

Norm change interventions tend to target three key sources of norm perception, namely, individual behaviour, group summary information, and institutional signals. Individual perceptions of what is typical or desirable in their group encourage the tendency to conform with the existing social norms. Any deviation from group norms can elicit punitive results, whether in the form of social sanction, distancing, or other kinds of physical or material sanctions (Miller and Prentice, 1996). Individual behaviour is also shaped by the beliefs and choices of social influencers or social referents. Social referents can be both real and fictional, and can range from political and social leaders to fictional characters on radio and television (Paluck 2009a, 2010b).

Two general models of norm change are relevant here. First, 'a social norms model, and a group influence model' (Sherif and Sherif, 1953), and second, 'a model of individual beliefs and learning' (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, 1953). A 'social norms model' recommends targeting the normative climate of relevant social models whereas, a 'learning and belief model' recommends targeting individuals' ingrained beliefs and values (Paluck, 2009b: 591). Because, attempts to counteract personal experiences or longstanding beliefs can be more difficult, and may also take more time (Tankard and Paluck, 2016: 183), peacebuilding radio often targets the normative climate within which individual beliefs are sustained. This was the case in Sierra Leone where a social norms model and a group influence model was applied. In Macedonia, by contrast, a learning and beliefs model targeted children's ingrained beliefs and values through the bilingual immersion groups. The power of group social norms in influencing intergroup relations was under-emphasized across the spectrum of peace education, media, and theatre projects implemented

by the country office. This had implications for norm persuasion as elaborated later.

Media Persuasion and Peace Education for Norm Messaging

Weaving persuasive messages into the storylines of television dramas has been effective in shifting people's attitudes, beliefs, and intentions in several cases (see Schiappa, Gregg, and Hewes, 2006; Braddock and Dillard, 2016). Previous research shows that radio narratives can have a positive effect on the perceptions of social norms for intergroup interactions (Murrar and Brauer, 2019: 166). In post-genocide Rwanda, radio was found to have contributed to changes in individual behaviour, if not attitudes (Paluck and Green, 2009a). This was due to the dipping or elastic influence of media interventions. Their success in triggering norm change depends on various factors: first, the willingness of the audience to listen; second, their psychosocial response to the messages; third, the extent of mimicking of social influences and behaviours; and finally, the congruence between the new norms and the acceptable standards of behaviour (Singhal et al., 2006). Radio programmes in Sierra Leone presented 'bundles of ideas', wrapped up in advocacy packages. Through infotainment—drama, music, and live debates, fictional characters on *Atunda Ayen*da offered powerful social referents (Singhal and Rogers, 2002). They informed the audience members about the kinds of behaviours that were desirable, with varying degrees of persuasive influence.

Peace education interventions are known to differ in their effectiveness across different conflict contexts. Salomon (2006: 38–40) notes that individual's acquisition of conflict resolution skills through peace education can be more effective in ahistorical interpersonal conflicts, rather than in historically rooted collective conflicts. In the case of longstanding intergroup conflicts, peace education efforts must take account of the painful historical memories, and the collectively held beliefs about the 'other' ethnic group (Devine-Wright, 2001; Gunawardana, 2003). In Macedonia, without promoting changes in the exo- and macrosystems, without restructuring the relevant institutions, microsystem or interpersonal shifts encouraged through the introduction of prosocial behaviours generated superficial results. They could not promote changes in intergroup socialization. A broader transformation across the exo- and macrosystems was not realized (Bar-Tal and Halperin, 2009; Taylor, 2020: 132).

Second-Order Interpretations on Norm Persuasion and Attitude Change

Through second-order interpretations of the data, I analysed the ways in which the children and youth focused media and education norms contributed to more

Table 6.1 Second-order interpretation of norm concepts

Second-order interpretation	Norm concepts inSierra Leone	Norm concepts in Macedonia	Second-order interpretation
Access and acceptance	Information Sensitization Dependence	Language Intergroup contact Socialization	Intercultural communication
Agency and behaviour	Voice Capacity Participation	Enrolment Institutionalization Pedagogy	Quality pre-school education
Citizenship and democracy	Governance Accountability Elections	Segregation Integrated education Social cohesion	Citizenship and ethnic identity

peaceful attitudes and how far the adopted norms and learnt behaviours were retained over time. I coded the main themes emerging from the meta-ethnographic synthesis of the evaluation reports to identify nine learning concepts on norm transmission for each country (Table 6.1). I then combined these with the findings from the field interviews to analyse the reflections of young people about the effects of media persuasion and bilingual immersion on their attitudes towards peace. I followed Alfred Schütz's distinction between first-order constructs as reported in the interviews and evaluative data, and then applied second-order constructs based on my own interpretation and analysis of the data. As Schütz (1962: 59) puts it, 'the constructs of the social sciences are, so to speak, constructs of the second degree, that is, constructs of the constructs'. By applying Schutz's (1966: 116–32) strand of phenomenology, I interpreted the material in a way that offered me an understanding of the 'mental content of people's natural attitude' and possible shifts in response to the media and education-based norm persuasion efforts.

In the evaluative data, media-related persuasion was measured at various points through (1) radio listening surveys in Sierra Leone; (2) television audience surveys in Macedonia, and (3) behaviour changes during the different phases of bilingual immersion through the *Mozaik* groups. Given the lack of consistency in the methodology applied to capture the data in the evaluation reports, I focused on the prominent messages and themes delivered as part of the project aims. Scholars suggest that to elicit attitude change, the message source, target audience, and context of media-based persuasion should be accounted for (O'Keefe, 2009). In keeping with this approach, for the secondary analysis, I coded three elements: first, the normative arguments of the various projects; second, the basis for the arousal of specific discrete emotions; and third, the behavioural guidance advised by these productions. Once the prominent concepts emerging from the evaluative data across three categories in each case was identified, second-order interpretations

were applied to organize them. The concepts included 'Intercultural Communication', 'Quality Pre-school Education', and 'Citizenship and Ethnic Identity' in Macedonia; and 'Access and Acceptance', 'Agency and Behaviour', and 'Citizenship and Participation' in Sierra Leone (Table 6.1). I discuss each norm concept in turn by analysing the persuasion effects at the level of the individual, and at the social or group level. I further examine their role in influencing young people's agency beyond the project timelines to assess cumulative effects and norm retention.

Macedonia

Intercultural Communication: Minority Language, Intergroup Contact, and Socialization

Exposure to conflict and violence can potentially enhance stereotypical thinking, elicit mistrust, and increase the political exclusion of the outgroup (Bar-Tal and Labin, 2001). Ethnic conflicts are deeply rooted in each side's collective narrative about their identity, aspirations, past and current history (Kupermintz and Salomon, 2005: 294). Time spent in the *Mozaik* groups had variable effects on improving intergroup contacts. In the initial years of primary school, alumni reported greater tolerance towards Albanian children. 'We lead separate lives, we don't mix, yet I feel differently from others in my high school. The other children have anger towards the Albanians.'[1] Over time, exposure to the monolingual instruction during the primary and secondary school years weakened these *Mozaik* values of tolerance. As a *Mozaik* alumni noted, 'when we were young, yes, there were differences with non-*Mozaik* children, as we grow older, there are not major differences, you would not be able to tell whether some children have been to *Mozaik* or not'.[2]

Socialized by grandparents, parents, teachers, and peers from an early age, Macedonian children learn to be wary of the other groups. 'The Albanians are untrustworthy and bad. They live and work here (in Macedonia), but they don't speak the language.'[3] Strong negative emotions, such as hatred, fear, and anger, interfere with the attempts to change attitudes (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). They are transmitted intergenerationally through memories, experiences, and discursive interpretation of events by the older generation (Boulding, 1972). A teenage *Mozaik* alumni in Skopje who was born after the 2001 war noted that the 'Albanians for years have been trying to take away our country.'[4] It became

[1] FGD with *Mozaik* alumni, Debar, 5 September 2017.
[2] FGD with *Mozaik* alumni, Skopje, 8 September 2017.
[3] Primary school student, Skopje, 9 September 2017.
[4] FGD with *Mozaik* alumni, Skopje, 8 September 2017.

clear that the interethnic hatred and negative perceptions were less reflective of their own reality, but more a product of epistemic rigidity.

What then was the value added of the intercultural communication efforts? While contact interventions are known to be effective in reducing intergroup animosity in various post-war contexts, like in Rwanda (Paluck, Green, and Green, 2019), in Macedonia the results were less effective. At the individual level, exposure to the minority language and intergroup contact events increased basic awareness of the language, culture, and religious practices of the minority ethnicities. The dominant use of the Macedonian language in the groups by both teachers and the children created lopsided classroom dynamics. It reflected trends in intergroup interactions more broadly. At the group level, the ecological model of child development was not applied to the intercultural communication focused media and education projects (Jordan, 2005). Due to this, the *Mozaik* groups, and complementary media projects like *Nashe Maalo*, the Bridges for the New Balkans, and the Balkan Theatre Network had only limited persuasive effects on young people's attitudes and behaviours. Even when individual attitudes towards other ethnic groups shifted to more tolerant ones as a result of their exposure to the culture and perceptions of the minority ethnicities, they did not translate into an increase in interethnic contacts or friendships (Euro-Balkan Institute, 2006: 59).

The retention of edutainment messages on *Nashe Maalo* which targeted a wider audience was equally weak. This was due to the weak resonance and superficial adoption of the social cohesion norms that competed rather than conformed with existing beliefs. To be successful, intercultural communication efforts required the transfer of conflict resolution skills between collectives rather than between individuals (Coleman, 2003). Long-standing rifts between the ethnic communities weakened the persuasive appeal of media and education messaging. The anticipated negative social consequences arising from the adoption of new beliefs of intercultural tolerance dissuaded young people from adopting these values in the long-run. Young people conformed to the powerful norms of group social control in both the Macedonian and the Albanian communities. In fact, recent studies suggest that intercultural tolerance has waned (Topuzovska et al., 2019: 10; 45). Legal adoption of social cohesion and integrated education norms by the government were not reflected in the societal acceptance of these norms. Peace education and media projects were limited in their ability to persuade a shift in young people's attitudes towards more positive intergroup relations.

Quality Pre-school Education: Enrolment, Institutionalization, and Pedagogy

As one of the earliest projects on bilingual immersion, *Mozaik*'s appeal was rooted in the provision of quality preschool education, including a high teacher:student

ratio, and high-quality teaching and learning resources. Pedagogical aspects around bilingual instruction were secondary considerations with regards to enrolment (Tankersley, 2001: 113). Therefore, the willingness of Macedonian parents to cross interethnic lines to enrol their children in *Mozaik* was not indicative of a newly found openness to the norms of intercultural communication or reflective of a positive shift in intergroup attitudes.[5] Following the institutionalization of the *Mozaik* groups into the state kindergarten system, the original emphasis on bilinguality and intercultural communication began to be diluted. Quality control of an integrated model of education within a segregated education system created further challenges. Compliance with national procedures, digital record keeping, and standardization did not account for *Mozaik*'s specificities such as the intercultural element. Teachers noted that 'institutionalization brought its own set of challenges… There was more administration, and more work with the increasing numbers of children. We had to observe the children, it was time-consuming and it complicated our work. We had to appease the state, and its bureaucracy.'[6]

The politicization of teachers' employment, particularly new recruitment, during the academic year 2010–11, reinforced intergroup schisms rather than transforming attitudes towards more peaceful relations. In Macedonia, state employment is politicized. State jobs are used as a carrot or a reward for political loyalty and candidates must enjoy the support of local political parties and government officials. Kindergarten teacher jobs represent secure government employment. They are highly coveted and accessed through ethnicized networks of political (and social) patronage. Recruitment decisions are not guided by criteria such as qualifications, experience, or expertise. Teacher recruitment can become subject to the whims of the local government, and to interethnic political competition. For example, if the local government is Albanian, then Macedonian candidates are not hired as teachers in the government schools.[7] For a programme such as *Mozaik* that was attempting to develop a model of bilingual, multicultural education, the question of teacher recruitment amplified interethnic schisms. It intensified competitive rather than peaceful attitudes.

Institutionalization weakened the pedagogical aspects as well. After the government made 100 days of pre-school attendance compulsory in 2012, children less than three years old were allowed to enroll if they were toilet trained. Younger children were less fluent in their mother tongue, and had a limited ability to learn a second language.[8] Little effort was made to extend the bilingual and dual teacher model of the *Mozaik* groups into the linguistically segregated state kindergarten system, creating inequalities in preschool education standards. These discrepancies in provision led to a further dilution of *Mozaik*'s norms and its persuasion

[5] Interview with external evaluator of *Mozaik*, Skopje, 2 September 2017.
[6] FGD with *Mozaik* teachers, Struga, 3 September 2017.
[7] Interview with external evaluator of *Mozaik*, Skopje, 2 September 2017.
[8] Interview with Macedonian teacher, Mozaik group, Struga, 3 September 2017.

effects. According to a 2010 OSCE report, only 26% of children in primary education, and 37% in secondary education interacted with non-ethnics in the school environment (OSCE, 2010, cited in Kavaja, 2017: 485). Without healing deep-rooted social schisms, integrated education initiatives like *Mozaik* can become technocratic processes that attempt to place the proverbial band-aid solution to deeply divided social configurations. Finally, long-term sustainability of a bilingual model requires continuous training for the kindergarten teachers. Pedagogical training when dependent on external funding can create gaps in the training provision (Baseline Survey, 2013). A shift to online training from 2019 onwards has opened up the possibility of a more sustainable and cost-effective model for the government (CCG, 2019). The long-term effects of the pedagogical aspects of the government's pre-school curriculum are yet to be ascertained.

Citizenship and Ethnic Identity: Segregation, Integrated Education, and Social Cohesion

In a multi-ethnic society, integrated education can act as a means to promote mutual cooperation and communication among the different ethnic communities, and help transcend 'superficial civility' (Krsterska-Papic and Zekolli, 2013: 135; Mac Ginty, 2014). Harmonious interethnic relations and trust among citizens are distinctive features of social cohesion (Green, Preston, and Sabates, 2003; Heyneman and Todoric-Bebic, 2000; Anger et al., 2010). My own research and the available scholarship suggest that the OFA was dualistic in its long-term effects. On the one hand, it provided greater protection for minority rights through its emphasis on education in the mother tongue; on the other hand, it also contributed to a deeper segregation of the educational system (Reka, 2008; Anger et al., 2010). At the policy level, the push for integrated education, intercultural communication, and social cohesion norms were reflective of the desire to conform to donor conditionalities. Improving the country's education system is seen as one of the pre-requisites for possible future accession to the EU and potentially to the NATO. While both ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanian elites have this interest in common, the contradictions in their respective nation-building projects have given rise to continuous political tension in the post-OFA period (Fontana, 2016b).

Deep-seated stereotypes, prejudice, and mistrust are difficult to resolve through the legal adoption of externally prescribed norms. Educational policies and practices around integrated education emphasize the integration of the minority group into the majority's social and cultural norms (Kirchberger and Niessen, 2011). Such a policy does not take account of how identities are understood and constructed in relation to matters of memory and citizenship, or how they evolve over time as the idea of the state is refined (Rothstein, 2005, cited in Aleksova, 2015: 60).

For example, in 2019, a new language law extends the official use of the Albanian language to the judicial system with the possibility of reversing judicial verdicts, if there is a lack of translation and interpretation facilities available during court proceedings. The law is opposed by the former ruling party, the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization/Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE), the United Macedonia party, and the Left party. These parties and their vote banks adhere to the narratives from the communist era connected with the piecemeal accommodation of multiple identities with the state.[9] They stand at loggerheads with the policies of integrated education and social cohesion. While interethnic tensions have declined in terms of reported incidents of violence, a conflicted language segregation debate is reflective of the reality of social distance (Zembylas and Bekerman, 2013: 404). Such an approach only reinforces the status quo rather than encouraging societal transformation regarding interethnic attitudes. This is reflected in the educational segregation from primary school onwards that does not support or sustain the internalization of intercultural communication norms introduced through *Mozaik* and the complementary media projects.

Strained socialization dynamics across the ecosystem of children's social relations does not support a long-term shift in young people's attitudes towards harmonious interethnic relations. Children observe the behaviour and attitudes of elders and peers, imitate this, and thereby model their own behaviours and attitudes (Bandura, 1977). Whether the meso-system of teachers, parents, grandparents, and peers promote or oppose amicable interethnic relations can have a major influence on the ideas of children and young people (Van Balkom and Beara, 2012). In the post-2001 period, classroom separation has promoted social and cultural alienation instead of greater interethnic contact (Allport, 1959). Educational segregation and monolingual instruction continue to create negative lived experiences for children, which official policies on integrated education and social cohesion cannot mitigate (Deenen, 2015: 10). These frictions create the potential for further freezing the interethnic conflicts instead of supporting a positive transformation of intergroup relations (Du Pont, 2005).

Sierra Leone

Access and Acceptance: Information, Sensitization, and Dependence

In post-war Sierra Leone, peacebuilding efforts targeted young people through different projects offering vocational training, education, and leadership skills. These projects aimed at developing the capacity and skills of young people with the aim

[9] Skype interview with senior military officer from Macedonia, 17 April 2020.

of empowering them. The broad advocacy efforts notwithstanding, only a small percentage of young people had access to the training and capacity building efforts in real terms.[10] Those well-networked into the civil society sector would receive regular invitations to attend different workshops and training events. 'The same youth began to shop around between projects…this created a saturated bubble of some youth with greater access to peace projects than others.'[11] Exposure and access to advocacy and activism encouraged them to embrace a developmental culture. It led them to become citizen activists; others used their contacts to start their own local organizations where their entrepreneurial skills were tested.[12]

Radio presented lower barriers to access. Through a continuous and interactive process, audiences were persuaded to adopt a change in their attitudes and behaviours on a variety of issues. The main drawback with radio-based sensitization was the information provided; radio also told young people what choices were best for them. Prescriptive messaging brushed aside the nuances involved with life outcomes. Similar choices may not lead to the same outcome in every case, fomenting disappointment with what peacebuilding and development could realistically deliver in young people's everyday lives (Bangura, 2016). Peacebuilding norms created new expectations about how youth should be treated. They led to the desire amongst youth to be less marginalized and more central to decision-making. Improvement in their social status was less readily forthcoming, however. In applying a critical lens to social practices like child labour, radio-based sensitization did not take stock of the material and lineal interdependence in which generational responsibility and relations are embedded. Without changes in young people's access to resources such as land, and merit-based employment opportunities in the formal sector, the norms on rights and participation generated mixed acceptance.

At the individual level, acceptance was directly linked to the utility rather than the resonance with prior beliefs. This led to the instrumentalization of rights-based discourses amongst formerly marginal populations like youth and women, and resistance amongst elders and the traditionally powerful in society. Young people's attitudes to peace became tactical and ambivalent. The discourse on rights was invoked when relevant to furthering their interests. Youth chose conformity with the elders when compliance presented better livelihood opportunities as seen in the Pujehun example. Human rights-based approaches were irreconcilable with social control mechanisms that are culturally significant (Dixon, 2021: 35). Due to this resistance, radio sensitization could not persuade long-lasting change in the group norms. The diffusion of rights-based discourses created new forms of intergenerational tensions.[13] Youth and women's empowerment were seen as

[10] Interview with Country Director Sierra Leone Country Office, Freetown, 28 March 2017.
[11] Interview with National Youth Parliament Representative, Freetown, 22 March 2017.
[12] Interview with civil society activist, Freetown, 25 March 2017.
[13] Interview with female staff at local NGO established by a former GKN presenter, Freetown, 25 March 2017.

inimical to, and erosive of, established social norms around reciprocity, obligations, and hierarchy by the older generation. Community elders and chiefs perceived peacebuilding NGOs as socially disruptive. They were seen as pitting children against adults in the name of rights and empowerment, encouraging them to demand rights and opportunities from adults as a given, while denouncing the importance of traditional values and communal duties.[14]

Compliance in an external narrative of development acutely enhanced the dependence of rural communities on material support from donors, political patrons, and INGOs. 'Communities are not interested in how much funding is available, or the duration of project support, at the core of their expectation is some form of benefit, the insistence that interveners must help them.'[15] With patron–client relationships shifting to INGOs, a skewed relationship between the state and society developed. 'If a community requires textbooks for school, or tube-wells for safe drinking water they will go to ActionAid, rather than to the under-resourced local councillor or the inaccessible member of Parliament.'[16] This outcome was rooted in a deep-seated culture of dependency, of seeking help from the more resourceful in society. 'If one is successful, there is an expectation that you will need to give back to the community in the form of material support.'[17] When NGOs become the primary go to for support, they assume the role of caretakers instead of families, thus weakening the existing social capital. While intending to help, NGOs inadvertently caused harm. They cannot offer sustained support given their transient presence (Dolan, 2009; Branch, 2011). With the family and elders replaced by civil society actors as the primary providers of social care and support, additional layers of complexity were added to the pre-existing fissures in intergenerational relations.

Agency and Behaviour: Voice, Capacity, and Participation

The norms around *voice, capacity,* and *participation* transmitted through the radio programmes encouraged youth agency or the capacity to think and act independently, to make choices, and operationalize those choices in their everyday lives. Youth agency interacted with radio-based persuasion and community-based norm change campaigns to determine attitudes.[18] Previous studies on radio-based sensitization have found that if listeners think that the behaviours modelled in the radio dramas would not be effective in producing social change in their own context, they might not endorse these messages (Bilali and Vollhardt, 2015: 614).

[14] Ibid.

[15] Interview with a former GKN presenter who runs a local youth focused NGO, Freetown, 25 March 2017.

[16] Interview with staff, Institute for Governance Reform, 26 March 2017.

[17] Interview with a former GKN presenter who runs a local youth focused NGO, Freetown, 25 March 2017.

[18] For studies that examine how youth agency is framed and understood, see McEvoy-Levy, 2001, 2006; Del Felice and Wisler, 2007; Drummond-Mundal and Cave, 2007; Podder, 2015.

The second-order interpretation of the evaluative data confirmed this. Youth in Sierra Leone were fearful of adopting non-conformist attitudes particularly in rural settings where social control was stronger due to interdependent structures of family and kin relations. Corruption and neo-patrimonial control over resources like land by rural elites determined youth behaviour and capacity in ways that limited their ability to exercise agency. The other finding was that youth focused radio, while targeting a wide audience, did not address the priorities of the different youth constituencies and was therefore limited in terms of persuading economic, social, and cultural empowerment.

The scope of socio-political, economic, and cultural agency exercised by young people in the post-war period further determined the link between agency and behaviour. With regard to socio-political agency, local governance reforms opened up the political space, allowing youth to take an active part in public life. Through their participation in radio and community advocacy, children, and youth achieved a sense of inclusion, respect, and improved status in their communities. GKN encouraged more positive assessments of children's roles and talents' (SfCG, 2008/9: 1). Radio-based sensitization and community advocacy did not however persuade deep changes in post-war social relations around governance and participation. As we saw, women and youth were rarely included in deliberations around the land deals (Daley and Pallas, 2014; Millar, 2015). Their status as land users engaged in subsistence farming was subject to the landowner's willingness to provide them with access to the land (Marfurt, Käser, and Lustenberger, 2016: 290, 293).

LSLAs disempowered youth. Loss of arable land led to an out-migration of young men and women from rural communities to use land in adjoining chiefdoms. This created added burdens for their aging parents, spouses, and children.[19] Edutainment programmes like *Bush Wahala*, increased the knowledge of the rural communities regarding land ownership; it enabled non-violent mediation, by proposing dialogue as an alternative to conflict, thereby contributing to a shift in overt behaviour such as violent attacks (Baú, 2019: 383). In terms of the broader internalization of accountability norms regarding land acquisition, NGOs like Green Scenery and legal groups like Namati played an important role through dialogue, legal action, and the legitimate representation of local grievances. The knowledge gained through radio programmes, and the success of legal action to reverse land grabs as seen in the Port Loko example, had direct and persuasive effects on young people's approach to political violence. The use of judicial processes has encouraged a shift from violent to non-violent youth agency in the socio-political sphere.

In terms of economic agency, in the post-war period many youths were systematically disadvantaged or discriminated against on the basis of their role during the conflict. With limited access to education and formal jobs, large numbers of ex-combatants took to bike riding. The traffic police would arrest them or seize

[19] Skype interview with staff, Namati, 9 October, 2020.

their bikes for non-compliance with the traffic regulations. As the riders were largely uneducated, they turned to wartime social networks and support from their military commanders to understand and comply with the traffic rules. The conflict between the bike riders and the police wardens was resolved through donor funded conflict resolution trainings. Radio programmes such as *Traffic Kotoku* and *On the Road* generated public awareness of the rights and duties of both riders and their civilian clientele. The BRU and its leadership initially seen as a counterweight to patrimonial politics have been co-opted into the national political dynamics due to the large vote bank they represent. The BRAs have developed links to the chiefs, and to political and commercial elites as their patrons. In important ways the functioning of these associations is guided by the mutual obligations between these patrons and their youthful clients (Fanthorpe and Maconachie, 2010). Political interference in the national delegate elections including police arrests of candidates in December 2018 point to the growing politicization and a return to neo-patrimonial control (Sierra Network Salone, 2018).

Political party loyalism has eaten deeply into student life as well. Clashes between youth and the police in the towns of Kabala (2016), Kono (2012, 2013), Tonkilili (2012), and Bo (2017) are indicative of this trend.[20] In terms of cultural production, up until the 2007 elections, locally produced music on politics enjoyed great popularity. Pop songs such as 'Corruption' by Daddy Saj, 'Wake up' by Steady Bongo, and 'The System' by Jungle, appealed to a wide audience. Radio programmes were developed along similar themes, *Accountability Now* being an example of this trend. Protest music served as a powerful informal opposition, ushering political change in 2007 (Kandeh, 2008: 627; Shepler, 2010: 627–8; Stastik, 2016: 215–20). Once in power, the APC, which had effectively used protest music to win the 2007 elections against the SLPP, clamped down on its production (Stastik, 2012: 100–5). Politicized music abruptly dropped in popularity, as the political climate and tolerance for protest music waned, creating new controls on youth's cultural production.

Citizenship and Democracy: Governance, Accountability, and Elections

In Sierra Leone, politics and youth mobilization into violence have a closely intertwined history. Urban youth have been instrumental for the political elite, as thugs for the ruling party, and as political labour for decades before the civil war (Abdullah, 2002: 24–5). Socialization into violent party politics often became a route to upward mobility in a rigidly hierarchical social system (Christensen and Utas, 2008: 518). Relations of reciprocity and dependence between 'big' and 'small' people meant youth mobilization into the conflict, and in post-civil war politics

[20] Interview with Former Commonwealth Youth Caucus Sierra Leone Representative, and World Peace Prayer Society peace representative, Freetown, 27 March 2017.

had deep structural continuity. Youth participation in elections was less attuned to their citizenship and the exercise democratic rights and more about employment and social mobility (Hoffman, 2011; Enria, 2015). Donor assistance for democracy promotion was prominent from the 2007 elections onwards. Donors supported the National Election Commission and underwrote 70% of the cost of the elections. The Sierra Leone country office and its partners received funding to support voter education, voter registration, and to sensitize youth towards non-violent participation. Community radios proved quite effective in publicizing locally relevant information, neutralizing the effects of rumours and hearsay, reducing the chance of riots and public violence as a result (Sesay and Hughes, 2004: 136). Youth noted that they would take the money or alcohol offered by the politicians, but would not engage in violence on their behalf.[21]

From 2004onwards when decentralization and local governance reforms were afoot, voter apathy among the youth was very high. Informing young people about the importance of peaceful participation in elections and the judicious application of their political franchise was a major focus of community engagement and training efforts. Radio persuasion has played an important role in enhancing voter knowledge about the electoral process, and about the right to demand effective governance. Over the years, Sierra Leone has had regular national and local elections, with declining rates of electoral violence. Every election since 2004 has been used by the voters to hold their leaders accountable. Political turnover is high, with a reported 65–70% turnover in Parliament (2017).[22] This ability to raise questions and reflect on the performance of elected elites was a direct result of radio-based sensitization (SfCG, 1998; Shepler, 2010: 627; Taouti-Cherif, 2008). High political turnover has prompted a shift in the composition of the political elite. A new class of elected MPs from the civil society sector and the diaspora have started replacing Paramount chiefs as the traditional political class. This trend has been accompanied by a growing demand for accountability and transparency around electoral mandates. The evidence suggests a positive shift in young people's attitudes towards peaceful democratic politics and meaningful electoral participation. Although such a shift has not been able to reform the political culture. Lack of clear intergenerational transition of political power means that youth continue to rely on political party affiliation and political leaders for access to resources, reinforcing some of the neo-patrimonial trends around dependence that fuelled the civil war.

The Limits of Persuasion and Young People's Attitudes to Peace

From this analysis, we can conclude that attitudes are formed through both direct and observational experience. Social factors and social learning are important

[21] Interview with male local NGO staff, Freetown, 26 March 2017.
[22] Interview with staff, Institute for Governance Reform, 26 March 2017.

variables in determining prior beliefs (Slovak, Carlson, and Helm, 2007; Choe, Zimmerman, and Devnarain 2012). Existing norms affect how any new or emergent norm may be interpreted and evaluated. To be sustainable, new norms must fit coherently with existing norms and become embedded in the normative structure of the specific web of beliefs and social institutions (Florini, 1996: 376). When new norms are at loggerheads with social control mechanisms, they are unlikely to be adopted in any meaningful way. If norms resonate strongly with prior beliefs or if they are seen as beneficial in advancing the rights and voices of young people in local settings, they are more likely to be adopted. Once institutionalized in the public discourses and policies, norms only become powerful if they introduce practices to induce new patterns of behaviour and not just attitudes. Low resonance means norms may not be institutionalized as pockets of resistance, rejection, or alternative ideas are possible. Institutionalization is complete when there is both high norm resonance and the internalization of norms, not only at the individual, but also at the societal or group level.

In Sierra Leone, behaviour change communication focused heavily on targeted messaging. Radio triggered an instrumental adoption of the norms around issues of human rights, education, gender, and governance by women and youth, because these norms proved empowering for them. The older generation were less receptive to adopting the recommended behaviours concerning child abuse, child labour, and various SRH practices as these were seen to be at loggerheads with domestic social norms and practices. This was also the case with equitable access to land resources. Rural chiefs rarely consulted women and youth during land deal negotiations that affected their lives and livelihoods adversely. Obedience, subordination, and respect for the community's authority structures, and dependence on the part of youthful clients were valued over youth's independence and agency. In the case of elections and youth participation in electoral violence, the relevance, frequency, and consistency of messaging led to greater internalization, norm retention, and transformative behaviours. Through IRN and their network of community radio partners, messages around elections and electoral behaviours were effectively linked between the national and local media levels. Through meet-the-candidate events and district-level electoral debates, advocacy was combined with grassroots participation and reflection. By promoting a collective shift in societal norms around peaceful electoral participation, individual behaviour could be enforced more effectively.

In Macedonia, attempts to create intergroup trust through structured contact had limited long-term effects. Changes in young people's behaviours are linked to both contact quality and contact quantity (Binder et al., 2009). Structured contact through *Mozaik* and complementary intercultural communication programmes like the NDC and USAID funded IIEP projects involved a mix of virtual contact (social media), para-social contact (positive media portrayals of intergroup relationships), and extended contact (through friendships or positive relationships

with an outgroup member) (Berger et al., 2016: 2). The contact initiatives were mostly ad hoc or short-term in nature with little follow-up. They emphasized more on virtual and para-social contact than on extended contact. The emphasis on assessing individual-level transformations overlooked the connection between the outcomes for individuals at the micro-level, and the outcomes that influence the consolidation of peace at the macro-level (Gürkaynak et al., 2008). Families were only indirect targets of the media and peace education-based persuasion efforts. In a society where the agency and capacity of young people to adopt norms were constrained by familial values and interactions, retention of norms took place at a rhetorical or superficial level, even when legal adoption of externally promoted concepts such as integrated education and social cohesion followed. Norm change and implementation across society was restricted to weak internalization and low resonance, and only a superficial adoption of these norms.

In conclusion, media and education programmes alone may not bring about more peaceful attitudes among children and young people. They must incorporate an ecological model of child development, targeting different actors at different levels through multilevel programming if they are to foster attitude change across society. In more closed societies, characterized by exclusive forms of social capital such as Macedonia, media and peace education were less influential in eliciting conformist attitudes (Salomon, 2004; Tropp et al, 2008; Romer et al, 2009; Taylor et al, 2019b). To effect long-term norm change, the peace education and complementary media and theatre projects needed to target group perceptions on intercultural interaction, rather than targeting other precursors to behaviours such as shifting social attitudes through increased intergroup contact (Paluck, 2009b: 594–600). Radio and media related work were more influential in shaping citizens' perceptions and attitudes to new ideas around rights, participation, democracy, and governance in societies with lower resistance to external norms such as Sierra Leone (McCombs and Shaw, 2017). From an attitude change and norm persuasion perspective, Sierra Leone presents a case of mixed acceptance of external norms, with high acceptance amongst children, youth, and women of the norms around human rights, accountability, and good governance that helped empower their position in society. These same norms fomented resistance from elders and traditional authority figures, who lost power following decentralization and local government reforms in the post-2004 period.

Finding ways to sustain the ripple effects of peacebuilding programmes requires dedicated, long-term, and institutionalized support for young people (Helsing et al., 2006: 196). In Macedonia, without capitalizing on the ripple effects emanating from individual or micro-level transformations in attitudes and beliefs, it was challenging to ascertain how far the norms that influence individual attitudes can reach others who did not participate in these programmes. Recent studies on the multiplier effects of peace education projects have shown that when alumni engage in further peacebuilding activities in their communities (see, Lazarus, 2011;

Ross and Lazarus, 2015; Ross, 2017; Cromwell, 2019: 62), the meso-level of the community acts as a bridge between the micro and the macro levels. Links with *Mozaik* alumni for scaling up and sustaining effects were not tapped until much later in the project life-cycle. Follow-up with the participants in the media and theatre projects was also limited or piecemeal at best. This did not allow multiplier effects that could strengthen the norm retention process to be generated (d'Estrée et al., 2001: 108). Given these dynamics, media and peace education programmes can only be as strong as the social institutions and the legal, political, and economic processes that assist in transforming conflicts (Bratić, 2008: 501). Without adequate follow-up, supportive national institutions, and normative resonance with the prevailing societal systems, the values and norms transmitted through peace projects often become obscure or lost over time. As a result, the persuasion effects of media and peace education in shaping young people's attitudes towards peace can often be transient or limited rather than enduring and transformative.