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AN EVALUATION OF THE FACILITATOR
EXPERIENCE OF THE PEACE EDUCATION
PROGRAMME PEP(EDU) TRIAL IN INDIA,
AUSTRALIA, AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND,
ENGLAND AND UNITED STATES

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INTRODUCTION

This report is one of two companion reports that evaluate the implementation trial of The Prem Rawat Peace Education Programme – PEP(EDU). The PEP(EDU) is a recently developed approach to helping students “discover their own inner strength and personal peace” (p 3. Educators’ Guide). Tātai Angitu, as part of the Institute of Education at Massey University, Palmerston North, Aotearoa New Zealand, was commissioned by The Prem Rawat Foundation to evaluate the trial findings from the perspective of its facilitators and developers.

The PEP(EDU) trial was international in scope. It was undertaken with groups in India, England, the USA, Aotearoa New Zealand, and Australia. The groups variously comprised of 14–17 years old secondary sector students, senior secondary students aged 17–19, and students 18+ years in professional training courses e.g. nursing, and in private colleges and public tertiary academic institutions. Fifteen facilitators were interviewed, across 10 settings. In some cases, facilitators had already delivered the programme to more than one group within their institution, while others were facilitating the course in their setting for the first time.

THE PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMME PEP(EDU)

The PEP(EDU) consists of 10 themes associated with the goal of developing and sustaining one's inner personal peace. The 10 themes are discretely facilitated. They are: Peace, Appreciation, Inner Strength, Self-awareness, Clarity, Understanding, Dignity, Choice, Hope, and Contentment. They are delivered as facilitated workshops that typically take an hour, which incrementally develop participants' internal sense of self as a peaceful and grounded person, which can act reflexively to shape the world in which they live. Each theme has its own resources, but facilitators are also encouraged to adapt these, and use their own resource material, to better reflect the local cultural context in which the programme is being delivered. Once the course is complete, students are asked to fill in a 'survey' of 10 statements each of which has a six-point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'don't know', with an equivalent emoji, for students to identify their responses. Following that are four longer 'paragraph' responses asking participants to detail further any benefits they have gained from completing the programme. The final task asks students to provide demographic information.

REPORT METHODOLOGY

The report is a qualitative evaluation. It comprises 10 interviews in which a total of 15 people were questioned. Three of the 10 interviews involved two people, and the remainder were with a single person.

Interviewees were emailed an information sheet that detailed the intent of the interview and the topics likely to be covered [see Appendix]. Semi-structured questions were included under each topic. This approach was chosen because it offers the researcher the opportunity to gather information that explores more comprehensively issues that initial research – such as online questionnaires – has uncovered. The semi-structured interview also has the potential to generate knowledge through the interviewer and interviewee's shared interest in the topic. This interview approach also provides interviewees with the opportunity to use their natural language to give their views and express their beliefs and opinions that authentically represent their perceptions of themselves, their environments, and their experiences of actually delivering the PEP(EDU) programme 'in public' (Cohen et al 2007; Burns 2000).

The information sheet asked interviewees to signal their initial consent to be interviewed, which was subsequently confirmed at the beginning of each interview. All interviewees gave their consent. The report, as much as possible, has kept their identities and their institutions, confidential in order to create a space for deeper critique and responses. Confidentiality also protects interviewees from unsolicited and unwarranted feedback, given that the report may become publicly available. Where quotes are used or comments paraphrased, interviewees will be identified as (Country).

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

There are four limitations related to the evaluation report, particularly about the trial design and process.

1. Across the trial settings, there were a number of uncontrolled variables with respect to who was involved in the PEP(EDU) trials, where and when they were completed and in what conditions the trial took place. It was trialled in a variety of educational settings, each of which had different institutional practices, conditions, and participants. These differences weren't wholly logistical; they also included diverse national policies and practices, and cultural norms.
2. In nearly all cases, student participation was voluntary, so facilitators had little/no influence over how many could be expected, who turned up, how long they stayed, and who might finish the course.
3. Most facilitators were already familiar with, and supportive of, the teachings of Prem Rawat and the work of the Prem Rawat Foundation. There was a positive predisposition to the intent and nature of the programme which may have influenced interviewee objectivity when critically evaluating their trial experience.
4. The report does not calibrate facilitators' commentaries of students' reactions with their participants' evaluation comments about the programme. The latter comments are, however, quantitatively evaluated in the second companion report.

These limitations notwithstanding, the research process has identified important information about:

- the PEP(EDU)'s delivery into diverse educational settings, including resources, cognitive demand, and scheduling;
- the end-of-programme Student Evaluation Tasks;
- teaching the PEP(EDU) in non-English speaking countries; and
- the implications for its inclusion into mandated curricula.

THE REPORT STRUCTURE

The Evaluation Report presents the research findings in six sections:

- **Section 1:** Setting information, including facilitator background, why and to whom the programme was taught and how the institution included the programme in its curriculum.
- **Section 2:** The PEP(EDU) course structure, content, resource materials and cognitive engagement levels.
- **Section 3:** Points of alignment between the PEP(EDU)'s espoused values and beliefs, and cultural norms of the trial setting.
- **Section 4:** The Student Evaluation Tasks, in which the report discusses facilitator perspectives about how accurately and substantively these tasks capture participant experiences and shifts in thinking.
- **Section 5:** Discussion of Findings.
- **Section 6:** Recommendations.

SECTION 1: SETTING INFORMATION

The PEP(EDU) trial was run in several educational settings and countries. These were:

- Five secondary schools teaching 14–17 year old students in India (1), Aotearoa New Zealand (2), USA (2).
- One senior college teaching 17–19 year olds in England.
- Two fee paying business settings: one, an exam tutoring centre in India teaching students 14 years+, and the second an adult English Language College in Australia teaching English as a Second Language to international adult students.
- Two universities, both in India, teaching 18 year old+ students from a variety of disciplines: nursing, medicine, education, commerce, and hospitality.

Facilitators were either employed in, or were associated with, most settings. In three cases, (England, USA and Australia) facilitators unconnected with the schools and college, were specifically invited to deliver the PEP(EDU) programme.

Classes in all settings were mixed gender, with numbers who finished the course ranging from seven to 57 participants. Numbers were generally lower in Anglo-American settings and higher within Indian settings.

Despite geographical differences, interviews identified several common features of practice:

- a) Students voluntarily chose to participate.
- b) The PEP(EDU) was presented to students as an option or elective placed within a wider suite of courses. In one Indian setting, the programme was included as an elective inside a wider mandated 'extra-curricular' course that had 30 credit values attached. Other settings ran the programme after formal instruction had finished. At the time of writing the PEP(EDU), in and of itself, was not a mandated curricular item in any trial setting.
- c) In one Aotearoa New Zealand secondary school the PEP(EDU) facilitator, also an English teacher, grafted the programme onto students' national examination. Students were able to use their PEP(EDU) work for their personal writing, and in-class presentations and speeches, all of which met the subject's credential requirements.

- d) In all cases, facilitators gained approval from senior leadership, be they school principals, chief executives, or vice chancellors, to operate the programme on their campuses. Contacts with leadership were by direct approaches from staff who wanted to introduce the PEP(EDU) to their students, or from approaches principals made to PEP(EDU) associates, after hearing about the programme through their professional networks. In one case (England) a charity was 'contracted' into the senior college to deliver the PEP(EDU) programme.
- e) Senior leadership approval was a crucial first step because it then prompted support from other personnel. This included the provision of a teaching space with reliable audio/visual technology, furniture, access to photocopying and the like. Organisationally, this expressed approval meant that timetables were adjusted, course information was distributed, and recruitment exercises were initiated. Most importantly, this afforded the programme, as an externally sourced artefact, an initial legitimacy in the eyes of students, parents, and teaching colleagues. For example, in two settings guidance and pastoral colleagues took a keen interest in the programme's effects on student wellbeing and were referred students for whom the programme surfaced problems that likely needed therapeutic intervention.
- f) The PEP(EDU)'s inclusion in a wider selection of courses led to students making trade-offs between the PEP(EDU) and other conventional subjects, such as mathematics. This led to high attrition rates (in percentage terms) across many settings, such as those in England, Australia, and India. This reflects the voluntary status of entry into, and exit from the programme, the presence of competing subject 'electives', or the programme being offered in students' break times between scheduled classes lunchtimes (London Senior College), sandwiched in break times between separate blocks of instruction (Australian Language School), or as an after-school club or interest group.
- g) Time was a scarce resource in all settings. Curricular programmes were already crowded spaces, which made finding hours to place and introduce the PEP(EDU), particularly as a non-mandated offering, a difficult scheduling exercise. PEP(EDU) facilitators negotiated time and delivery in various ways. In one Indian setting the programme was delivered in five x two-hour slots. In the Australian setting, the programme was divided into two distinct parts of five hours each, offered in the hour between scheduled classes (3-4 pm). In two American settings the PEP(EDU) was part of a suite of elective courses which were run within school hours as per the school's timetable requirements. In two Indian settings, the programme was supported by the senior leadership but had to be run outside normal scheduled hours of operation by facilitators in their own time.

SECTION 2:

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE, CONTENT, RESOURCING AND COGNITIVE DEMAND

The PEP(EDU) was trialled in various geographical and cultural locations. Efforts were made by local facilitators to use local resources, but in general, the programme was delivered largely unchanged in its thematic format, resource offerings and materials, facilitation guidelines and students' final evaluation of the programme.

This level of commonality across multiple settings is an opportunity to evaluate the programme's thematic structure, the quality and relevance of resources and the extent to which, in its current form, the programme and its resourcing are cognitively demanding enough to hold and challenge students who range from mid-adolescent school students to adult learners in professional and academic learning.

In all interviews, facilitators were asked their views about:

- how well suited the 10-theme workshop structure aligned with teaching conditions in these various settings;
- the value and usefulness of programme resource materials in countries other than the USA, where the programme was developed; and
- the extent to which the programme could capably hold and challenge students of different ages, circumstances, and abilities.

a) **The PEP(EDU) structure**

The PEP(EDU) structure, of 10 themes each focusing on a specific aspect of inner peace, was endorsed by all facilitators. One tertiary facilitator felt that the structure had a simplicity that students at any level could easily understand. It also allowed students to monitor their progress through the programme, and it gave facilitators, both new and more experienced, clear, and easily implemented signals about programme delivery. Equally, the structure was adaptable enough to local conditions, particularly around scheduling, which did not seem to compromise its integrity and substance. The experience of an Indian facilitator who initiated the programme with 70 enrolled students in her school, reflects these characteristics. The facilitator was already a busy teacher and was only recently able to offer the programme. The school allowed her five x two-hour blocks, in which she closely followed the programme instructions and used only the provided resources. Fifty-seven students completed the course, and, based on their reflections, the facilitator was confident they had connected with the concepts and ideas.

In contrast, in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand, two teachers are offering the PEP(EDU) programme to small numbers of students 14-17 years, who have exited mainstream education and either require support to re-enter schooling or enter the workforce and their communities. Despite behavioural and learning difficulties, the facilitators commented that the programme's structure gave their students often "chaotic lives" a sense of clarity and direction. Moreover, the structure was a complimentary fit with their existing curriculum and reporting protocols. Although these facilitators did use local resources, and adapted sessions to suit their students, they were able to maintain the PEP(EDU)'s essential features, intent, and 10 theme structure.

b) **Resourcing**

The PEP(EDU) programme is resourced on a theme-by-theme basis, with written, oral and visual materials chosen and developed to illuminate the key idea of each theme. These include primary source documents, animations, clips of speeches, and educator's guide and student workbook.

All facilitators complimented the course developers on the quality, relevance and presentation of the resource materials, and their advice, via the Educator's Guide and Lesson Plans booklets. Planners, who were also trial facilitators, explained that as the programme developed, multiple forms of teacher practice were uppermost in their thinking. They adopted a "menu" approach as a working model, in which resources, strategies, and leading questions were available to be chosen or adapted wholly or in part, as required by the facilitator (USA). This suggests that a balance has been well struck between a prescriptive structure and "on-the-ground and in play" flexibility (USA).

Alongside these positive general comments, some facilitators offered more specific suggestions that in part reflect their settings' local conditions (levels of English Language competency for example), or which relate more directly to their students' skill and knowledge levels. These were:

- Place English language subtitles in visual resources so students can read and listen to spoken English (facilitators in English as a second language settings).
- The need to resource differently for Zoom-type online delivery which may include technical support and compressed timeframes (England).
- Cartoons were too immature for older adolescents and for young adults studying at tertiary level (England).
- One facilitator signalled the need to develop Hindi language resources to help introduce the PEP(EDU) programme into regions beyond main cities, where English is less widely spoken, if at all (India).

- Resourcing also needs to reflect the needs of participants who are in special or para-education, youth justice or adult prison facilities, where the programme has considerable potential to make a difference (Aotearoa New Zealand and USA).
- Resources appear to be set with mainstream schooling and competently literate students in mind, rather than students who have failed, or are on the cusp of failing, mainstream schooling (Aotearoa New Zealand).
- Specifically, one Aotearoa New Zealand facilitator in a low socio-economic school, argued for shorter video clips that were more confronting, and “darker and deeper” about real life. She noted that using these resources, “such as the prison clips”, had “reached even the staunchest [adolescent] boys” which then opened them up to the possibilities offered in the programme.
- Facilitators dealing with students who had “fallen through the cracks” out of mainstream into alternative settings, commented that clips of one person talking for a long time in all themes, needed to be shortened in order to retain satisfactory engagement of their students in the moment.

c) **Cognitive challenge and student engagement**

The interview process explored these questions:

- *Given the American-based development and resourcing, how well did the PEP(EDU) engage and hold students from a variety of cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds?*
- *Given their wide age range and academic levels, how well did the programme appeal to secondary school students, senior secondary school students, and tertiary students in private and public colleges and universities?*
- *Within the programme, which themes were more impactful than others?*

Facilitators’ complimentary comments about resource materials carried into their comments about how their students cognitively connected with the big ideas of the 10 themes of the programme. When asked if American-centric resource materials, and the ideas advocated therein, affected students’ engagement with it, facilitators commented that:

- i. Cultural globalisation has made students of all ages more familiar with western cultural norms and practices. This means that students were connecting to important ideas and concepts, regardless of country of origin (India).
- ii. The “inspired neutrality” of the programme meant that all students were included irrespective of political, religious, or ethnic identity. As such the programme was sufficiently generic to appeal to all walks of life (India).
- iii. The materials were multicultural in their presentation of ideas, which increased their appeal across diverse cultures (England and Aotearoa New Zealand).

In terms of cognitive demand, facilitators observed that:

- i. Secondary school age participants readily engaged with course materials and appreciated the workbooks given to them. That is the PEP(EDU) was cognitively well aligned to this age group (India, USA).
- ii. Older, more mature students found the materials somewhat shallow at first but were able to find for themselves meanings at deeper levels. Despite their apparent simplicity, especially in the first few themes, depth and importance emerged the further into the programme students went (India).
- iii. One facilitator commented that the materials were “surprisingly challenging” – the Peace session especially. However, some other plans were too immature, given the skills and abilities of her students (England).
- iv. A number of students whose first language wasn’t English found the resources materials difficult to use. However once English subtitles were used, levels of understanding and engagement rose appreciably (Australia).
- v. Students with low literacy skills, and higher dependency learning needs found the readings, long oral presentations, and written responses too difficult (Aotearoa New Zealand).
- vi. Hope and Dignity themes were the two most difficult, because they were too conceptual, and needed to be revised (India, USA). Peace, as the first theme, was initially challenging, but later coursework helped participants to appreciate it.
- vii. Apart from the Hope and Dignity themes, facilitators were mostly positive about the levels of engagement students displayed with the programme themes, irrespective of age and sector. As a facilitator/developer commented, from a cognitive perspective, each student could get something out of it at their own level.
- viii. The most impactful theme across the trial was Inner Strength.

SECTION 3:

CROSS-CULTURAL ALIGNMENT OF NORMS, VALUES AND BELIEFS

As Sections 1 and 2 report, the PEP(EDU) was trialled in diverse educational settings, in a number of countries. The programme has been adapted by facilitators to reflect local conditions. Facilitators' feedback indicates a high level of fidelity to communicating the PEP(EDU)'s essential ideals, concepts and messages about personal inner peace, universal benefits and social cohesion, no matter the geographical and sociocultural settings. This suggests extensive points of alignment between the norms and values of both the programme and the settings in which it has been delivered.

In this Section, the report discusses why facilitators think a programme, originating in the USA, broadly and deeply appealed to participants from such different backgrounds. In other words, what is in the PEP(EDU) that connects with the values, norms, and experiences of multiple national and cultural identities?

Facilitators from India and USA pointed to the challenges, pressures and anxieties young people face as they navigate adolescence and young adulthood. These originate externally and include issues associated with:

- adolescence being made more complex and difficult by ubiquitous and influential social media;
- a perspective that frames the world as chaotic and competitive, which in turn offers a sub-optimal future;
- the tensions created between traditional social values and those that promote selfish individualism;
- the belief that material wealth defines individual success and is an important source of personal happiness;
- the absence of inner fulfilment because of the systemic pressure on adolescents and young adults to be well qualified, consistently employed, career oriented and to earn high salaries; and
- how little time and opportunity are given to students to talk about personal aspirations and inner peace given the demands of school and tertiary curricula, and the implicit messaging such demands transmit.

PEP(EDU) trial facilitators noted that the programme offers a distinct alternative to the daily routines and demands of schooling and training because:

- a) It reconceptualises peace as an internal harmony, that counters the idea of peace as being an externally attained civic state, negotiated by others. “This is a new concept.” (USA).
- b) It is an “antidote to the pressure to attain fame, qualifications and wealth”, because it is a source of inner strength to cope with these external pressures (India).
- c) The messages emerging from the themes are presented as universal values and ideals that transcend ethnic and religious affiliations, ‘ages and stages’ (USA, India).
- d) The PEP(EDU) does not preach, nor does it adopt a condescending or patronising ‘we know better’ position. It encourages students to “connect with their own life situations and gives them time to reflect, think and reconsider from a different perspective” (India) and gives students a way to reflect on themselves - “to stop still, and evaluate who you are” (Aotearoa New Zealand).
- e) The PEP(EDU) offers no set answers, but rather opens discussion about their [students’] inner lives. It acts as a door which students can pull open, and in so doing emphasises that peace is attainable because it is already inwardly present. It provides a context within which to nurture this quality in order to attain personal peace (India, USA and Aotearoa New Zealand).
- f) The PEP(EDU) is a stark contrast to the externally imposed requirements of the school day, because it is introspective, and a safe site for participants’ positive self-reflection.

SECTION 4:

STUDENT EVALUATION TASKS

Facilitators were asked for their views about how accurately and substantively the evaluation tasks captured student experiences, in particular shifts towards the concepts, ideas, and beliefs the PEP(EDU) advocates.

Once students complete the PEP(EDU) 10 theme programme, they are asked to complete a three-part survey. For each student: the first part comprises 10 statements that describe changes to their understanding of Peace AFTER COMPLETING the Programme. Students rate their new understanding using a six-point Likert scale as follows: 1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 - Disagree; 3 – Neutral; 4 - Agree; 5 - Strongly Agree; 6 – Don't know. To gain an idea of 'shift' - changes in understanding and to skills - they are asked to fill a 'Before the Programme' measurement and an 'After the Programme' measurement.

The second part asks for four longer written responses. Question 1 asks the student to comment about 'what they liked most' about the programme. Question 2 asks about how 'it could be improved', and Question 3 is about how it 'helped' them in their lives. The fourth question was an open-ended 'any other comments' question. The final part is demographic. Using tick boxes, it asks for students' age, gender, level of education, and then students write the country in which they did the PEP(EDU), and the name of their setting. (Educator's Guide, pp 80-81)

In general, facilitators thought that the evaluation process was adequate, and fit-for-purpose. The comments of three Indian facilitators, separately recorded, describe this position.

The first facilitator said that using pre- and post-course measurements at the end of the course "seems to work" despite their doubts about accuracy and depth. A second said that "The tasks are good enough." And a third said that "as it stands, it works as a sound psychometric assessment". However, there were a number of additional comments pointing to potential problems of inaccuracy, depth, lack of nuance, and suitability for certain audiences. These were:

- a) There is value in setting a pre-test before the programme starts, but as one facilitator pointed out, a pre-test is prone to inaccuracy because students can't accurately measure what they know nothing about (England).

- b) Current practice is inadequate. At the end of a 10 theme course, students may be tempted to respond quickly or flippantly. It risks becoming a 'quick best guess' situation for participants. (England and USA).
- c) The open-ended questions do not prompt the student to provide substantive and useful information (USA).
- d) There needs to be "more questions" that elicit better information than relying on a standardised number of personal statements or Likert scales (India).
- e) The statements need to be revised so that they more closely co-relate with each theme. Currently they are too generic (India).
- f) Course developers could consider a number of smaller intermediate evaluations which incrementally track students' shifts (India).
- g) Developers might consider a formative mid-course evaluation and a summative post-course evaluation (India).
- h) The tasks were not appropriate for some students. Aotearoa New Zealand facilitators commented that their students were resistive writers or were insufficiently skilled to respond to the open-ended questions. Some were not interested in an evaluation process and minimally completed tasks, or left many parts of the tasks incomplete.
- i) The tasks lacked a maturity associated with older more adult students in the tertiary sector (India). The use of emojis didn't work for students 16+ (USA).
- j) Evaluation design should include visual and oral tasks, opportunities to complete tasks online and/or at home, or the provision of small-scale unobtrusive evaluation points strategically placed across the 10 sessions.
- k) Time poverty was an issue. The programme was often delivered in tight timetabling schedules. This gave facilitators little chance to evaluate more thoroughly either at the beginning, within, or at the end of the programme. It was done quickly, almost as a wrap-up and conclusion in the last part of the final theme.
- l) There was also the risk of losing valuable theme teaching time to assessment which could compromise the delivery of the full programme. Striking a balance between time doing evaluation with time spent in the programme was a challenge (USA).
- m) Were evaluation tasks to be revised, the programme may have to extend to 11 or 12 hours in order to gather authentic and high-quality information. In time scarce contexts this may be a barrier to programme implementation.

SECTION 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The PEP(EDU) has been trialled in a variety of different educational settings. These are private and publicly funded tertiary organisations, secondary schools, and an English language school. Irrespective of setting, facilitators confirm that senior leadership support is vital to the successful implementation of the PEP(EDU) programme. This support leverages help from others within the organisation and importantly lends the course a heightened degree of legitimacy within the setting's curricular offerings. However, settings are time poor, and have few if any hours to allocate to the PEP(EDU) programme. This requires facilitators to be flexible and creative about how they co-ordinate the course to fit into their setting's wider scheduling structures.

The voluntary nature of most trial PEP(EDU)s, and their competition with other curricular tutorials, led to inconsistent attendance and lowered retention and completion rates. This is problematic given the programme's incremental learning structure, which slowly builds understanding and insight across the 10 themes.

Despite these challenges, facilitators report that senior leaderships have been impressed with the contribution the course has made, its content and focus, and have expressed interest in continuing the relationship. The trial experience has also enhanced facilitator enthusiasm about the course and teaching in it. While there remain systemic barriers to wider implementation, facilitators, confirmed have had confirmed the value of the PEP(EDU), and consolidated its presence in their setting's instructional programmes.

The PEP(EDU)'s structure, resourcing and levels of cognitive engagement are key conditions that underpin the programme's capacity to promote the ideas of inner peace in individuals and their communities. The facilitator responses confirm that the 10 theme structure works to organise and deliver a mix of complex ideas and concepts. The structure offers facilitators a reliable framework to guide programme delivery, and yet is flexible enough to adapt to the idiosyncratic features of settings in which it is delivered. Further, the resources made available for the programme reach across and transcend religious, cultural and ethnic differences. That is, the messages are universal, and resonate with students irrespective of social context, belief systems and background.

Facilitators endorsed the PEP(EDU)'s ability to appeal to and engage students of different ages, in different education sectors, who study for many different reasons. The course materials offer layers of demanding complexity, nuance and depth from which students can derive personal insights and growth. However, as the programme widens its reach, particularly into non-English speaking parts of the world – India is the example emerging in this study - resources will need to reflect more local realities, beginning with local language use.

The interview data confirmed that the course's internal orientation, woven into the PEP(EDU)'s instructional approach, has been a significant factor in its success across diverse communities and settings. This orientation means that students are guided towards self-reflective internalised considerations of the programme's ideas and concepts. Rather than considering externally sourced and imposed notions of peace as an ideological or religious belief system, this level of student agency, or internal orientation, nurtures a sense of self-determination around how participants might grapple with the programme's big ideas and the conclusions they can come to. As one facilitator from India eloquently commented: "The course successfully reorients students' perspective from being outward. It presents them with an inward vision that the remainder of the course will bring to reality."

Establishing a more rigorous PEP(EDU) evaluation process emerged as an important feature for programme developers to consider. This report has investigated how student data is collected. As one Aotearoa New Zealand facilitator recognised, collecting longitudinal data across multiple research sites and audiences is a challenging process, especially if it is aimed at credibly evaluating a programme's impact on students' personal perspectives, and their experiences learning about something as subjective as personal and inner peace. Response data suggests that facilitators were satisfied with the tasks as an initial first step towards developing a more effective suite of student evaluation tools. They suggest that improving student evaluation effectiveness should consider the provision of smaller incremental measurements through the programme as well as at the end; adding hours to the programme for robust data to be gathered, and widening data gathering methods to include audio, visual and online tools.

However, a facilitator who is also a course developer cautioned that "we should not put assessment up front" (USA). Any changes or improvements made to student evaluation tasks should foreground prominently the nature of the programme work, rather than define its content and drive facilitator practice.

The potential for tension between national or regional localisation and international standardisation is an emerging issue. Within the Indian context, the trial has highlighted potential flow-on effects of an important federal policy shift, that require Indian curricula to provide teaching time for Values education, for which the PEP(EDU) can be an ideal programme. This means that, rather than being in a voluntary position, potentially the PEP(EDU) could become part of various settings' mandated curriculum. There are implications for PEP(EDU) in terms of facilitator training, resource provision, addressing language demands, and programme evaluation and design. This implies a challenge to reset the balance between international standardisation and national/regional localisation so that the programme gels with local and regional curricular conditions on the one hand, and sustains the integrity of the programme as whole, as imagined and presented in this trial.

SECTION 6: RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this analysis of facilitator responses, the report makes the following recommendations:

- a) As the programme internationalises, and the potential for regionalised local delivery expands, consideration be given to:
 - i. resources that more closely reflect regional sociocultural conditions; and
 - ii. facilitator training for teachers already in settings, and individuals who are not teacher trained but would like to facilitate the programme.
- b) In countries where the PEP(EDU) can be integrated into existing mandatory curricular, or contribute directly towards credentials (e.g. India), The Prem Rawat Foundation should consider in the medium term, how to effectively scale up its operation to meet potential demand for the programme (e.g. developing a fully facilitated online version), and satisfying regulatory and compliance requirements associated with mandatory curriculum inclusion.
- c) Provision of translations that precis materials, or English language subtitles in audio and visual clips, be provided to improve student engagement in classrooms with resistive and under-skilled students, and especially those in non-English speaking groups.
- d) Programme designers consider developing versions of the current programme to recognise the needs of increasingly diverse audiences, in terms of cultural background, country and citizenship, ethnicity, age, and locations in which the PEP(EDU) is delivered.
- e) Consider revising the student evaluation process. Developers should continue to use the current mixed methods approach (a combination of methods to provided qualitative and quantitative data) but revise current tools to enable more layered and nuanced data to be collected. This could include the use of audio, visual and online tools for students who resent or reject written approaches, such as questionnaires and open-ended paragraph responses.
- f) Developers consider the ethical implications of collecting student data using a wide range of tools, in order to preserve student privacy and their rights pertaining to consent and participation.

- g) Consideration be given to allocating more time to help students authentically and more deeply assess their PEP(EDU) experience. This may mean adding hours to the programme's current 10-hour structure, wherein the programme can be introduced, and pre-course metrics gathered. Strategic small-scale evaluations can be placed through the programme, and students can have more time and support, after the 10th theme, to thoroughly evaluate their experiences. The caveat is that students' task evaluations should not dominate, override, nor detract from comprehensive task delivery.

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The Prem Rawat Foundation (undated): Educator's guide. Peace education programme for schools and universities. Los Angeles, California.

APPENDIX

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMME INTERVIEW PROCESS

Your name has been forwarded to participate in an interview about your experience teaching the Prem Rawat Foundation's Peace Education Programme PEP(EDU).

This sheet provides information about the interview process.

1. The interview will cover these areas:
 - a) **Demographic information:** this asks about your professional interest in the programme, why and to whom you taught it, and how you recruited your school's support to do it.
 - b) **Course structure:** this asks about how well suited the 10 theme workshop structure fitted into your school's operations such as timetabling, curriculum, routines and protocols.
 - c) **PEP(EDU) course resources:** this asks you to evaluate the quality of the resource materials provided by the PEP(EDU), including their relevance and variety.
 - d) **PEP(EDU)'s cognitive challenge:** this asks about how challenging the course was in terms of your students' own ability levels to consider and work with the course's concepts and idea materials i.e. is the PEP(EDU) pitched at a demanding yet accessible level for your students?
 - e) **Information skills:** how well did students use information skills to purposefully find, select, process and communicate a variety of new information, using multiple source types.
 - f) **Teaching strategies:** I'm interested in exploring the types of instructional approaches you used in the course, which worked best to engage and sustain students' interest, and which you recommend we avoid.
 - g) **Professional support:** how well did Prem Rawat prepare you to teach this course? How would you rate their support assisting you to deliver the course?
 - h) **Values and norms:** I'm interested in the points of alignment between the course's underlying beliefs, norms and values and those of the organisation you work for and the community your students come from. Are there points of complementarity and/or points of friction? Where might these be?

- i) **Student evaluation task:** you will note that at the end of the course students fill in a simple questionnaire about their reactions to the course. I'm interested in your opinion about how accurately and substantively it captures their experiences of participating in the PEP(EDU), in particular the shifts in thinking and beliefs the course aspires to teach.
- j) **Personal study skills:** this part of the interview emerged from feedback from the questionnaire pilot we trialled in November and December 2022. It looks at the more personal skills students exhibit around social interaction with peers, individual and social empathy, acceptance of difference, perseverance, and respect for others.

Although this seems a substantive list, there are points requiring only short factual responses.

2. The interview will last 30–45 minutes.
3. It will be via Zoom and recorded.
4. Confidentiality is important: your responses will be reported anonymously in the final report commissioned by the Prem Rawat Foundation.
5. Raw data, such as interview recordings, will be stored securely by me at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand
6. Your consent to be interviewed is very important. Even if you initially agreed to be interviewed, please note that, immediately before or during the actual interview you are able to withdraw your consent, at which point the interview will cease, and the recording will be deleted.

Please reply to the email to which this information sheet is attached, indicating that you have read this, and that you consent/do not consent to being interviewed, and for the interview to be recorded.

Once I have received your emailed consent response, we will arrange a time to conduct the interview.

Kind regards

Ngā mihi nui

[Researcher name]

Tātai Angitu

Massey University

Palmerston North

New Zealand

[Researcher contact details]