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# The Effectiveness of Peace Education Program on the Preschoolers' Social Behaviour in the Sultanate of Oman

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – This research aims to measure the effects of the peace education program on the social and emotional behaviours of preschool children in the Sultanate of Oman. Children should be equipped with basic values, such as respecting the efforts and ideas of others, forming a comprehensive and positive relationship with people, possessing the skills of empathy, and resolving conflicts in peaceful ways.

**Design/methods/approach** – The researcher adopted the quasi-experimental approach, and the current study presented the Peace Education Program (PEP) for children aged 4–6 years in the Sultanate of Oman. The participants consisted of 40 children in the experimental group and 40 children in the control group. The researcher used a scale with picture choice questions containing two pictures per question to measure the behaviours of children before and after the treatments. The peace education program for the study also included 28 training sessions that were presented for 15 weeks at a duration of one hour per session.

**Findings** – The current study results also favoured the experimental group, as an improvement in their social behaviour was observed after joining the program.

**Research implications/limitations** – The research demonstrates that peace is a key prerequisite for developing a balanced life, especially in childhood. The results may be of great significance in measuring and improving children's behaviour through (PEP).

**Practical implications** – The study findings may likely be fruitful to Oman's pupils, educators, curriculum designers, and educational policy-makers.

**Originality/value** – This study has been successful in focusing on some aspects of growth and behaviour enhancement in children.

**Keywords** Peace education, Social behaviour, Pre-school

**Paper type** Research paper

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## 1. Introduction

Peace also is the highest level that helps spread tranquillity, happiness, harmony, and balance, not only with others. However, it is peace of mind and inner tranquillity with a mind full of love and enables living peacefully. The top level of the spiritual pyramid is inner harmony and self-alignment to live peacefully with comfort and peace of mind. These could be gained through continuous training on dealing with others on a win-win solution basis (Al-Sharqawi, 2014). The researcher finds that training children on peace since childhood makes them deal with themselves and all that surrounds them peacefully and safely away from violence.

In addition, peace education is a philosophy and process concerned with gaining knowledge about various aspects of peace, violence, and peace-making skills. It is also the process of instilling elements of peace education in learners to develop their abilities to demonstrate tolerance and skills for solving conflicts non-violently and a sense of dedication in creating peace education (Akudolu, 2010).

The current study supports the principle of bringing peace to children, even those living in a peaceful and secure environment, considering the following reasons. First, our world planet has transformed into a small village through electronics to realize what is happening around us. As a result of being influenced by all they have been living through, children have become more aggressive than young people. When they engage with each other to resolve issues, such aggression is expressed in their game.

Second, article 29 of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child states that child education must be directed toward preparing the child to live with responsibility in a free society and with a spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality between the sexes, and friendship among all people (Al-Saidi, 2013).

Third, the study by Graça Machel (1996) on the impact of armed conflict on children and the critical role of education in shaping the future of peace emphasized the importance of content that promotes peace education, social justice, human rights respect, and acceptance of responsibility, as well as the importance of teaching children negotiation, problem-solving, and reflection skills. Moreover, contacts that enable them to resolve issues peacefully on the impact of armed conflict on children and the importance of education in shaping the future of peace emphasized that content must promote peace education, social justice, respect for human rights and acceptance of responsibility, and the need to teach children the skills of negotiation, problem-solving and reflection. Moreover, contacts enable them to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence (International Human Rights Instruments, 2008). Graça Machel (1996) The study on the effect of armed conflict on children and the role of education in shaping a future of peace also emphasized the importance of content that promotes peace education, social justice, human rights respect, and accountability, as well as the need to educate children in the skills of dialogue, problem-solving, and contemplation, as well as contacts that allow for the peaceful resolution of disputes (International Human Rights Instruments, 2008).

Fourth, article 29 of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child states that educating the child to live responsibly in a free society in the sense of awareness, peace, tolerance, gender equality, and friendship among all individuals is the purpose of child education (Al-Saidi, 2013).

Hence the importance of raising awareness of peace and its necessity to protect human beings, as permanent peace is a necessary condition for fulfilling all human rights and duties, and also for the liberation of human and physical resources from devastating conflicts and directed to solve the problems of human society and achieve development and prosperity (Al-Saeed, 2010).

Recently, there has been a growing interest in peace education, especially with the United Nations' efforts to promote peace education, launch the Culture of Peace Decade, and protect the world's children from violence from 2001 to 2010. As the lead agency for the International Decade, UNESCO called upon UNESCO's member states to promote peace education nationally and regionally. The United Nations General Assembly endorsed this resolution by Decree 56 at its fifty-sixth session on November 5, 2001, by reaffirming a declaration and a program for peace education, based on its charter and UNESCO's charter, and stipulating: Since wars are born in the

minds of men, strongholds of peace must be built In their minds, “and the United Nations realizes that peace does not only mean the absence of conflicts but also requires a process of positive participation in which dialogue is encouraged, and disputes are resolved in a spirit of understanding and cooperation” (Al-Abd, 2002).

Education for children in the pre-formal school stages is one of the most important educational stages for the children's cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic development, consists of they constitute psychological construction on which the fundamentals of genetic, mental health are based and at this stage changes occur in all types of growth, mental, physical, emotional, linguistic, social, and the maturity of each of them; the child's susceptibility to them is also affected by the factors surrounding it daily (Qenaoui & Abdel Muti, 2000).

In addition, early childhood is often called the golden age of the mark with the rapid changes in the social development of children, so that in order for every child to pass this period healthily and positively, it is necessary to seek the appropriate in training them peace education from an early age. The peace learning program is one of the best ways to develop children's skills so that children can communicate well and smoothly and recognize and solve problems, adapt, resilience, respect, love, and tolerance of others.

This confirms that the first years of a child's life are essential in building their intellectual ability, character and social behaviour. Children are provided with a range of social capacities, physical and psychological abilities enabling them to interact, gain experience and grow. If the attention they seek from adults is not well provided, the development of such abilities may be delayed impeded. Studies also suggest that behaviour that develops in children occurs before the age of seven, and because children are the future of our lives in the next generations to come, they honour the values of culture and maintain social and moral values. Therefore it is essential to promote these values with children through useful educational programs (Salama, 2002).

The Sultanate of Oman's Vision 20/40 asserted that Oman aims to be one of the top ten countries enjoying peace in the world (Supreme Planning Council, 2019). The present study is also aimed at supporting the 20/40. The vision of Oman is to be reached and archived at the highest level.

In Oman, education has been carefully considered since 1970 to expand the scientific, social, and financial development of its general public and meet the educational needs of Omani citizens satisfactorily to meet the needs of daily life. Moreover, the procedural changes that confirm the adoption of dynamic or constructional training convictions have significantly increased because Omanis react to globalization and the demands of today's society (Ministry of Education, 2007).

In the framework of the fruitful cooperation and partnership between the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Omani Educational Ministry, the Child-Friendly Schools initiative, which is a vital project supported by the organization and applied in many countries all over the world to develop the quality of education and peace planting, creates a child-friendly school environment, prepares and trains the teacher to be a supportive partner of child-friendly schools. The initiative aims are set to: Make the educational environment friendly and loving to the child; Raising awareness of the Rights of the Child's Convention among children, parents, and civil society; Promoting the principles of children's rights in the education system; Promoting the inclusion of children with disabilities in the educational institutions; Strengthening partnership among all target groups in society) (Ministry of Education & UNICEF., 2015).

The initiative has been implemented in three of the eleven governorates of Oman (Muscat-Dhofar- Musandam) and has been implemented for children from the first grade to the twelfth grade at the post-primary level. Since it did not include in its application stage of pre-school education, there is a significant lack of understanding among children of pre-school of their educational rights, which are within the education of peace.

On the other hand, Muscat Daily (2018) showed that the abuses against Omani children had become 387 cases in a recent newspaper report. (e.g., physical, verbal, negligence, and sexual harassment) occurred between January and June 2018. The cases reported through the free hotline (1100) of the Ministry of Social Development uncovered many of the abuse cases against children that were hidden before. Although there is a Children Code in Oman published by a royal

decree number 22/2014 (Ministry of Social Development, 2014) to protect children and preserve their rights, it is still not enough. Children should learn how to take preventive actions to be ready for the incident to shield themselves from any violence.

Additionally, the researcher believes that we must develop a program for pre-school children that teaches peace skills such as love, tolerance, honesty, cooperation, respect, happiness, dialogue, and protection to ensure that children develop holistically and become peace-loving and peacemakers. This is an endeavour to foster peace in children from an early age to build a world free of strife and bloodshed. Without peace, people live in panic and fear, lose their stability, treat their surroundings as enemies, lose friendship and respect for others, and people cannot live in isolation.

In this context, the current study can bring fruitful results for children, teachers, policymakers, and the entire learning and training process in the Sultanate of Oman. The study program was designed to help people reduce and avoid conflicts by helping them better understand one another. The Peace Education Program (PEP) for Children is a capacity-building program designed to provide the needed skills to help them constructively confront and eliminate devastating conflicts. When children understand how conflicts occur and have the skills and attitudes to confront them, the proportion of sterile problems that cannot be solved is significantly reduced.

Peace has as many definitions as its types. Thus it might not be easy to have one unified definition, i.e., Al-Saeed (2010) argued that this program aims at promoting the non-violence culture and human rights respect as well as respect and unity among communities, cultural exchange, the connection between peace and political engagement, and sustainable human development. In addition, it promotes social engagement, the free flow and exchanging of information and knowledge, the commitment to conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and the establishment of gender equality (Al-Saeed, 2010). The current study sought to modify children's social behaviour through the peace education program. Social behaviour is a set of works, performances, experiences, and activities that pre-school children learn and repeat, and they train regularly until they enter into their social interaction with others and the things around them (Hassouna, 2007).

## 2. Objectives and Hypotheses

The current study is aimed to build a Peace Education Program (PEP) that demonstrates positive social behaviours to children. More specifically, the study's objective identifies significant differences in preschoolers' social behaviour between the experimental and the control group after the Peace Education Program (PEP). In line with this purpose, the study was guided by the two following main hypotheses. (a) There are no significant differences in the social behaviour of preschoolers between the experimental and the control group after the PEP. (b) There are no significant differences in the social behaviour of preschoolers within the experimental group before and after the PEP. To test these hypotheses, three sub-hypotheses were formulated based on the three dimensions of the social behaviours of the preschoolers, namely, self-care skills, interpersonal relation skills, and communication skills. The three sub-hypotheses are as following: (a) There are no significant differences in self-care skills of preschool children within the experimental group before and after the PEP. (b) There are no significant differences in interpersonal relation skills of preschool children within the experimental group before and after the PEP. (c) There are no significant differences in communication skills of preschool children within the experimental group before and after the PEP. c) As for determining whether there are significant differences between male and female preschoolers in social behaviour after having the PEP. The third hypothesis came: There are no significant differences between male and female preschoolers in social behaviour after having the PEP.

To answer the research questions and investigate the accuracy of the proposed hypotheses, the study was based on a theory through which the researcher formulated a new framework for data analysis as follows: Maslow's theory says that humans have basic needs that must be met first on which other needs are based. These are the basic needs of children that must be fulfilled,

after which other needs of higher virtues such as coexistence, peaceful life, and constructive dialogues are met. The study adopted Maslow's theory to emphasize constructive dialogue between individuals, respect, love, peace, cooperation, tolerance, and honesty. In other words, pre-school children can access and possess such virtues after they reach comprehensive self-realization based on other needs in the hierarchy, including the most important ones at the base of the pyramid. The results of potential social behaviour problems arising from this theory may greatly assist decision-makers and other staff to take the necessary steps and actions in the making / finding appropriate solutions that help promote and spread peace education in kindergartens in Oman.

### 3. Previous Studies Related to Study

Dijk, Haan & Winter (2020) written about "peace education in violent circumstances." The authors concentrated on the peace education practices of instructors in slums around Brazil. Teachers incorporated a restrictive strategy based on ethical care in order to foster a pleasant instructional atmosphere. The author stated that a critical awareness of the societal context could aid in implementing peace education programs to transform hostile educational environments into peaceful ones. The data collection took place at preschools located in Salvador's slum neighbourhoods, with around 3 million people in 2016 (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE), 2016). The first author collected the data in eleven months of ethnographic fieldwork in 2015 and 2016. The process of data collection involved daily participation in three different community preschools and many guest families. The author concluded that pre-school educators described the neighbourhood's environment as increasingly violent due to gangs of drug trafficking and their fights with the police and other rival factions. The study stressed that "the risk of children getting caught up in drug use or traffic was considered the direst threat within the community."

Very recently, Murano, Lipnevich, Walton, Burrus, Way & Carrasco (2020) undertook a study to assess primary pupils' social and emotional abilities. They ran two searches to generate and evaluate questions to assess third, fourth, and fifth-grade students' emotional and social skills. Using the Big Five personality model as an assessment framework, the authors found that elementary pupils' emotional and social abilities can be tested validly and reliably. Additionally, the authors determined that teamwork is the primary component contributing to elementary students' academic performance and achievement.

Taka (2019) studied the role of education in promoting and building peace in learners in Rwanda. The author adopted a qualitative interpretive research design. Interviews were used as data instruments, where 23 learners were individually interviewed. The author stressed that while education was used as a means of discrimination and destruction in Rwanda in the past, it is now a pillar for peace, prosperity, unity, peace, coexistence, and love. This was due to the significant dramatic change of replacing Rwanda's poor-based-discrimination educational system with a modern educational system guaranteeing the rights of all citizens. The author found that education plays a crucial role in healing past wounds by ending those tragic incidents and replacing them with different notions of love, peace, and coexistence. The author found that peace education plants great values, attitudes, and behaviour, improving learners' social rapport and relationships.

Al Hashemi (2016) conducted interesting theories about positive psychology. His study aimed to investigate how effective a proposed program about educational games was in evolving some social skills in children at the school preparatory stage. The study sample consisted of 52 children as participants (between 5-6 years old). The group was equally divided into two groups (experimental and control). The main variables between the two groups were: age, IQ, ranking AD, and parental educational level. The study used different materials (Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test, the child form data, the photographer measure of social skills, and the training program). This study applied an experimental method, relying on the design of a non-randomly control group of the two pre and post-tests. SPSS was used to analyze the statistical data. The hypotheses were tested by calculating square ETA ( $\eta^2$ ), the *t*-test, and the analysis of covariance.

In the overall conclusion, the results showed that children's social skills improved after completing the program.

Al Sawafi (2015) conducted a study to measure the effectiveness of a training program in developing some social skills among a sample of pre-school children. Three social skills were identified (empathy, communication with others, cooperation). The program was applied to a sample of (20) pre-school children (ranging from 4-6) years from Santo Private School in Sharqiyah North Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman. The researcher used the Social Intelligence Scale in the study of Al-Qatami and Al-Yousef (2010), which consists of a photographic scale and a note form for the teacher. The study results confirmed the correctness of the first hypothesis about statistically significant differences in the social skills (empathy, communication with others, cooperation) with pre-school children in the first and second measurements. This is because of the training program used in this study. The results also confirmed the second hypothesis, which indicates no statistically significant differences between the second and follow-up measurements in social skills (empathy, communication with others, cooperation) among a sample of pre-school children.

Al-Saidi (2013) evaluated the effectiveness of enrichment activities in planting the concepts of peace in kindergarten children. To achieve the study's objectives, the semi-experimental method was used on a random sample ( $n = 46$ ) of kindergarten children in the Holy City in the second semester of 2013. The sample included 23 children in the experimental group and 23 children in control. The researcher prepared a daily program concerning the education of peace (Peace Unit). The researcher concluded that integrating peace education in the curricula enriches the kindergarten programs, thus boosting students' motivation and desire to learn effectively and quickly.

## 4. Methods

The present study used a quasi-experimental approach. To evaluate the peace education program (the independent variable) on preschool children's social behaviour (the dependent variable) in the Sultanate of Oman.

In the current study, the researcher used the quasi-experimental design approach for two unequal groups: the control group and the experimental group, where the children were selected from the KG2 class, and the number of children in the study sample was ( $N = 80$ ) children (42 male and 38 female), and the experimental group was included On (40 children) and the control group on (40 children). Then the two groups underwent a pre-test. After that, the experimental group was subjected to the independent variable (Peace Education Program), and the control group was not exposed. Finally, at the end of the experiment, a post-test of the experimental and control groups was performed to assess the effect of applying the independent variable.

## 5. Result

Normality tests were performed to ensure sample normality. Subsequently, the ANCOVA test was applied as an inferential analysis approach to test the study hypotheses.

Table 1. Normality Tests for Study Variables

	Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Social Behaviour	Self-Care Skills	1.4938	.26821	.731	-.475
	Interpersonal Relation Skills	1.5625	.23403	.839	-.495
	Communication Skills	1.5896	.23562	.673	-.609

SD= Standard Deviation

Table (1) shows the skewness and kurtosis values of the mean, standard deviation, and normality tests for each of the study variables. Results illustrate that all variables are normally distributed as the kurtosis and skewness values are between  $\pm 2$ . This is regarded as acceptable, as suggested by George & Mallery (2016).

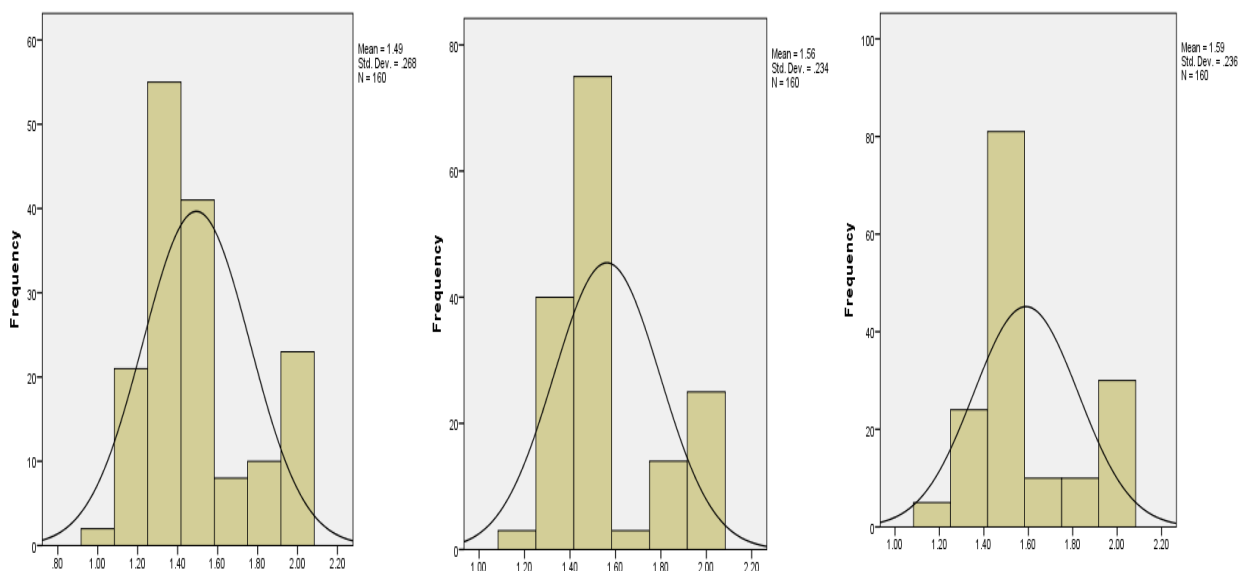


Figure 1: Self-Care Skills    Figure 2: Interpersonal Relation Skills    Figure 3: Communication Skills

### 5.1. Testing Research Hypotheses

They were first testing the differences in the social behaviour of preschoolers between the experimental and the control group after the Peace Education Program (PEP). The first hypothesis assumes that there are no significant differences in the social skills of pre-school children between the control and the experimental group of the peace education program (PEP), which means that there is a pre-test and a post-test for each social skill also there is an independent variable with two groups (control and experimental), so by using ANCOVA test, the independent variable will be the children' group (experimental and control), the dependent variable was the post-test and the covariate variable is the pre-test. The ANCOVA test results are shown in table (2).

Table 2. ANCOVA Results for Testing The Differences in The Social Skills of Preschool Children Between The Experimental and The Control Group of The (PEP)

Variable	Test	Mean	S.D	F	Sig.	Effect Size %
Social	Control	1.4319	.06097	1588.119	.000	95.4
	Experimental	1.9306	.05731			

Sig. <.05

Table (2) demonstrates significant differences between the experimental and the control groups concerning preschool children's social skills after attending the (PEP). The significance level is .000, which is less than .05. This means that preschool children's social skills are significantly improved after attending the (PEP). The mean values indicate this before (M=1.43) and after (M=1.93). Thus, the PEP is with an effect size of a percentage of .95.

As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected and accept the alternative hypothesis as the social skills of the pre-schoolers. Testing the differences in the social behaviour of preschool children within the experimental group before and after (PEP).

Second, testing the differences in the social behaviour of preschoolers within the experimental group before and after the Peace Education Program (PEP).” In order to test this hypothesis, three sub-hypotheses are derived from this central hypothesis based on the three dimensions of the social behaviour of the pre-schoolers: self-care skills, interpersonal relation skills, and communication skills. The three sub-hypotheses are as following: a)Testing the differences in the self-care skills of preschoolers within the experimental group before and after the (PEP). The first sub-hypothesis of the social behaviour states that “There are no significant differences in self-care skills of preschool children within the experimental group before and after the Peace Education Program (PEP),” to test this sub- hypothesis, the ANCOVA test is used as well. This hypothesis assumes “that there are significant differences in self-care skills of preschool

children within the experimental group before and after the peace education program (PEP).” This means that there is a pre-test and a post-test for each self-care skill. Also, there is an independent variable with two groups. Using the ANCOVA test, the independent variable is the students’ experimental group, the dependent variable is the experimental group’s post-test, and the covariate variable is the pre-test of the experimental group. The ANCOVA test results are shown in table (3).

Table 3. ANCOVA Results for Testing the Differences in The Self-Care Skills of Preschoolers within The Experimental Group Before and After The (PEP)

Variable	Experimental Group	Mean	S.D	F	Sig.	Effect Size %
Self-Care Skills	Before	1.552	.30496	96.532	.000	55.6
	After	1.710	.29731			

Sig. <.05

Table (3) demonstrates significant differences in preschool children’s self-care skills within the experimental group after attending the (PEP). The significance level is .000, which is less than .05. This means that the preschool children’s self-care skills are significantly enhanced after attending the PEP. The mean values indicate this before (M=1.55) and after (M=1.71). Thus, the PEP has an effect size of a percentage of .56.

As a result, we can reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis as the self-care skills of the preschool children have enhanced significantly after attending the (PEP) within the experimental group.

I am testing the differences in interpersonal relation skills of preschool children within the experimental group before and after the (PEP). The second sub-hypothesis of the social behaviour states that “There are no significant differences in interpersonal relation skills of preschool children within the experimental group before and after the Peace Education Program (PEP)” to test this hypothesis, the ANCOVA test is used as well.

This sub-hypotheses assumes that there are significant differences in interpersonal relation skills of preschool children within the experimental group of the peace education program (PEP), which means that there is a pre-test and a post-test for each interpersonal relation skill. Also, there is an independent variable with two groups, so by using the ANCOVA test, the independent variable will be the students’ experimental group, the dependent variable will be the post-test, and the covariate variable is the pre-test. The ANCOVA test results are shown in table (4).

Table 4. ANCOVA Results for Testing The Differences in The Interpersonal Relation Skills of Pre-Schoolers within The Experimental Group Before and After The (PEP)

Variable	Test	Mean	S.D	F	Sig.	Effect Size %
Interpersonal Relation Skills	Control	1.589	.27274	28.208	.000	26.8
	Experimental	1.803	.25680			

Sig. <.05

Table (4) illustrates significant differences in preschool children’s interpersonal relation skills within the experimental group after attending the (PEP). The significance level is .000. This is less than .05, which thus means the preschool children’s interpersonal relation skills are significantly enhanced after attending the PEP. This is indicated by noticing the mean values before (M=1.59) and after (M=1.80) the PEP with an effect size percentage of .27.

As a result, we can reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis as the preschool children’s interpersonal relation skills are significantly enhanced after attending the (PEP) within the experimental group.

I am testing the differences in communication skills of preschool children within the experimental group before and after the (PEP). The third hypothesis states that “There are significant differences in communication skills of preschool children within the experimental group before and after the Peace Education Program (PEP),” To test this hypothesis, the ANCOVA test is used as well.



The third sub-hypotheses of the social behaviour assume significant differences in communication skills of preschool children within the experimental group after the peace education program (PEP), which means that there is a pre-test and a post-test for each communication skill. Also, there is an independent variable with two groups, so by using the ANCOVA test, the independent variable will be the students' experimental group, the dependent variable will be the post-test, and the covariate variable is the pre-test. The ANCOVA test results are shown in table (5).

Table 5. ANCOVA Results for Testing The Differences in The Communication Skills of Pre-Schoolers within The Experimental Group Before and After The (PEP)

Variable	Test	Mean	S.D	F	Sig.	Effect Size %
Communication	Control	1.622	.27109	72.156	.000	48.4
	Experimental	1.812	.26765			

Sig. <.05

Table (5) demonstrates significant differences in preschool children's communication skills within the experimental group after attending the peace education program (PEP). The significance level is .000. This is less than .05, which means the preschool children's communication skills are significantly enhanced after attending the PEP. The mean values indicate this before (M=1.62) and after (M=1.81). Thus, the PEP has an effect size of a percentage of .48.

As a result, we can reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis as the communication skills of the preschool children have enhanced significantly after receiving the peace education program (PEP) within the experimental group.

After having the (PEP), they test the differences between male and female preschool children in social behaviour having the (PEP). In order to test this hypothesis, an Independent-sample t-test is used which the independent variable will be the students' gender (male and female), and the dependent variables will be the social behaviour dimensions, and the results are shown in table (6).

Table 6. Independent-Sample t-test results

Variable	Group	Mean	SD	T	df	Sig.
Self-Care Skills	Male	1.8981	.12959	-.081	38	.936
	Female	1.9015	.13273			
Interpersonal Relation Skills	Male	1.9352	.08361	.115	38	.909
	Female	1.9318	.09839			
Communication Skills	Male	1.9537	.07681	-.358	38	.722
	Female	1.9621	.07149			

Sig. <.05

Table (6) shows no significant differences in all preschool children's social behaviours between male and female students after receiving the peace education program (PEP). In contrast, the significance levels are more than 0.05 for all variables, meaning that student gender does not affect the preschool children's social behaviours after receiving the PEP.

As a result, we accept the null hypothesis as there are no statistically significant differences between male and female preschool children in terms of social behaviour after receiving the peace education program (PEP).

## 6. Discussion

The first hypothesis, there are no significant differences in the social behaviour of preschoolers between the experimental and the control group after the Peace Education Programme (PEP).

The results of this hypothesis indicated that there are statistically significant differences between the experimental and the control in favour of the experimental group with effect size large, that is due to several factors:

*First:* Training received by children of the pilot sample during the implementation of the Peace Education Program, which included a range of activities, methods, and different methods appropriate for pre-school education; the program also included meaningful educational games related to program topics and practical activities implemented with children.

*Second,* the school administration responded positively to the program, and the teacher excelled and cooperated with the researcher to implement the PEP with children.

Finally: Parents' cooperation, acceptance, and encouragement of the program, and the enthusiasm of children to participate in the PEP.

In addition, there is no isolation from others completely, sleep and feeding; sleepers are all behaviours that stem from social reality and aim to influence it (Hussain & Bushra, 2013). Attention to social skills is also attributed to being an essential determinant of the child's daily interactions. Children live in a network of relationships involving parents, peers, relatives, and teachers (Al-Said, 2005). Moreover, Al Sayed added that social skills are the key to building the child's personality and acceptance as an active member of society in the future, and these skills are laid in early childhood.

The results of the present study are consistent with the findings with studies by (Al Hashemi, 2016; Al-Saidi, 2013; Al Maimouni, 2018), which revealed the existence of statistically significant differences between the experimental and control group in the post-test and for the benefit of the experimental group trained in the program.

Based on the above, social skills are essential for the individual from a young age. However, despite the interest of researchers in the field of social skills, they still did not receive sufficient attention. Therefore, the current study is designed to train children to enhance some social skills, such as (self-care and communication skills).

Thus, the study results demonstrated its rejection of the hypothesis that there were no differences in social behaviour between the children of the experimental group and the control group after the Peace Education Program (PEP). The current study results showed that the behaviour of children in the experimental group had improved significantly after the PEP in communication skills is a little more than interpersonal relation skills and self-care skills. Also, Interpersonal relation skills had a more significant impact than self-care and led to a better improvement in children's behaviour. Despite these differences in impact, all skills associated with social behaviour have significantly improved children's behaviour. Therefore, the study emphasizes the importance of paying attention to the social behaviour of pre-school children and increasing research on this aspect (Qasem, 2011).

The second hypothesis, there are no significant differences in the social behaviour of preschoolers within the experimental group before and after the Peace Education Program (PEP)?

The results of this hypothesis indicate that three sub-hypotheses are developed from it by the three dimensions of pre-schoolers social behaviours (self-care skills, interpersonal relation skills, and communication skills). The following are the three alternative hypotheses: a. There are no significant differences in preschool children's self-care abilities between the experimental and control groups before and after the PEP. b. There are no significant variations in preschool children's interpersonal relationship abilities between the experimental and control groups before and after the PEP. c. There are no significant differences in preschool children's communicative abilities between the experimental and control groups before and after the PEP.

The findings related to  $H_a$  reveal that the pre-schooler's self-care skills have enhanced significantly after receiving the peace education program (PEP) with a large effect size. Additionally, the current study's findings are congruent with the results obtained by Al Said (2005) and Hassan (1996), who confirmed the importance of training children in self-care to improve their social behaviour, which would thus help them develop better. This study also agrees with Hussain & Bushra's findings (2013), who emphasized that child's positive growth and achievement can be obtained through their acquiring. The findings of this study are consistent with Hussain & Bushra (2013), who argued that an individual's capabilities, experiences, and concepts are accomplished through positive growth.

The findings of this study go in congruence with several other studies such as (Lagreca & Santagrosi, 1980; Mize & Ladd, 1983; Grossi, 2000; Al Hashimi, 2016; Abduljalil, 2018), which found significant improvement in the behaviour of the experimental group and their reactions to social problem-solving, which also improved the performance of skills training in the program. In addition, improving social skills is closely linked to training these skills to acquire an excellent behavioural pattern and helps improve some social skills.

Thus, the findings related to Ha are not in line with the findings found in Abduljalil's study (2018) in the presence of statistically significant differences between males and females after enrolling in the program and favour of the female students. As revealed in the results of this study, training children in self-care skills helps them take care of themselves and become more self-reliant. It also earns them self-confidence and good behaviour in critical situations, as demonstrated by the results of this study and from the reactions of parents and teachers who have noticed a significant improvement in their children's behaviour. The current study is different from others in that it may have the most significant impact on the self-care and development skills of pre-school children in Oman.

Highly systematic work that provides the child with the necessary pre-school social skills will undoubtedly form a strong foundation for a child's development, which will thus make them creative individuals in society. Many scientists were interested in communication skills, including John Dewey, who explained that the continuity of life in society does not last without transferring the experiences of adults to the young. He also mentioned that communication helps transfer experiences among children by training them to communicate well (Othman, 2002).

The results of the current research reveal the role of the peace education program in enhancing positive and personal relationships and communication skills between preschool children in Oman, and children's behaviour significantly improved in personal relationship skills and communication skills for children of the experimental group compared to their peers in a control group the size of an impact indicates significant impacts, as confirmed by the study by al-Saidi (2013) and McKinley (2007).

Moreover, developing the social skills of pre-school children leads to developing their talents and abilities so that they can achieve success in the present and the future. Social skills are also an indicator of children's understanding of themselves and their understanding of others, and in turn, they can build good friendships with their colleagues (Al Hashmi, 2016).

Grossi et al. (2000) emphasized the importance of training children in social skills to improve their collaboration, play, and learn effectively with their peers. The study of Al Said (2005) showed that the child learns the spirit of cooperation and participation, tolerance, love, and other social and moral concepts that play a family and teacher in kindergarten an essential role in gaining them. The kindergarten peer group can play a clear role in developing social skills in the child's personality. The kindergarten is an important place to teach the child many of the moral and social values prevailing in the community because they learn the standards and values and are trained to apply them and use them properly (Qasem, 2011).

Consequently, the results related to Hb, Hc are consistent with many other studies (Brooks, 2006; Abd Al Latif et al., 2007; Al Saeed, 2010; Qasem, 2010; Al-Saidi, 2013). Found significant improvement in the behaviour of the experimental group after exposure to the peace education training program.

This study shows that the training of children in social skills helps them develop sound and positive relationships with others and live in peace and love.

The third hypothesis, there are no significant differences between male and female pre-schoolers in social and emotional behaviour after having the Peace Education Programme (PEP).

The results of the third hypothesis indicate that there are no statistically significant differences between male and female preschool children in terms of social behaviour after receiving the peace education program (PEP).

The results of H3 show the importance of training all pre-school children (male and female) in Oman in the peace education program, which is integrated into the curricula offered to children

of this category. The results explain that everyone needs peace education, and there is no difference between males and females in the level of vulnerability to peace training.

The current study concurred with studies such as (Al Said, 2005; Al Maimouni, 2018). The current study in the research sample differed from a study by (Al Hajj, 2013) that showed statistically significant differences in the school social behaviour depending on gender for the sample of the male; and statistically significant differences in self-concept depending on the gender for the sample of the male. Also, it differed from a study by Abd Al Jalil (2018) in the presence of statistically significant differences between males and females after enrolling in the program and for the benefit of females.

## 5. Conclusion

This research concludes that there is (PEP) has positive outcomes on preschool children's social behaviour. The research demonstrates that peace is a key prerequisite for developing a balanced life, especially in childhood. The results may be of great significance in measuring and improving children's behaviour through (PEP). It would also support the curriculum in Oman. This study has been successful in focusing on some aspects of growth and behaviour enhancement in children. The study findings may likely be fruitful to Oman's pupils, educators, curriculum designers, and educational policy-makers.

## Declarations

### Author contribution statement

Mahfouda Rashid Al Mushaqiri of the presented idea. Zahari Bin Ishak and Wail Muin Ismail developed the theory Peace Education Program (PEP) on the Preschoolers' Social Behaviour. Mahfouda Rashid Al Mushaqiri analytical methods. All authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript.

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### Data availability statement

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

### Declaration of interests statement


The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.


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