



Peace Education Program Evaluation Report Summary Johannesburg Department of Social Development, South Africa

Introduction

As part of Johannesburg's efforts to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the city set up shelters for houseless people, offering essential services while maintaining strict safety measures. In May of 2020 the Johannesburg Department of Social Development designated the Peace Education Program as one of the essential services needed to help these people cope with the crisis.

The Johannesburg Department of Social Development conducted a study of some participants at the shelters to assess the effectiveness of the Peace Education Program and its impact on behavioral change.

[Read the complete study here.](#)

Objectives & Purpose

The Johannesburg Department of Social Development offered the Peace Education Program with the following primary objectives:

- Re-orientation of personal values and attitudes including tolerance, love, non-violent conflict resolution and peaceful co-existence;
- Empowering participants with knowledge about their role in creating peaceful societies;
- Equipping participants about how they can be at peace with themselves and others;
- Leveraging the power of education towards building lasting and sustainable peace.

The study aimed to assess the program's impact by measuring:

- (i) The perceptions of participants on the programme and its effectiveness;
- (ii) Behavioural and mental transformation;

- (iii) Areas for improvements and adjustments.

Methodology & Participant Profile

The study evaluated 24 participants in shelters from all age groups—youth to seniors—using questionnaires and open-ended interview questions with pre- and post-program evaluations. Analysis was conducted using the Likert scale and constant comparison techniques.

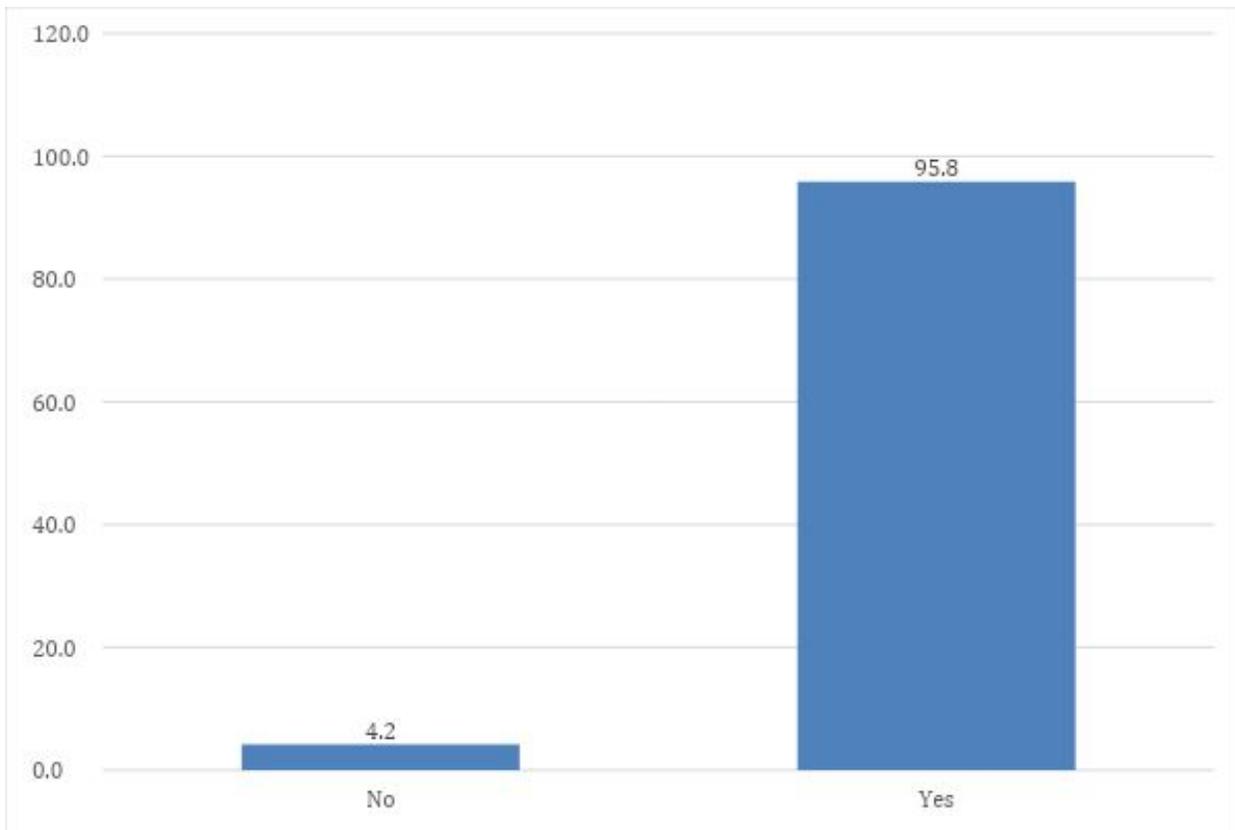
A majority of the sample had attended some high school. 12.5% had some college or university education. The gender sample was 85% male and 15% female. 75% of the participants were not employed.

Results

The study found a fundamental difference in how the participants viewed their personal lives pre- and post-participating in the program. The majority experienced a paradigm shift in their value system from anger, self-pity and low self-esteem to values that included enhanced self-awareness, tolerance, love, inner peace, contentment and self-reliance. The study concludes that there is abundant qualitative and statistical evidence to suggest that participants have mastered the ability to let go of the past, tolerate one another, love one another and respect people's rights, and feel inner strength during trying times.

Statistical Highlights:

- More than 95% of respondents indicated that the Peace Education Program helped them.



- The understanding that peace was possible in participants' lives increased from 30% to over 85%.
- The understanding that participants have inner strengths that can help them in their lives rose from 40% to 80%.
- The recognition of the importance of inner dignity increased from 50% to 90%.
- About 70% of participants indicated a high likelihood that they would recommend the program to other people, with another 25% showing potential to recommend.

Recommendations

The study concludes that the Peace Education Program can be a valuable tool in advancing tolerance and peaceful co-existence throughout South Africa and recommends making the program available throughout all sections of society, especially in the public school system. It recommends budgetary allocations as well as partnerships with civil and private organizations to bring it to people on a national scale.