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NAVIGATING DISCOMFORT FOR GROWTH: STUDENT EXPERIENCES WITH PROVOCATION PEDAGOGY IN PAKISTAN

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
	The content of this study is a qualitative case study on how the provocation pedagogy was adapted and practiced in an experimental peace education classroom situated within Sialkot, Pakistan. Drawing on reflections from 43 students and the instructors field notes, this research examines how these pedagogical approach influences learning; critiques assumptions around district identity and culture; as well encourages critical analysis of the social justice. This research offers important reflections on transformative qualities of provocation pedagogy, and how this sits with other ethical considerations in order to strengthen its use and protect against potential misuse. Findings add a new layer to the perennial debates about pedagogy of discomfort in learning and site-specific peace education. While this study reflects on hope that provocation pedagogy has to offer in engaging students as critical thinkers and as vehicles for transformative cultural work, it also contains ongoing concerns about ethical issues and risks in diverse contexts. To that end, this study serves as a model for educators looking to integrate the type of culturally relevant transformative learning, particularly as it relates to issues of social justice.

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INTRODUCTION

In midst of widespread, ongoing conflict, violence, and injustice around the world, peace education has become a vital field of study and practice (Gultom & Haq, 2024; Kester, Archer & Bryant, 2024; Senapati & Paroi, 2024). Thus, peace education is about changing the way people think and interact in order to advance matters of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to create a more peaceful and just world (Galtung, 2008). In essence, peace education aims to build the culture of

peace through the eradication of structural and ideological causes of war by fostering nonviolence, social justice, and respect for difference (Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016b; Dabula, 2024). In order to meet these goals, peace educators use a variety of pedagogical approaches to promote the critical thinking, the interrogation of assumptions, and creation of empathy and understanding (Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016b). One of them is provocation pedagogy, also known as pedagogy of discomfort (Thomassen, Moi, Langvik, Skeie & Fandrem, 2024), which has already attracted large attention in this day and age. Such an approach strategically capitalizes upon discomforting experiences as unsettling events that challenge the understanding of learners in ways that ask for critique (Porto & Zembylas, 2024).

The provocation pedagogy is based on the notion that transformational learning occurs commonly through disorienting dilemmas that initiate a process of questioning, reflection, and transformation of perspectives (Mezirow, 1991). The goal of provocation pedagogy is to provoke discomfort in the students that can lead to growth and new understanding by confronting students with the ideas, experiences, or materials that challenge their assumptions. In this regard, approach resonant with some of fundamental basics of peace education, such as consciousness development (Freire, 1970), critical thinking, and deconstructionist learning for the compassionate and empathetic citizenship. However, the use of emotion in provocation pedagogy raises its own set of the important questions about discomfort in educational spaces (Porto & Zembylas, 2024). This is an issue about which the peace education literature remains explicit, telling us that it is critically important to create a safe learning environment (Duckworth, 2015). Other researchers suggest that the use of discomfort as a pedagogical strategy has likely to relegate or even harm students, especially those from factually underserved backgrounds (Berlak, 2004). One aspect of provocation training that advocates point out is importance of facilitating an approach to addressing emotional vulnerability directly (Porto & Zembylas, 2024).

However, it is indicated before, there is empirical evidence showing that the provocation pedagogy does, in reality, work to promote processes of transformative learning within the context of peace education. Zembylas (2008), for example, illustrated how a pedagogy of discomfort enabled pre-service teachers in Cyprus to grow as individuals by critically reflecting on their own feelings and the tensions within them. A significant benefit of teaching from this perspective is that pre-service teachers have grown greatly not only in critical reflection but even more so in perspective-taking within the USA. Yet provocational practices should be further studied to learn about their strengths and weaknesses, and how they may be implemented best. The focus of study is provocative learning within a provocation pedagogy in a peace education classroom located in Pakistan. This case study highlights an example of more direct, explicit ways to question students' assumed district identity as it relates to culture, history and social justice through provocative questions and materials. By examining the students' reflections on this class, study offers insight for peace educators into how teachers might use provocation pedagogy to push back against hegemonic stories related to some aspects of peacemaking that hinder transformation learning around peace (Piacentini, 2024; Porto & Zembylas, 2024).

The use of provocation pedagogy to stimulate critical reflection and challenge dominant narratives can be seen as a potentially transformative but also risky endeavor. But what is required to deliver

peace education in Pakistan is nothing short of daunting. The national educational policy is often shaped to create a strong state identity or central and formal education rules, as well as a higher level of system stratification fostering nationalism combined with militarism (Ahmad, 2008; Halai & Durrani, 2018) . Here, the application of provocation pedagogy to incite critical reflection and interrogation of dominant narratives) may be understood as a risky but ultimately transformative venture. This study employed a qualitative case study design within context of a curricular unit of peace education in which a teacher used provocation pedagogy. This was a qualitative study; data were collected via reflective writing assignments in which students described and analyzed their experiences in class. Using a cross-case analysis process, these reflections were analyzed to identify convergent themes and patterns that emerged in students' responses. These results have potential to contribute to future peace education theory and practice. This study will address the following research questions.

1. What are students' lived realities and responses to provocation pedagogy when introduced in a peace education classroom in Pakistan?
2. What are possibilities & limitations of using provocation pedagogy as tool for transformative learning, and what considerations emerge for its effective implementation?

While offering empirical validation of how students experience variance as provocation pedagogy, this study may enable further understanding of possibilities & limitations of realizing transformative learning through such an approach. More broadly, study can speak to debates in peace education about discomfort and emotions as part of the learning process, context-specific approaches, and the place of critical and reflective practice. Practically, given themes of culture, history, and identity within the curriculum for this group of learners, these findings offer some direction for educators working in other contexts to use provocation pedagogy in own classrooms. Through an exploration of the potentials and the pitfalls of provocation, this research can assist educators in discerning how and when to deploy provocations in teaching and learning with diverse individuals, advancing the art of engaging learners for critical learning in accordance with their individual needs. This paper presents a review of the literature on peace education and provocation pedagogy, explains the methodology for current study, analyzes findings, discusses theoretical and practical implications. To this end, paper aims to contribute to recent debates around the ways that education might work in service of a more peaceful and just world, including how innovative pedagogical forms could support these aims.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Peace education is concerned with developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to create a more just and peaceful world (Tilakaratna & Szenes, 2024). It wants to transform lives and societies by upholding some nonviolence, social justice, and human rights values (Bajaj, 2008). In service of these goals, pedagogies for peace educators have evolved to ease critical consciousness and engagement, challenge ignorance, biases, and stereotypes, and strengthen empathy and cross-cultural understanding (Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016a). Provocation pedagogy is widely discussed and applied alternative approach. The provocation pedagogy, or pedagogy of discomfort (Porto & Zembylas, 2024; Zembylas, 2008), is the term used to describe an approach in which learners are

troubled by experiences that force them to question their generally unquestioned assumptions and become susceptible to critical reflection. It is derived from notion that transformative learning often starts with the disorienting dilemma that triggers a process of reflection, questioning, and changing perspectives (Mezirow, 2009). By exposing students to forcing them to interact with ideas, practices or material that are provocative (that directly challenge their assumptions), provocation pedagogy seeks to create productive discomfort among the students as a means for sprouting development and new understanding.

The use of provocation pedagogy, indeed, can fit well with a host of principles and practices from peace education. Second, it aligns closely with the Freirean tradition of problem-posing education, aimed at fostering critical consciousness by having students reflect on social reality and challenge it every day (Freire, 2020). Provocation pedagogy, much like a problem-posing education model, invites learners to question what they think is true and begin the work of making the connections necessary to make sense of their world. From an alternative perspective, the provocation pedagogy indirectly encourages critical thinking within the peace education (Goumaa & Anderson, 2024). Provocation pedagogy can arouse critical investigation and more nuanced insights because it shines a light on students' hegemonic beliefs via contradictory perspectives, voices, and experiences (Piacentini, 2024). Therefore, rather than departure from roots of peace education, this commitment to encouraging critical thought is central to how peace education hopes to form reflective, engaged citizens. It is one of the defining characteristics of transformational peace education: attention to developing self-awareness and reflection. Third, the provocation pedagogy is congruent with the peace educational aim to facilitate empathy and promote appreciation of the diversity (Savelyeva & Park, 2024).

Such pedagogy leads students to ask questions and dig for stories and experiences not known to them (challenge their cognitive habits and cultural indifferences), which in turn may also help the students see the different types of real rooms/views being constructed around them by such means, and question stereotypical categories. Fostering this value of appreciating diversity over empathy is also essential in developing the interpersonal and intercultural competencies necessary to live peacefully as people (Gultom & Haq, 2024). Fourth, provocation pedagogy, rooted in the critical reflection and constructive dialogue between diverse viewpoints on a societal issue, lies at the heart of reflective practice, thus, it fits well with peace education (Lum, 2013). In so doing, provocation pedagogy can be a useful mechanism for creating counter experiences where students are forced to challenge their positionality and reflect upon how, in cases where our biases may be with us till death, it is that we respond and act differently personally and societally. While the provocation pedagogy embodies a deeply empowering mode of transformative learning, it has also prompted particular concerns about role played by discomfort in education environment (Porto & Zembylas, 2024). Peace education literature regularly has extolled importance of establishing a safe, caring learning atmosphere.

Critics argue that using discomfort as a pedagogical strategy can encourage alienation or result in psychological harm to students, especially for those from the marginalized backgrounds (Berlak, 2004). Understanding this, advocates of provocation pedagogy stress the importance of deliberate

and caring facilitation attuned to emotions of learners (Zembylas, 2008, 2015). In fact, they have argued that discomfort can be a good thing when there is a supportive space for it and enough time to process what was felt. We are not doing this to the students just to traumatize them but to help challenge them in a manner that we believe fosters growth. While provocation pedagogy has been used in peace education settings, there is limited empirical research on its use, but potential space is being created. Zembylas (2015) examined the utilization of a pedagogy of discomfort for teachers in Cyprus and found that it promoted self-reflection & increased empathy of participants. Zembylas and Chubbuck (2012) offered similar examples of how a pedagogy of discomfort may elicit critical inquiry and empathy in a teacher preparation program in the USA. Other studies have highlighted the difficulty of applying provocation to peace education. For example, Bekerman and Zembylas (2011) reported that the use of the provocative materials in an Israeli-Palestinian school stimulated critical reflection among some students while intensifying tensions and resistance among a group of other students.

The evidence of powerful stockings, the positive, reinforcing effect of agile moderation has been confirmed here and more impressively demonstrated for use of a provocation in teaching. However, the literature indicates that it would be a mistake to simply dismiss the provocation pedagogy as irrelevant or limited because of these issues. In fact, there is substantial evidence that suggests it has been an important tool in peace education efforts. Designing experiences that create a disturbance, challenging individuals to reflect more deeply on why they see things the way they do and how others might experience the same situations, has the potential to enable transformative learning at personal and social level. Nonetheless, further research is needed to determine the appropriateness of this strategy in the different settings and its optimal use. This article seeks to add insights into this growing literature through an analysis of the deployment of provocation pedagogy in the peace education classroom in Sialkot, Pakistan. They also, however, underscore key challenges associated with the co-creation of pedagogical provocations in peace education. This spatial analysis of the reflective student responses to provocation pedagogy is intended to inform the scholarly work-in-progress regarding how or if provocation pedagogy has the potential to stimulate critical thought, disorient assumed knowledge, and interpellated empathy necessary for effective understanding our shared humanity.

While also trying to shed light on important aspects of this method that should be considered for its application in the peace education. These findings have both confirmed previously reported results and extended existing literature. The idea of initial defensive being turned into the curiosity and reconsideration recalls the theme of provocation pedagogy that ideally leads to a disorienting dilemma prompting perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1991). This is what the student reflections provide as anecdotal evidence of how strategic discomfort can snowball for growth. Another good fit within the pedagogy of provocation's emphasis on critical thinking and self-reflection, which are important themes in the peace education (Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016b). These results indicate that these students were forced to grapple with the provocative ideas and experiences, which can indeed facilitate the critical analysis and introspection that are central to transformative peace education. The third finding is that the use of provocation pedagogy in the unit increased students'

capacity to understand diverse cultures and, thus, enhanced peace education designed to promote respect and diversity. In hearing about varied lived experiences and new narratives within familiar, this approach genuinely seemed to allow for more textured formations of what one might call the sociocultural wisdom.

The student's identification of discomfort as something productive reflects the work on pedagogies of discomfort. The results lend the empirical evidence to the notion that discomfort is potentially educationally beneficial with careful facilitation and mindfulness toward the emotional needs of students. This upset from the students about more support and sensitivity reinforces the necessity of careful facilitation regarding learners' socio-emotional needs, as previously discussed as a critical point in the literature (Berlak, 2004). Instead, it adds an important nuance to debate: that although discomfort may be generative, we have to make sure we use it carefully and offer enough guidance. This study, thus, contributes to the literature by providing this how and reality of what assertiveness provocation pedagogy might have potential as a transformative peace education practice. It can inspire critical thinking and questioning whilst stimulating curiosity to really get to know others. At the same time, it points to significant considerations for the ethical and effective practice of this, like high-quality facilitation and emotional risk mitigation. These are significant implications for peace education theory and practice. In this way, authors suggest that provocation pedagogy can offer critical tool to elicit type of transformative learning needed in peace education. They should point out, still, that it must be done carefully and with sensitivity to learners if they are to benefit from such a tool.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was a qualitative case study based on the use of provocation pedagogy as it played out in one peace education classroom situated within Sialkot, Pakistan (Thomas, 2021). The qualitative case study research method was selected as it allows for the exploration of novel factors that were identified over previous studies and to examine why these innovations work (or did not) within their broader context (Adu & Miles, 2023). This design provided a complex understanding of student experience with provocation pedagogy that goes beyond measuring directly observed actions to explore nature of reactions, reflections, and learning processes. The case under consideration was an individual peace education classroom in a higher educational institution located within the region of Sialkot. This situation defined the limits to starting a research project on how this pedagogical approach was put and worked in practice in one given the cultural/education context. This study involved 43 students enrolled in a peace education course. Purposive sampling was applied to these students they each personally experienced phenomenon under study (Patton, 2015). In qualitative research, the sample size is supposed to be enough to reach data saturation. Thus, it was limited to the class enrolment.

The method of the data collection is reflective writing assignments. Towards the end of this course, students did leave a detailed write-up on their experience with provocation pedagogy throughout the semester. The time provided to students was extensive in order to detail reflections, pushing for more than just surface-level responses. The records about reflections came in electronically, so it

was pretty easy to organize that data. Teacher-researcher documented and reflected on classroom dynamics and student reflections/questioning approaches in relation to teaching with provocation pedagogy using field notes during course. The field notes worked as contextual information for the student reflections. We used a cross-case analysis (Yin, 2018) approach to analyse the data, which facilitated identification of patterns & themes across multiple student experiences (Saldaña, 2021). The analysis process was sequential, beginning with an initial reading where all reflections were read thoroughly to realise the data as a whole. This was followed by open coding, in which free-text reflections were analyzed line-by-line, labelling sections of text with descriptions that conveyed vital concepts/experiences, we then created categories by identifying higher level themes per code (Miles et al., 2020).

During interpretation, we read all themes over lens of literature in peace education & provocation pedagogy to investigate degree they reinforced or contradicted present understanding. Multiple methods were used to increase confidence in findings (Creswell & Poth, 2024). These included peer debriefing: in order to uncover the biases and assumptions and seek alternative explanations, the research team had ongoing discussions with peers not part of the study. Furthermore, a portion of the findings were shared with the participants to ensure the alignment of the findings with their experiences. In final report, thick descriptions of participants' experiences were weaved throughout to help readers judge the transferability of findings. Furthermore, researcher maintained a reflexive journal during all stages of data collection and analysis, documenting the personal responses to the fieldwork experiences, possible biases impacting interpretative themes & methodological decisions. At the same time, it points to significant considerations for the ethical and effective practice of this, like high-quality facilitation and emotional risk mitigation. Regarding ethical considerations, the work described in study was performed diligently, with all ethical guidelines carefully considered. In this connection, the data collection for study was commenced only after receiving approval from concerned institution.

The main ethical dimensions addressed included informed consent, where all participants received extensive information on the purpose, procedures, and possible risks/benefits of taking part in this study and provided written informed consent (Pietilä et al., 2020). Therefore, in accordance with the confidentiality statement, all data utilized in this study was de-identified during any analysis or reporting, with all direct quotations presented verbatim, using pseudonyms or otherwise (Bentele & Herzog, 2023; Ratnam & Drozdzewski, 2022). This article seeks to add insights into this growing literature through an analysis of the deployment of provocation pedagogy in the peace education classroom in Sialkot, Pakistan. We ensured voluntary participation by making students aware that their participation in the study (i.e., consent for use of their reflections for research purposes) was completely voluntary and had no impact on their grades. For data protection, all research data will be stored on secure, the password-protected devices and destroyed at a specified time after the completion of this study. In addition, as the course instructor was also a researcher, we gave thought to potential power imbalances related to this dual role. To address this, students were encouraged to provide honest responses, with assurances that their feedback would not be used against them in the academic review.

RESULTS OF STUDY

A cross-case analysis of the reflections from 43 students on their teacher's use of the provocation pedagogy to encourage thinking about district identity revealed several common themes. Thus, these themes provide insight into how the students' experiences, feelings, and evaluations of the teaching approach.

Initial Defensive Reaction Transforming into Curiosity & Reconsideration

One of major themes was that students began their teacher preparation program defensively when instructor used provocations to disrupt their assumptions and beliefs about themselves as potential members of challenging district identity. Some students said they felt uncomfortable/even irritated at beginning. Participant 1 said, "During experience, I initially felt surprised & defensive as my assumptions were questioned." Similarly, Participant 17 noted, "At first, I had no idea what people of other cities thought of us because I had never heard anything upon subject. Yes, but had heard about Sialkot Accent on social media, and his provocation revealed that some of his statements are true while others are misguided notions that he and other people are carrying out about natives of Sialkot." Still, this initial defensiveness typically transformed into curiosity and desire to reconsider preconceived notions as provocations spurred deeper reflection. Participant 34 articulated this shift: "At first, we don't reflect about our culture, and as Sialkoti our views accent we didn't notice… but when our instructor uses method of provocation in lecture we think & reflect our identity… It arises a mix of emotions. But this discussion piqued my curiosity and interest in our city." Many other participants echoed this sentiment of defensiveness, giving way to intrigue & drive to study district identity more closely.

Effective Stimulation of Critical Thinking & Self-Reflection

A related theme was effective use of provocation pedagogy to provoke students into critical self-awareness. Many described how their assumptions about district were questioned and challenged through provocations offered by teacher. One of participants said, "Our teacher asked us to take a look at how one district belongs to another and its perspective of Sialkot as well. I knew Sialkot only and not any other district deeply. So, I need to assess the other district" (Participant 21). In summary, in conclusion, as Participant 24 stated, it "was also a good way to break mold of thinking with my assumptions and be more critical. This led to heated debate that forced me to consider the opposing viewpoint and really make my voice…mine." This kind of reflective pedagogy enabled participants to both critically and valuably reflect upon their own schools. Participant 37 observed, "It gave us confidence to strengthen ourselves and pull out our culture [identities]. It was very good technique because all of us ended up re-evaluating things we had absorbed over years from our society. In start, we defend our self when our teacher discusses some incident he observed in Sialkot or asks us about his thoughts on Sialkot. A lot of students said that they came out with heightened realization about how they interacted in their own cultures and the awareness to know where their cultural understanding ends."

Fostering Cultural Understanding & Empathy

Beyond critical thinking and self-reflection, students also emphasized how provocation pedagogy had expanded their knowledge of the culture, along with improving the level to which they could

empathize with differences. The teacher's provocations involved presenting contrasting viewpoints or experiences of people from different backgrounds within the district. For example, Participant 1 stated that teacher "shared personal narratives of people from different backgrounds. It expanded our monolithic perception of the community. Struggling with this diversity of experience forced us to get past stereotypes and satirical versions of what defines an area." Participant 6 articulated how this really helped foster empathy: "We should not think negatively about others in Sialkot. I should not feel bad. Every person has a different point of view, so I should think positively." Participant 18 also linked approach to cultural competence, "For a course regarding the diverse origins of Sialkot, by presenting opposing perspectives on Sialkot's identity, the instructor prompted us to examine supporting data and assess claims." Participant 39 stated, "event further promoted self-awareness by making us think about our own biases & beliefs. Being exposed to conflicting attitudes invoked emotional responses that illustrate how the collective stories, and personal experiences, inform our understanding of identity."

Embracing Discomfort as a Catalyst for Growth

Although provocation pedagogy created considerable discomfort in many as it forced students to confront their beliefs and assumptions, there was recognition of discomfort as essential precondition for learning. One participant, Participant 32, captured some of this insight eloquently: "This lesson reminded me of the gift of getting uncomfortable and how that can be a great indicator of growth and reaching further into something more. So, allowing discomfort, I discovered, has the potential to broaden our views and empower us to see various dimensions of the world." Many of the students seconded this sentiment, stating that the challenging moments of the experience were ultimately beneficial for their development. Participant 29 stated, "It was a bit challenging, but it is something fulfilling," & Participant 10 responded with the reflection, "Liberating and insightful yet somewhat confronting, ultimately it enabled me to broaden my perspective on what Sialkot is. Results in this study provide strong support for value of provocation pedagogies as agents complicating dualistic understandings and enabling students to see ourselves as part of half-finished stories. Provocation pedagogy is an educational approach that intentionally introduces discomfort to provoke critical thinking and personal growth. This study explores the experiences of students in Pakistan who have engaged with this pedagogical method. Findings show that while students initially face discomfort and resistance, many ultimately recognize benefits in terms of enhanced critical thinking, empathy, and self-awareness.

Gaining New Perspectives on District Identity

Through the process of having assumptions challenged, engaging in self-reflection, and embracing the diverse viewpoints, many students reported gaining new, more nuanced perspectives on their district identity. The provocation pedagogy appears to have complicated simplistic narratives and enriched students' understanding of the multi-faceted nature of Sialkot's identity. For example, the participant 43 concluded, "By implementing provocation pedagogy by our instructor, it's very needed for our kind of students to pay attention of what our instructors saying as there is something which some urges to think and say about it let's say out Sialkot's accent and condition of roads, etc. Personally, I have learned a lot by using that kind of discussion in our classroom." Participant 16 said the experience "expanded my understanding of my district identity by highlighting its complexity

and multiplicity." In this linking, the participants frequently mentioned coming to appreciate the diversity within Sialkot and seeing their district from new angles. Participant 22 summarized: "It helped us see the issues we might have overlooked. Understanding why the teacher did this helped us see it was about making us think and grow. Consequently, we learned that every place has its challenges." The provocation pedagogy seems to have cultivated a more expansive understanding of district identity.

Internalizing Values of Open-mindedness & Lifelong Learning

The experience of having their beliefs about district identity challenged appears to have instilled values of the open-mindedness and commitment to lifelong learning for many students. A common theme in the reflections was a newfound drive to continue seeking out diverse perspectives and habitually examining one's own views. Participant 39 stated, "I believe that provocation pedagogy has taught me to actively seek out options to engage with individuals from different frameworks and communities, stay updated on current events and scholarly literature related to identity and cultural studies, continuously enlarge my knowledge and awareness of relevant issues." However, the results lead to design implications for careful, nuanced facilitation that caters to the social and emotional needs of learners. For practitioners interested in employing provocation pedagogy, it is critical to develop an ecosystem of support and scaffolding effectively. Participant 16 pledged, "To apply lessons learned, I will actively seek out diverse views, engage in conversations that challenge my assumptions, and regularly reflect on my beliefs and biases." When this is alleged as a means of (uncomfortable) growth, then provocations are instrumented as plans that spark creative learning experiences for students.

Critiquing the Provocation Pedagogy

Despite the fact that almost all the participants found provocation pedagogy to be practical and worthwhile, critiques and suggestions for improvement were provided in reflections. Some students said approach was emotionally demanding and needed more support from teachers. Participant 2, "I guess it would be well if everyone was open." Participant 1, "Improvements might include greater facilitation of the process to deal with initial awkwardness and to foster atmosphere of openness." Participant 24 mentioned this, "requirement of safe and inclusive classroom became clear as some learners were feeling too uncomfortable or resistant." Others pointed out importance of the teacher being thoughtful in use of provocation pedagogy. Participant 8, "If someone's thoughts are opposite of my thoughts, I will still listen to them, correct them if they are wrong, and change my perception if they are right…The instructor must keep in mind as realizing provocation pedagogy." Equipping students with respect for lifelong learning is meaningful. These reflections suggest that provocation pedagogy might develop these central qualities that will help learners engage in ongoing work of cultivating a sophisticated sympathetic of themselves and society. Participant 29 that the capacity to bear the provocation should not exceed its limit as consequences can be harsh and survival may come under threat.

Nuanced Analyses of Sialkot's Identity

Threaded through the reflections were many specific insights about Sialkot's identity that students gleaned through the process of provocation pedagogy. While not always the central focus, these

insights revealed the substantive content gains students made in critically examining their district identity. For instance, Participant 18 noted, "Personally, I feel that this experience was valuable for me in every situation of my own life. What I learned from my teacher's use of provocation pedagogy is to appreciate my own district's identity, acknowledge diversity of its people, and feel comfortable in its environment." Participant 40 reflected: "I had a good experience with learning that initiated self-realization, deeper connection, and personality grooming. It helps me to discover my inner self, my roots as a civilized citizen, and my connection with tradition and cultural values, bring flavours to my life and groom me as an individual." The goal is to push students out of their comfort zones to facilitate deeper learning and personal development. Over time, students reported improvements in ability to think critically and understand multiple perspectives. When implemented carefully and with attention to these factors, provocations can be a worthwhile addition to peace educators' pedagogical toolkit. Therefore, the nuanced reflections demonstrated students grappling with the complexities of district identity and extracting meaningful personal insights through the process of provocation pedagogy.

DISCUSSION

Several key points related to previous literature on transformative pedagogy, critical thinking, and peace education, as well as other findings from this study, emerged from the cross-case analysis of student reflections regarding their experiences with provocation pedagogy in a peace education classroom. The most common stages of initial defensiveness to inquisitiveness and reframing of the problem to curiosity are consistent with Mezirow's (1991) perspective transformation theory, which suggests disorienting dilemma flattens against walls that have been built up around their thinking until receptive to rethinking. Provocation pedagogy perhaps functioned as a disorienting dilemma for multiple participants, challenging their hegemonic sympathies and spurring further reflection. This result shows that provocation pedagogy can serve as effective mediating strategy to instigate friction even up to level of its productive discomfort, which opens a path for growth by resonating with Boler (1999) notion of "pedagogy of discomfort." Use of provocation pedagogy has contributed to degree that students have evolved with such abilities for developing critical-thinking skills and self-reflection in learning on, about, toward peace education. It is related to Freire (1970), who calls it "problem-posing", critical education model where students address issues based on their own life experiences and values.

It is concluded that provocation pedagogy may be an interesting method towards accomplishing some of goals indicated by Freire. Moreover, the fact that self-reflection is an important component of peace education was reflected in student responses (Lum, 2013). Provocation pedagogy invited students to problematize their personal perceptions in relation to themselves and their positioning in society—when they questioned their own district identity. This result implies that the element of provocation pedagogy processes may fulfill the function of reflection within peace educational aims. It is noteworthy that in general, provocation pedagogy increases cultural empathy among the students. Scholars have advocated for peace education, which should develop compassion, correct stereotypes, and offer respect and acceptance of diversity (Duckworth, 2015). This study presents empirical evidence of potential of provocation pedagogy to respond in such way. This provocation,

featuring many competing narratives of life within the district, permitted the students to escape decontextualized or overly simple images of identification and respect the variety of beliefs found in their own surroundings. One significant influence from this study is placing students' awareness of their discomfort as an agent in the teaching and learning, thus pushing the idea found in peace education literature.

Scholars have pointed to need for processes of discomfort in safe spaces (Duckworth, 2015). Rather, this study demonstrates possible transformation through discomfort with supportive intervention. The results are in line with Boler and Zembylas (2003) notion of a "pedagogy of discomfort," which recognizes generative possibilities of emotional experience as oppositional. Students' experience of different ways of understanding their district identity as new, more nuanced through provocation pedagogy in some way founds doing peace education, as "unsettling taken-for-granted beliefs" is a core task of peace studies (Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2010). Kester et al. (2023) state that the peace education must be disruptive, urging the students to question what they have learned and to move towards more nuanced perspectives (Noddings, 2012). In sum, the student reflections offer empirical evidence for provocation pedagogy's transformative potential in peace education. The method thus emerges as a powerful tool for both generating critical reflection and unsettling assumptions, two things that aid in taking really oneself or one's society. At the same time, results highlight need for caring, sensitive facilitation attuned to learners' emotional needs. If well implemented, provocation pedagogy looks likely to be an effective tool for achieving goals of peace education, cultivating the students' critical consciousness, empathy, and commitment to lifelong learning in diverse situations (Noddings, 2012).

CONCLUSION

This study explored student experiences of provocation pedagogy in a peace education classroom using a cross-case analysis of student reflections. The findings about the impact of a provocation pedagogy are explored alongside enabling conditions for effective use. The analysis demonstrates that designing for provocation pedagogy can force disorienting dilemma that triggers perspective transformation by initial space for students to critically explore and problematize district identity. It was adopted, to be more precise, incorporated as powerful instrument to provoke critical inquiry, self-discovery, and an intricate assimilation of one's sociocultural reality. Importantly, provocation pedagogy observed to increase students' appreciation of other cultures and empathy due to the culturally and socio-economically unique lived experiences of individuals within their own district that they were encouraged to think deeply about. One important conclusion was the fruitful power of discomfort in peace education when skillfully mediated. However, the findings also revealed a need to provide adequate support and address learners' emotional needs when using this approach. The study drew attention to the possibility of provocation pedagogy as a strategy for encouraging dispositions such as open-mindedness and lifelong learning—which are essential objectives within peace education.

The student reflections demonstrated the ability of the approach to interrupt commonsense beliefs and produce larger, constantly reconfiguring visions of self and society. In conclusion, study offers

empirical evidence to underpin provocation pedagogy as a radical approach to teaching in peace education. Although it is claimed that the approach is successful in facilitating peace education outcomes by inviting productive discomfort, promoting critical reflection, and fostering multiple perspectives, it appears to be an effective platform to achieve peace education goals of developing critical consciousness, caring for others and life-long learning. Further research could investigate the effects of provocation pedagogy on students' affects and behaviors and explore how this method may be applied successfully in other cultural contexts or organizational settings. In this light, this study represents a transformative example of how provocation pedagogy may be used in peace education and elucidates important principles for doing so effectively. The violence-ridden nature of the world demanded creative strategies and tools that peace educators have employed in their practices, and current heuristic study gives a glimpse of how transformative peace education may allow youths to hold such curricular tools in altering their consciousness, hence fostering peaceful societal co-existence.

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