

**An assessment of the theory-practice gap in conflict
transformation and peace education: a focus on Seeds of Peace**

By

Agnieszka Kosik

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DISCLAIMER

I have taken great effort to ensure accuracy of the findings presented in this thesis. However, there is the potential that some information presented is incomplete due to limited amounts of information on the program available to me as an outsider of the organization. Errors or misrepresentations, if they exist, were not intentional, and I take full responsibility if they have occurred.

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ABSTRACT

Peace education offers potential for transforming violent conflict into peace between groups in conflict. The research literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education has identified key assumptions for building long-term peace following violent conflict. The extent to which peace education programs have incorporated these theoretical notions, however, is not well known. This thesis explored the extent to which key theoretical insights from the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education are incorporated in a prominent peace education program, Seeds of Peace. Data collection consisted of interviews with ten program staff members and written documentation produced by Seeds of Peace. Employing the analytical framework developed from a review of the literature, a comparison between theoretical notions and Seeds of Peace programming was done. Findings of this study highlight the extent to which there are gaps between theory and practice, and a case is made for the establishment of a more explicit connection between theory and practice. Furthermore, the thesis highlights the importance of further studies to address the research gap.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

When violence ends (re)building positive and nonviolent relations between groups becomes possible. Renewed violence, however, can erupt after peace negotiations and agreements, or other interventions focused on economic or political solutions (Kaufman, 2006; Rothman, 1997; Rothman & Olson, 2001; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004). Despite years of peace negotiations, conflict and intermittent violence between Israelis and Arab Palestinians continues (Bar-Tal, 2005; Bar-Tal, 2004). The prolonged and reoccurring nature of violent conflicts has stimulated the search for more innovative and effective conflict resolution interventions (Rothman, 1997; Rothman & Olson, 2001; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004). In recent years, a number of researchers have advocated a greater role for the use of conflict transformation theory in strengthening practices for building long-term peace. One type of intervention on which peace and conflict studies have particularly focused in the past decade has been peace education. (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Salomon & Kupermintz, 2002; Tidwell, 2004; Harris, 2008; Salomon, 2004a; Clarke-Habibi, 2005; Noe, 2008; Bar-Tal, 2004). Peace education aims to educate and inspire people with the skills, attitudes, and knowledge to restore relationships and create peaceful environments that nurture long-term peace. Peace education includes joint school-based and off-school programs, learning projects, weekend workshops, summer camps, community-based seminars, and theatre clubs (Salomon, 2004a).

While peace education has been identified as an important intervention to prevent reoccurrence of violent conflict, peace education research has continued to

focus primarily on the challenges that such programs must deal with and the goals they aim to bring about. There is a gap in peace and conflict literature to demonstrate whether peace education programs have incorporated vital elements from the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education. This gap in knowledge is particularly pertinent to peace education programs involved in identity conflicts, including those in the Middle East, Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland, the former Yugoslavia, and Rwanda (Bar-Tal, 2004; Bar-Tal, 2005; Shapiro, 2006). Theory's contribution to practice will be clearer and facilitated if the theory-practice gap is relatively small. As such, it is important that studies begin to inform the literature on the relationship between theory and practice of conflict transformation.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the extent to which key theoretical assumptions of the conflict transformation theory and peace education literature are incorporated in a prominent peace education program, Seeds of Peace, which appears as the most cited and recognized peace education program in the research literature. The results of the analysis will indicate to what extent key theoretical notions from the literature are reflected in Seeds of Peace practice. In doing so, the study will highlight gaps between theory and practice.

The first phase in this study is to review the research literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education to develop the analytical framework that will be used for data analysis. Using data from both semi-structured interviews with staff members and program documents, the second phase of the study is to

examine the extent to which key theoretical assumptions are reflected in Seeds of Peace practice. It should be noted that the purpose of this study is not to evaluate the effectiveness of the program or its impacts. It will not assess whether the different components of the program, or the program in general, is successful in achieving conflict transformation. The study will highlight the existence of gaps between theory and practice, as reflected in the programming of Seeds of Peace.

1.2 Assumptions

Conflict transformation theory has been increasingly advocated for strengthening practices for building long-term peace, including the peace education field. The Seeds of Peace program is one of the largest and most established peace education programs, which attempts to resolve the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians within the Middle East. This program has been around since 1993 and since then has been praised for its accomplishments within the research literature. For example, Tidwell (2004) presents Seeds of Peace as a promising peace education program that can teach methods of dialogue and understanding between groups in conflict. Kaufman (2006) notes Seeds of Peace is a program that may increase understanding of the other side and promote continued contact between conflicting parties after they have returned home from camp. Overall, these examples along with others indicate that in the peace education literature Seeds of Peace is perceived as a model program that may inspire and equip individuals with the understanding, relationships and skills needed to advance peace. Since this program is often described in the literature as an exemplary program, it is assumed

that it should be incorporating most key assumptions from the conflict transformation literature. The analysis of Seeds of Peace will determine whether or not theoretical insights from the research literature are actually reflected in practice, and to what extent.

1.3 Significance of the study

Assessing the extent to which key assumptions from the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education are reflected in Seeds of Peace programming is selected as a specific focus because it offers an opportunity to address an area in which there is limited research. The knowledge of the relationship between the realm of theory and the realm of practice in conflict transformation, especially in the practice of peace education programs, remains limited. Using the analytical framework to assess the Seeds of Peace program is important for several reasons. First, it is necessary that the practice of peace education incorporate key theoretical assumptions from the literature if such programs are to fulfill their potential in addressing underlying identity issues of conflict and build long-term peace. By incorporating the individual, relational and structural assumptions found in the research literature, as well the challenges identified in the literature on the practice of conflict transformation and peace education, the Seeds of Peace program can better address underlying issues of identity conflict and help prevent reoccurrence of violent conflict. The identification of the existence of gaps between theory and practice in this study will help identify where the program is incongruent with the literature, and therefore, provide the

opportunity for the program to become better aligned with the literature. At the same time, challenges observed in practice can suggest important changes needed to further refine theory, which can increase the potential for conflict transformation. Finally, the analytical framework developed for this study may provide a basis for future studies to assess the extent to which key theoretical assumptions from the research literature are incorporated in other peace education programs beyond the case analysed in this thesis.

1.4 Research questions

The main research question of this study is as follows:

To what extent are key assumptions from the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education reflected in Seeds of Peace programming?

The answer to the main research question will be derived from an analysis of the Seeds of Peace program using the analytical framework that is developed from a review of the research literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education. The indicators below (phrased in question format) make up the analytical framework of this study, which is presented in the next chapter. These indicators will help analyze the data on Seeds of Peace in order to answer the main research question.

1. Does the program aim to promote positive attitudes and perceptions toward the adversary group?
2. Does the program encourage participants to develop a better understanding of their conflict?

3. Does the program strive to stimulate among parties a greater desire for maintaining peaceful relations with the other side, which emphasizes cooperation and nonviolence as a way to deal with problems or disputes?
4. Does the program encourage both parties to share their feelings and personal experiences of conflict openly and honestly with the adversary group?
5. Does the program stimulate friendships across lines of conflict?
6. Does the program support cooperation and collaboration between adversaries?
7. Does the program support the development of educational materials and curricula that promote positive attitudes and perceptions toward the adversary group?
8. Does the program seek to educate and inspire leaders to advance peace?
9. Does the program support using the media to promote positive images of adversary groups, including modeling tolerant behaviour and supporting dialogue between adversaries?
10. Does the program seek to encourage the wider community to adopt positive attitudes, critical knowledge, and peaceful behaviour between adversary groups?
11. Does the program bring in all relevant target groups?
12. Are the program's activities aimed at sustaining desired program outcomes over time?
13. Are the program's activities tailored to positively influence larger groups of people beyond program participants?
14. Does the program acknowledge the potential underlying biases, assumptions and values of its instructors and teachers and how these may promote further conflict?

It is important to note that these indicators will not be used as a "to-ask-list" that will be answered one by one. Questions will be answered implicitly, cross-cutting different areas in the analysis and discussion.

1.5 Organization of the thesis

There are six chapters in this thesis. Following the introduction, Chapter 2 provides a literature review that gives the context of this study. The chapter begins with a discussion of the sources of conflict, focusing on the role of identity in conflict. The chapter then reviews the research literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education. It discusses in detail the key individual, relational, and structural theoretical assumptions that may contribute to preventing reoccurrence of violent conflict between groups. The chapter continues with a discussion of key challenges in conflict transformation theory, limitations in peace education, and barriers in implementing peace education programs in conflict-affected contexts. The analytical framework, a tool used for data analysis, is presented and described at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 3 describes the research design and methods used to address the research question. In addition, the Seeds of Peace program is presented and described, and reasons for its selection as a case study are discussed.

Chapter 4 examines written program documents on the Seeds of Peace program as well as semi-structured interviews with staff members of the program. Findings relating to the specific individual, relational and structural assumptions for conflict transformation in Seeds of Peace programming are presented and described.

Chapter 5 discusses the results of the analysis and interpretations of findings in relation to the research literature.

The last chapter, Chapter 6, concludes with a summary of key findings and conclusions reached, and suggestions for future research. The references and appendix follow this chapter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Sources of conflict

Conflict is broadly defined as an actual or perceived opposition of values, needs and interests between conflicting parties (Goodhand & Hulme, 1999:14). In political terms, it often refers to acts of violence, including murder, rape, torture, execution, humiliation, and mental cruelty (Kaufman, 2001). Not all conflicts are intensive and prolonged; many are temporary and are resolved before violence occurs. However, there are conflicts that last for many years, are intense and violent, and lead to deep animosity among parties involved. For example, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has lasted for many decades and intermittent violence between Israelis and Arab Palestinians continues (Bar-Tal, 2005; Bar-Tal, 2004; Rothman, 1997).

Peace has typically been conceptualized in the research literature as the absence of war, a situation in which physical violence does not occur (Goodhand & Hulme, 1999). However, recent interpretations have extended the meaning of peace beyond this viewpoint. Galtung (1985) defined peace in terms of reduced levels of both physical violence and 'structural violence,' meaning structural inequity and unequal distribution of power. Galtung also noted that peace includes the presence of greater cooperation and harmony among groups, which he termed 'positive peace.' The presence of mutual cooperation also relates to Miall's (2004) concept of 'stable peace,' which proposes that peace is "more than just ceasefires and formal

cessation of warfare.” Stable peace involves the “reorientation of perceptions so that the parties stop seeing each other as unremitting threats and enemies.” Stable peace is when parties acknowledge and respect each other’s needs and they work towards “mutual problem-solving” (Pearson & Olson, 2009:72). In recent years, scholars have added that a truly peaceful society is one in which peace is long-term. Bar-Siman-Tov (2004) describes long-term peace as follows,

mutual recognition and acceptance, invested interests and goals in developing peaceful relations, as well as fully normalized, cooperative political, economic, and cultural relations based on equality and justice, nonviolence, mutual trust, positive attitudes, and sensitivity and consideration for the other party’s needs and interests (p.15).

Therefore, long-term peace is achieved when the economic, social, cultural and political issues are addressed, in addition to improved individual aspects and group relations.

2.2 Role of identity in conflict

There is no single cause of conflict. Rather, conflict is influenced by the specific context, and can result from a combination of factors. A combination of political and institutional, socioeconomic, and resource and environmental factors may affect the likelihood of violent conflict (Sen, 2008; Stewart, Brown, Langer, 2008; Goodhand, 2001). For example, political institutions that are unable to manage differing group interests or provide adequate group protection can increase the chance of violent conflict. States can prevent violent conflict by addressing inequalities through democratic inclusion. On the other hand, ruling parties who react with force to prolong their rule may provoke group mobilization and lead

marginalized groups to resort to violence. As another example, socioeconomic factors can determine the likelihood of violent conflict. Unequal access to land and natural resources, or lack of access to power and decision-making between groups may fuel violent conflict. Overtime, tensions and animosity among marginalized groups may fuel violence as groups react to the injustice and inequality. At the same time, privileged groups who fear losing power and benefits may instigate violence.

In recent years, the role of identity in conflict has received significant attention in conflict and peace research (Cook-Huffman, 2009; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Eller, 1999; Kaufman, 2001; Rothman & Olson, 2001). Identity is not usually the main issue and reason for conflict; however, when introduced, identity can provide a system of beliefs and practices that can unite a group, alter their perceptions of others, and encourage them to engage in violence in the name of their group. In situations of actual or perceived exclusion and inequality, group identity can be the determining factor in whether groups are mobilized to violence. Identity can be used by both dominant and marginalized groups to articulate perceived exclusions and discontent relating to access to, or control over land and water, access to resources, or decision-making power (Cook-Huffman, 2009). Identity contributes to creating a shared history, kinship, common norms, beliefs, and symbols that provide group members with a sense of self-esteem and belonging. Thus, when group members compare themselves with another group that is economically, culturally or politically more successful, individuals may feel discriminated against and perceive threat (Horowitz, 1985; Eller, 1999).

Threat is defined as a “situation in which one agent or group has either the capability or intention to inflict a negative consequence on another agent or group” (Rousseau & Garcia-Retamaro, 2007:745). Threats can be against the collective group in the form of military, economic, and cultural threat, or against the individual in the form of negative consequences for physical security, personal wealth and income, and personal values and beliefs. A group will try to protect or defend itself against perceived identity threat, and violence may occur when conflict is no longer handled with peaceful means. The conflict between Israelis and Palestinian Arabs, for example, has been said to be driven by a threatened group identity (Rothman & Olson, 2001; Bar-Tal, 2005). Both groups have an unmet need for recognition and security of their own collective identity. Each group is trying to protect or defend the traits, beliefs and values that form the basis of their collective identity.

Over time, identity politics can lead to a distorted image of the opponent's intentions and a decreased ability to tolerate the adversary group. In identity conflicts, the conflictual attitudes, perceptions and beliefs are often expressed in societal channels of communication, appear to be dominant in public discourse, and eventually permeate into cultural products such as books, plays, and films (Bar-Tal, Rosen and Nets-Zehngut, 2009). Young kids and adolescents may be exposed to these conflictual beliefs and attitudes through the family, the mass media, and other cultural products. In addition, the education system has a strong effect on the young generation, which serves as a major agent for socialization through school textbooks, instructional materials, and teachers' instructions. By adulthood, many members of society may share these negative beliefs, attitudes, values and

emotions, thereby maintaining the conflict and making it particularly difficult to resolve through traditional conflict resolution interventions that mainly focus on resolving inequalities in resources or political power between groups. Opponents begin to delegitimize each other, meaning they view the enemy group as inferior and not worthy of respectable treatment (Salomon, 2004b; Bar-Tal, 2005; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Kelman, 2004).

In addition, opponents tend to think that negative actions of the other party reflect that group's fundamental evil nature, traits or motivations. Further, these negative perceptions can often lead to feelings of intense anger, hatred, and a wish for vengeance (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Kelman, 2004; Salomon, 2006). Once formed negative images of the opponent group perpetuate and intensify the conflict. Negative images increase the likelihood of violence as parties come to believe that the other group is a threat to their own group's survival. Both groups eventually frame the conflict as a war between "us" and "them," as they try to protect their own individual and collective identity being threatened (Cook-Huffman, 2009:19).

Identity-based conflicts are often resistant to traditional conflict resolution methods, which include negotiation and mediation. These interventions tend to frame the conflict in terms of tangible resources or interests at stake, whereby parties in conflict are assisted in reframing their interests, or are forced to reach a compromise. Recent literature has noted that although these traditional resource or interest-based methods are often necessary to cease violence, they are inadequate in preventing renewed violence where identity issues are at the heart of conflict

(Kaufman, 2006; Bar-Tal, 2005; Mitchell, 2002; Miall, 2004; Fisher, 1997; Rothman, 1997; Rothman & Olson, 2001; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004). Underlying identity issues include negative attitudes, beliefs and perceptions, which do not change when violence stops or the parties sign a peace agreement. Resolving long-term identity conflicts requires planned and active efforts to deal with the underlying identity issues of conflict (Lederach, 1995; Salomon, 2004b; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Kelman, 2004; Kaufman, 2006; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005). For example, it is important to satisfy individual needs such as “mastery, safety, positive identity, and/or meaningful understanding of the conflict that can provide a coherent and predictable picture of the situation” (Nets-Zehngut & Bar-Tal, 2007:4). The parties in conflict must also be prepared for a long struggle, learn to tolerate and trust each other, and establish common goals for a peaceful future (Salomon, 2004b; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004).

2.3 Conflict transformation theory

Emerging in the 1990s, conflict transformation is relatively a new concept in peace and conflict studies. The approach of conflict transformation was first proposed by John Paul Lederach as distinct to the traditional perspective of conflict resolution (Lederach, 1995). Conflict resolution refers to ending undesired conflict in a relatively short timeframe, focusing on the content of conflict as something that can be disputed and negotiated. The aim of conflict resolution is to end undesired disputes and physical violence between parties in conflict through helping them find a mutually acceptable solution that satisfies the needs of both groups involved

(Fisher, 1997). Generally, it involves helping the parties, through negotiation and settlement, to clarify their goals and interests in order to reach common ground between them (Rothman & Olson, 2001). For example, parties may negotiate territorial accommodation in exchange for financial compensation. Compromise in this situation is viewed as an acceptable solution.

In contrast to conflict resolution, the conflict transformation approach proposes transforming violent conflict into something positive or desired within a longer timeframe, focusing on both the content of conflict but more importantly on the relationship between parties involved. In broad terms, the aim of conflict transformation is to (re)build a violent relationship between adversaries and promote conditions that can help to create cooperative and long-term peaceful relations between adversaries (Lederach, 1995; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Bar-Siman-Tov, 2004; Kelman, 2004). Conflict transformation differs from conflict resolution in that it works “beyond the cessation of violence, the achievement of a compromise settlement or even the joint creation of an acceptable solution” (Mitchell, 2002:3).

Lederach explains that “social conflict is a phenomenon of human creation, lodged in relationships. It is a phenomenon that transforms events, the relationships in which conflict occurs, and indeed its very creators” (1995:17). For instance, conflict transforms “perceptions, of self, others, and the issues in question, usually with the consequence of a less accurate understanding of the other’s intention and decreased ability to clearly articulate one’s intentions” (Lederach, 1995:17). Scholars of the conflict transformation approach explain that traditional conflict resolution methods tend to frame the conflict in terms of tangible interests at stake,

such as wealth and political power (Lederach, 1995; Miall, 2004; Rothman, 1997; Fisher, 1997; Mitchell, 2002). When both parties lack trust and are insensitive to the other party's needs, however, conflict resolution methods are inadequate in addressing the conflict. People may still hold a worldview that fuelled the conflict in the first place.

In long-term conflicts where adversaries hold deep animosity, hatred and fear toward each other, the violent relationship between parties must be transformed into one that is peaceful and constructive (Bar-Tal, 2004; Lederach, 1997; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Kelman, 2004; Goodhand & Hulme, 1999; Lederach, 1995; Fisher, 1997; Rothman, 1997; Lambourne, 2004). This involves changing negative perceptions, attitudes and behaviour, building peaceful relations between groups, and improving structural issues in the wider society that maintain the conflict. Identity conflicts do indeed contain issues of resources and interests that can be resolved through conflict resolution. However, without sufficient attention to underlying identity needs conflict resolution will lead only to short-term peace. For instance, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has for decades been defined and sustained in resource terms as a struggle between two nations over a piece of land. However, efforts to redefine the conflict have reframed it in terms of underlying identity concerns, involving barriers of fear, insecurity, and mutual non-recognition between parties (Rothman, 1997; Bar-Tal, 2005).

Conflict transformation does not aim to ultimately replace traditional methods of conflict resolution. Negotiation, mediation, institutional mechanisms, and other traditional diplomatic methods will remain essential to the cessation of violence.

Conflict resolution can be appropriate in conflicts where resources and political interests are the only issues at stake. However, when identity is perceived to be at threat by the other side of conflict, interventions that focus on the distribution of resources and power politics alone will be insufficient to prevent renewed violence between groups (Lederach, 1995; Miall, 2004; Rothman, 1997; Fisher, 1997; Mitchell, 2002). In identity conflicts, violence between groups often reoccurs, even after its formal termination. In addition, compromise settlements usually break down into renewed fighting (Rothman & Olson, 2001). Conflict transformation is designed to complement conflict resolution interventions through transforming the attitudinal, relational and structural sources of identity conflicts. Overall, compared with the conflict resolution approach, conflict transformation aims to not only remove undesired disputes and violence, but more importantly, build long-term peaceful relationships between parties. It also shifts the focus from resources and interests to the relationship that needs to be transformed. Finally, compared to conflict resolution, conflict transformation requires a longer timeframe to achieve its intended effects.

2.4 The individual, relational and structural changes in conflict transformation

Building on the idea that peace will not last unless strategies for peace change underlying identity concerns involved in conflict, the theory of conflict transformation supports fostering a number of individual, relational and structural changes. These changes refer to the development of positive attitudes, perceptions and behaviour (individual), the establishment of positive, personal relationships

between conflicting parties (relational), and the improvement in social structures and institutions within society (structural) (Lederach, 1995; Salomon, 2004b; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Kelman, 2004; Kaufman, 2006; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005). Without dealing with these underlying issues, identity conflicts will not be genuinely resolved and threat of renewed violence will likely persist.

2.4.1 Individual changes

The first major theme in conflict transformation involves changes in individuals involved in conflict. These changes refer to a shift in ways of thinking that help individuals decide how they will behave when confronted with conflict (Lederach, 1995; Salomon, 2004b; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004). Individual changes include positive changes in attitudes, emotions, and behaviour. Attitudes describe the way individuals think about themselves and how they think about others and the conflict (Yablon, 2007; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004). Negative attitudes describe fear, hatred and mistrust, which may lead to negative emotions such as anger, a sense of loss, and a wish for vengeance (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Kelman, 2004; Salomon, 2006). Behaviour describes the manner in which people express themselves, how they interact with others, and how they resolve problems and disputes (Lederach, Neufeldt & Culbertson, and 2007:20). Conflict-promoting behaviour is hostile and aggressive.

In identity conflicts, it is common for adversaries to hold negative mindsets toward the enemy group, which are filled with fears, stereotypes and mistrust. Perceived threat from the enemy group in addition to fear and anger towards that group leads individuals to distrust members of that group (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009).

Feelings of insecurity, uncertainty and vengeance are also commonly held by groups. For the suffering experienced, blame is often placed on the enemy group, while one's own contribution to conflict is commonly ignored or minimized (Salomon, 2009). It is common for each group to attribute their own suffering to the opponent's aggressiveness, or their innate evil nature. Such negative attitudes and emotions involved in identity conflicts may promote violence. For instance, delegitimization of the opponent can lead to violence. Delegitimization is when a group sees the other side's views, feelings, values, and traits as unworthy of attention or respectable treatment (Bar-Tal, 2005; Bar-Siman-Tov, 2004; Kelman, 2004; Salomon, 2004a).

Conflict transformation asserts that it is important to change attitudes, emotions, and behaviour from negative to positive if reoccurrence of violent conflict is to be prevented. It is important to promote positive attitudes such as mutual understanding, trust and tolerance. In terms of behaviour change, it is important to encourage positive behaviour such as respect for differences, cooperation, and resolution of conflict through peaceful means such as through negotiation, arbitration, and compromise (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009). The objective of these individual changes is to encourage individuals to think and behave more positively toward their opponents, and learn how to resolve problems peacefully as well as create conditions for a peaceful future (Salomon, 2004b; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005; Schimmel, 2009; Schulz, 2008).

One method to build trust and understanding between groups that has been discussed in the literature on conflict transformation is to increase the ability of individuals to empathize with the other side, or develop perspective-taking (Bar-Tal

& Rosen, 2009). According to Zembylas (2007), empathy means placing oneself in the other's circumstances, or seeing and feeling their perspectives and emotions. Empathy enables each party living in fear and hostility to see members from the other side as human beings with rights, who can be trusted, and who have legitimate needs and goals. Bar-Siman-Tov (2004) adds that accepting the other group's perspectives and needs as legitimate does not imply fully agreeing with the other side's opinions or views, or abandoning one's own identity; it means developing an awareness of the opposing group's perspectives and goals, including the reasons behind their feelings and actions. That is, empathy is experienced when groups accept others to have different thoughts, opinions, attitudes, values and behaviour. By empathizing with the other side, the assumption is that new positive attitudes and emotions toward the other group will emerge, gradually replacing previous negative ones (Kelman, 2004; Bar-Tal, 2000).

A method for promoting empathy discussed in the literature is sharing thoughts and experiences related to conflict with the adversary group. Schimmel explains that empathy occurs "as people open up and share, and make themselves vulnerable to one another through conversation" (2009:65). As both groups share their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and perspectives surrounding their conflict with one another, they can challenge negative prejudices and images of the other side with real stories and experiences expressed openly by the other group (Salomon, 2004b). Sharing thoughts and personal experiences of conflict openly and honestly with the other group can also encourage groups to see that the enemy group has also suffered and experienced pain. The experience can also encourage groups to

see that they too, have collectively contributed to conflict and suffering of the other side (Salomon, 2009; Nadler & Liviatan, 2006). Bar-Siman-Tov (2004) has argued that accepting involvement in the conflict is important since it helps reduce grievances among members of the group that suffered injuries, and encourages parties to work together to create better conditions for a peaceful future. Nadler and Liviatan (2006), for example, found that individuals tend to assign less negative intentions and emotions to someone who assumes responsibility for causing suffering than to someone who does not.

2.4.2 Relational changes

The second major theme in conflict transformation literature is relational change. A relationship refers to face-to-face contact between individuals or groups (Lederach, Neufeldt and Culbertson, 2007:21). There needs to be a shift from a coercive and mistrustful relationship between parties to a friendly and cooperative one (Kaufman, 2001). Friendship is relevant to conflict transformation because it is closely connected to trust. According to Tomlison & Lewicki (2003),

trust indicates a willingness to become vulnerable to another based on confident positive expectations of their conduct. It holds relationships together and enables individuals to perform more efficiently. Trust reduces uncertainty over future outcome and simplifies decision processes, and provides peace of mind.

In identity conflicts, trust in the other party is lacking and this prevents building a personal relationship between parties. Building trust between adversaries is important to allow individuals to replace fear and defensiveness with tolerance and understanding (Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005). One method to promote trust between opponents commonly discussed in the literature is the use of dialogue,

which has been discussed in the above section on individual change. Dialogue refers to direct interaction between individuals or groups in conversation (Schimmel, 2009). Bar-Tal (2000) explains that dialogue can help individuals gain a better understanding of the other side's feelings, perceptions and goals, leading to increased understanding, trust, and greater willingness for social contact with members of the other group. Another mechanism for promoting trust and friendship between conflicting parties is to encourage groups to work together toward a common goal. According to Kupermintz & Salomon (2005), encouraging groups to work together toward a common goal can challenge groups' hostile views toward each other and build trust for the other group. In addition, the experience can help parties become aware of accomplishments that can be achieved if both groups learn to work together as partners. Overall, the assumption with fostering relational change is that open communication, and shared activities and friendships will foster positive attitudes and emotions toward the enemy group. Further, a personal relationship between parties can encourage both groups to work together in creating conditions that will support building peace.

2.4.3 Structural changes

The third major theme in conflict transformation is structural change, which refers to efforts to transform the larger society in conflict. Besides promoting positive attitudes, perceptions, emotions, and personal relationships between conflicting parties, it is critical to develop communities that will strengthen and support peace (Miall, 2004; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005; Bar-Tal, 2005; Harris, 2008; Schimmel, 2009). Authors in peace research have discussed the role of educational, societal

and cultural institutions in furthering building of peace. For example, Bar-Tal (2000) explains that communication channels, such as books, films, plays, leaders' speeches, TV programs, and newspaper articles can promote new positive messages that will foster individual changes among society members. The mass media can play an important role in promoting peace by transmitting new positive messages regarding peaceful goals, the adversary group, one's own group, and about developing peaceful relations. The education system can also be used to inform people's values, beliefs, attitudes, motivations, skills, and patterns of behaviour in a way that supports future peaceful relations. Schimmel argues that encouraging changes in larger structures and systems within society will:

yield real social change that creates a positive social domino effect, expanding the circles of understanding, respect and coexistence to society at large and enabling structural change that improves the lives of all (2009:65).

In summary, conflict transformation complements conflict resolution interventions such as military strategies and negotiation, which are often necessary to stop violence and to address the problem of disputes over tangible interests. Conflict transformation is a gradual process that will continue for many years. However, it is precisely in the context of prolonged violent conflict that it is necessary to promote conflict transformation so it can prepare individuals and communities to live in peace. Conflict transformation needs to be a part of the peace building process in societies affected by prolonged violent conflict, especially when identity issues are central to the conflict. This is to ensure that underlying issues that lead to reoccurrence of violent conflict are acknowledged and addressed. Without this

approach, any peace achieved will be short-term and reoccurrence of violence between parties will likely persist.

2.5 Challenges in conflict transformation theory

The literature reviewed indicates that conflict transformation is essential in identity conflicts for facilitating new positive individual, relational and structural changes, and eventually the establishment of long-term peace between groups. However, several criticisms have also been noted in the literature on conflict transformation. These limitations include: underlying assumptions, goals and values of trainers in addition to selection bias in programs.

2.5.1 Underlying assumptions, goals and values of trainers

Schmelzle (2006) warns that the training process in conflict transformation risks unexpected resistance and difficulties if one is not aware of underlying assumptions of trainers or teachers in the practice of such interventions. Trainers bring with them personal and societal values, assumptions, and goals to the setting that shape their expectations and interactions. In current practice of conflict transformation, however, the examination of such values and assumptions and about how they might influence the teaching process and the long-term purpose of conflict transformation is rarely done. Bush & Salterelli (2000) have already exemplified in their discussion of the 'two faces of education' how teaching in contexts of violent conflict can serve both positive and negative purposes. For example, teachers can gradually train people to use nonviolent alternatives in building peace, but they may also equip participants with conflict-promoting values

and beliefs. Therefore, without understanding who the teachers or trainers are and their underlying assumptions, aspirations or values, conflict transformation interventions risk imposing on participants particular values and lessons that may lead to increased frustration among individuals and even further conflict and violence between groups (Schmelzle, 2006).

2.5.2 Selection bias

A second main criticism of conflict transformation practice in the context of violent conflict is the tendency to work with people who are already open to building peace with the rival group (Schmelzle, 2006). Usually people who participate or are willing to join conflict transformation interventions already exhibit some commitment to engaging with the rival in a respectful manner. Individuals who hold severe prejudices, hatred and fear of the other side, however, show the greatest resistance to joining or participating in such interventions (Schimmel, 2009). Those who oppose conflict transformation generally do not participate in such interventions. Participants from certain populations, as for example, armed or formerly armed groups, or those from lower economic classes rarely participate in such interventions (Schmelzle, 2006; Schimmel, 2009). As a result, more efforts need to be made to expand access of conflict transformation training among all society members who shape the course of conflict and transformation of violent conflict.

2.6 Peace education

The role of education in building peace has received increased attention in the conflict transformation literature (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Tidwell, 2004; Clarke-Habibi, 2005; Noe, 2008). In societies emerging from long-term violent conflict, it is

necessary to change perceptions, attitudes and behaviour from negative to positive. This kind of change can take place through the process of conflict transformation, in which education plays a major role. While recognizing the need to affect changes in the economic and political structures, UNESCO's *Medium Term Strategy* (1996-2001) noted that education can instill:

the values, skills and knowledge which form the basis of respect for human rights and democratic principles, the rejection of violence, and a spirit of tolerance, understanding and mutual appreciation among individuals, groups and nations (UNESCO, 2001:38).

Furthermore, education is often said to “be the only institution of which the society can make formal, intentional, and extensive use to change the psychological repertoire of society members” (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004:31). Peace education is a broad concept used to describe a wide range of formal and nonformal educational approaches undertaken to promote peace in schools and communities through the inculcation of new values, attitudes, skills and patterns of behaviour that support the development of peaceful relations between former adversaries (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Clarke-Habibi, 2005; Noe, 2008; Tidwell, 2004; Harris, 2008).

Peace education has been used in a number of societies affected by violent group conflict as a major method to advance peace. For example, it has been used as compulsory curriculum in schools called the Education for Peace (EFP) program in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Clarke-Habibi, 2005). Attempts to develop peace education have also taken place in Israel, including an attempt by the Ministry of Education in 1994 and several attempts from various nongovernmental organizations, including the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME),

Adam Institute, Middle East Children Association (MECA), and the Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI) (Bar-Tal, 2011). The particular focus of peace education depends on the needs and objectives of the particular context (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Harris, 2004).

In societies emerging from long-term identity conflicts, the objective of peace education is to move from a culture of violence to a culture of peace, which refers to building long-term, positive change by helping a fractured society move towards a cohesive one (Salomon, 2004a; Salomon & Kupermintz, 2002; Danesh, 2006). In such circumstances, peace education must deal with unique challenges that differ from those pertaining to school-based interpersonal conflict resolution (Salomon, 2004b; Kupermintz & Salomon, 1995). The focus in the latter is mainly on the acquisition of skills for interpersonal conflict resolution, aimed at changed behaviours and attitudes in individuals to manage conflicts in less violent ways. Peace education in the context of long-term violent conflict, however, is mainly focused on resolving the conflict between groups, not individuals. For example, in areas such as Northern Ireland, the former Yugoslavia, Israel/Palestine, and Rwanda, the main goal is to change beliefs and attitudes and establish genuine peaceful relations with a particular threatening collective enemy, rather than cultivating general dispositions about peace for interpersonal conflict resolution (Salomon, 2006; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005; Bar-Tal, 2005). There is partial overlap between peace education programs in both kinds of contexts, since both aim at the improvement of understanding the nature of conflict and building listening skills and empathy. However, peace education in the context of long-term violent

conflict is mostly aimed at changing attitudes, behaviour, and relations between groups.

Peace education provides knowledge about the roots of violence and the different strategies for attaining peace. It also attempts to promote attitudinal changes, such as increasing tolerance, reducing fear of contact with others, and reducing prejudice and rigid, preconceived and narrow perceptions (Lederach, Neufeldt & Culbertson, 2007). Furthermore, peace education tries to encourage behavioural change such as developing listening skills, acceptance of others, openness and transparency about feelings, and reconsidering perceptions. Thus, peace education attempts to contribute to social change by identifying changes in individuals and their relations with others, which are known to support the desired, long-term changes in the broader society (Salomon, 2004a; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004). UNICEF (2011) and UNESCO (2000) also promote peace education through changing individual attitudes and behaviour, promoting peaceful relations between groups, and through the improvement of school environments, training parents and community leaders, and utilizing the media and other channels of communication for the promotion of peace. Advocates of peace education argue that once learners become informed about the dangers of violence and learn how to promote peace they will be encouraged to change their behaviour and the structural systems that promote violent conflict. It is believed that these actions can help reduce levels of violence and promote enduring peace between groups (Harris, 2008).

2.7 Challenges in peace education practice

The literature reviewed highlights the importance of peace education, as part of the conflict transformation process, for building long-term peace. However, there are a number of limitations and challenges in peace education discussed in the literature. These include: 1) positive program effects are limited to program participants, 2) unsustainability of desired program outcomes; 3) limited evaluations on peace education; and 4) insufficient attention paid to differential needs and goals of adversary groups.

2.7.1 Positive effects limited to program participants

The first limitation of peace education refers to the argument that positive program effects of peace education are limited to a small number of program participants, without any ripple effect to the wider society. People who participate in a particular program may be positively changed; however, positive impacts from the program may not spread to non-participants. Salomon (2011) argues that the goal of peace education is the creation of a more peaceful society; hence, the idea is to educate not only individuals, but to influence whole societies. Bush and Salterelli (2000) have added that any positive change achieved from participating in a peace education program will be unsustainable unless such changes are developed and supported by the majority of society members.

Bar-Tal, Rosen, and Nets-Zehngut (2009) have indicated that school children and adolescents are part of the larger community in which they live and are greatly influenced by the views expressed in it. As such, it is important that peace education

reaches and involves the wider community. This is to ensure that when children and adolescents return to their communities, their positive insights and experiences will be welcomed and supported by those around them. Schimmel (2009) explains that at the end of a program intervention people return to their communities and within those communities the lessons they learned and positive experiences are likely to be “mocked, questioned, marginalized and otherwise challenged as irrelevant or even potentially traitorous in nature” (54). Very few peace education programs in Israel take into account these ideas, and as a result, research has revealed that peace education programs in Israel have limited beneficial effect on the negative attitudes of Arabs and Jews in Israel.

Schimmel argues that peace education needs to be designed as part of a larger educational effort that addresses not only a small section of the population, but one that reaches all members of the community. Peace education demands engagement and responsibility by the entire community because targeting a small section of the population is insufficient to build a social atmosphere that can improve prospects for long-term peace. Bringing about long-term peace requires that the masses support the peace process and work to change the negative attitudes, behaviours, and social structures which serve to perpetuate conflict for many years. A significant challenge for peace education, therefore, is to spread its interventions to additional areas of conflict-affected societies, which includes the participants’ parents and families, their friends, the media, politicians, educational institutions, and public opinion (Bush & Salterelli, 2000; Salomon, 2004b; Schimmel, 2009). By expanding peace education on a larger scale in schools and through nonformal

education programs, it ensures that positive changes of peace education will spread to the wider society and across all age groups, and not just program participants.

2.7.2 Sustainability of desired program outcomes

The second common limitation in peace education noted in the literature is sustainability of desired program outcomes. Salomon (2011) explains that over time positive effects from peace education interventions tend to erode and return to their original state. Kupermintz and Salomon (2005) provide two factors that play an important role in the erosion of desired program effects: time and adverse political events. Friendships between members of adversary groups tend to erode without continued contact and maintenance. In addition, ongoing violence in the conflict-affected society can adversely affect a person's willingness to remain in contact with a member of the rival group. Authors have shown that socio-political events can easily suppress previously attained positive program effects, as shown in Northern Ireland (Kilpatrick & Leitech, 2004) and in Israel (Salomon, 2006).

Due to pressures experienced from people who cannot relate, or who are opposed to the changes, most positive outcomes from a program are lost or forgotten within a few months, prompting participants to return to their previously held negative attitudes and beliefs (Schimmel, 2009). For these reasons, Kupermintz and Salomon (2005) argue that "hit-and-run, shot-in-the-arm-like interventions cannot suffice" (295). A challenge for peace education is to ensure repeated face-to-face meetings between groups and reinforcement of critical program elements. Consistent and repeated programming is crucial to maintain

people's willingness for contact with members of the enemy group and to reinforce other desired program outcomes, including changes in attitudes, beliefs and behaviour. Long-term programming is especially relevant where positive changes gained are under constant threat of being quashed by ongoing violence, hatred, and a social atmosphere that opposes such changes.

2.7.3 Limited evaluation on peace education

The third limitation in peace education discussed in the literature is the lack of evidence or data that verifies peace education interventions as effective at building peace. Despite the large number of peace education programs that have been implemented around the world (including Sri-Lanka, Rwanda, Kosovo and Northern Ireland) there is limited evidence to show that such programs succeed in attaining their goals or that they are effective in building peace (Salomon, 2004a; Salomon, 2006; Schimmel, 2009; Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005; Harris, 2008; Ashton, 2007). The most common evaluations are social-psychological studies on the contact hypothesis and those focused on school-based interpersonal conflict resolution (Salomon, 2004a; Harris, 2008). The contact hypothesis involves face-to-face meetings between individuals from different groups, such as Jews and Arab Palestinians and Catholics and Protestants, getting together in dialogue groups to discuss their experiences. Evaluations about whether such actions lead to peace are not conclusive (Harris, 2008; Salomon, 2004a; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005; McGlynn, Niens, Cairns & Hewstone, 2004). Evaluation studies on peace education programs in the context of prolonged violent conflict are even more limited (Salomon, 2004a; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005; Harris, 2008). Without evidence of

the effects that a program or a particular intervention has on an individual or the community, neither the research on theory nor practice of peace education can learn from failures and inform each other about when certain strategies work and when they do not.

Part of the reason little is known about the conditions under which peace education interventions are effective is the difficulty of testing them and little consistency in evaluation methods (Ashton, 2007). Assessing changes in attitudes and beliefs is not easily measurable and requires long term monitoring. Ashton has further suggested that another reason for limited evaluations of peace education is that theories of change underlying educational strategies are often implicit. A theory of change gives reasons and mechanisms (why and how) for the process that links activities to the desired goal. Without explicit assumptions about why and how an activity or set of activities will lead to a desired goal, it is difficult to make clear links about what works and what does not, and under what circumstances. Thus, it is necessary that theories of change be explicitly stated to facilitate evaluations of peace education and its impacts. New knowledge from evaluations on peace education can be used to better achieve the goals of peace education and conflict transformation.

2.7.4 Limited attention to differential needs, values and goals of adversaries

The fourth common limitation in peace education is that much of the content and methods of programs are the same for all sides of conflict, which leads to inconsistent levels of success across different groups (Salomon, 2011; Abu-Nimer,

2004). For example, many researchers assert that encounter programs fail to recognize the differential needs of each group involved, often leaving parties frustrated in the end (Abu-Nimer, 2004). In one study involving 800 Israeli-Jewish and Palestinian children, Salomon (2011) found that the two groups had a different conception of peace- 'negative peace' or absence of violence versus 'structural peace' or independence and freedom- which led to stronger effects on the Jews than on the Palestinians after the one-year program. This occurred because the intervention mainly dealt with the psychological aspects of reconciliation, not with any political solution.

Therefore, a challenge for peace education is to design programs that serve the different needs and goals of all parties involved. Kupermintz and Salomon (2005) add that adversaries come to joint peace education programs with "incompatible, even opposing agendas and perceptions that need to be taken into consideration" (300). Rather than assuming the process of overcoming negative attitudes, beliefs and behaviour are similar for all parties, peace education programs need to take into account each group's different needs and goals. These differences across groups must be addressed within the content and methods of peace education to improve success of conflict transformation. For example, in the context of the Israeli and Palestinian conflict, it may be useful to allow one side to "strengthen its adherence to its own collective narrative, or become empowered; and the other side to acknowledge its role in the conflict and give legitimacy to the other's collective narrative" (Salomon, 2011:53).

2.8 Challenges in implementing peace education in conflict-affected societies

The context of ongoing violent conflict presents additional barriers to the implementation of peace education. Bar-Tal, Rosen and Nets-Zehngut (2009) provide a number of necessary conditions for implementing peace education, which are not prevalent while conflict persists. The authors argue that in the absence of political and social support, or ripeness for conflict transformation, peace education faces significant difficulty in achieving conflict transformation.

2.8.1 Political-societal conditions

The first political-societal condition required for successful implementation of peace education includes a well publicized and open movement towards conflict resolution that includes negotiation with the rival party. This includes military, political, societal and economic conditions that influence relations between parties. A peace agreement must be at least achieved and signed between adversaries. Bar-Tal and Bennink (2004) explain that a change in people's attitudes and beliefs are related to a conflict resolution process that includes negotiation, compromise, and signing of a peace agreement. These processes facilitate greatly and legitimize launching of peace education.

The second political-societal condition required for successful implementation of peace education is substantial support by the majority of society members, including political leaders and civil society. Positive change in society members depends on the motivation, determination and activism of those who support the peace process, including leaders, political parties, NGOs, and individual society

members (Bar-Tal, 2005). Efforts of peace supporters, especially in areas of ongoing violent conflicts, are often met with opposition aimed at obstructing the peace process. As such, there is the need to show determination to the peace process, despite opposition. Support can be exhibited in the form of “well-publicized conciliatory acts, including verbal statements and symbolic acts, both formal and informal, by both parties” (Bar-Tal, 2005:11). Support from individuals, groups and organizations can help persuade those who are hesitant, or who oppose conflict transformation. As well, their support helps legitimize launching peace education to advance the peace process.

The third political-societal condition is the readiness of the society to change their conflictual collective attitudes and emotions, which play an important role during the conflict. Society members may be ready for the peace process, but they may not be ready to change their collective beliefs and attitudes that are central to their group identity (Bar-Tal, Rosen and Nets-Zehngut, 2009). Improving the willingness of society members to change their collective attitudes might require fostering reflective thinking on the nature of conflict and the way that it is handled, promoting a new meaning of living in peace, outlining the benefits and costs of achieving peace, and developing views about its possible peaceful resolution.

2.8.2 Educational conditions

In addition to the above noted political-societal conditions, Bar-Tal, Rosen and Nets-Zehngut (2009) discuss several educational conditions that are necessary for successful implementation and institutionalization of peace education. First,

peace education requires support from the highest educational authority, such as the Ministry of Education. This support gives legitimacy to carry out peace education and provides leaders of the education system, such as teachers, with motivation to implement it. Second, initiating peace education requires major change in educational policies. This includes development of new curricula, new school textbooks, new programs, and new training curricula for teachers and school staff. Finally, to implement peace education, there has to be sufficient infrastructure and resources. This includes availability of well-trained experts and professional staff as well as resources for educational materials to carry out the programs.

In summary, building peace between adversaries is not an easy task in societies affected by prolonged identity conflict- societies that are moving from conditions of violence and coercion, and which are hoping to build long term peaceful relationships between groups. The peace process requires transformation of conflictual societal beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes of all society members into new positive ones that can lead to the development of peaceful relations between adversaries. In addition, it often requires transforming prevailing relationships and structures within society that maintain the conflict and present obstacles to maintaining peace over the long-term. Despite the numerous difficulties involved, peace education is necessary to help prevent further delegitimization of the adversary group, and help society members learn how to resolve conflict in non-violent ways and how to live peacefully with the adversary group. Peace education, as part of the conflict transformation process, needs to be a part of the peace

building process in societies affected by prolonged conflict. Without it, any peace achieved will be short-term and renewed violence between parties will likely persist.

2.9 Links between theory and practice

There has been increasing concern in the field of conflict studies over the “substantial gap between theory and practice” (Deutch & Coleman, 2000, p.598). Many practitioners in the field dismiss the contributions of theorists and researchers, particularly if the research challenges their own opinions or methods. At the same time, scholars often fail to incorporate the expertise of highly-skilled practitioners in their development of theory. This lack of collaboration between scholars and practitioners “hinders the development of the field and is a significant loss for both scholars and practitioners” (Deutch & Coleman, 2000, p.598). There is a need for greater collaboration between researchers and practitioners in order to minimize the theory- practice gap. Theory and practice are closely intertwined; theory can offer new insight and perspective to practice that is evidence-based and logical. At the same time, practitioners can inform the development of theory by indicating the constraints and realities observed in practice. It is important to foster stronger links between theory and practice in order to revise theory, improve practice, and ensure interventions are effective. One way to minimize the gap between theory and practice is to surface the underlying theories of change that shape practice (Shapiro, 2006). These are the underlying assumptions about what changes are needed to help transform conflict and the strategies for bringing about such changes. Articulating theories of change in current conflict transformation interventions is

useful in building theories that are grounded in good practice. It is also useful in evaluating the validity of given theories and revising practices when assumptions are imprecise or unfounded. In addition, articulating theories of change in conflict interventions can help foster reflective practice and conscious choice among practitioners that can expand and improve intervention options. Therefore, minimizing the gap between theory and practice can advance research that both refines theory and improves practice. To this end, this thesis explores the theory-practice gap in the field of conflict transformation and peace education through analyzing one prominent peace education program, Seeds of Peace, to determine to what extent theoretical insights are incorporated in practice.

2.10 Conflict transformation – an analytical framework

The analytical framework used for data analysis was developed from reviewing the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education. The current study will use the indicators that make up the analytical framework to analyse the Seeds of Peace program. These indicators are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Conflict transformation: an analytical framework

INDIVIDUAL CHANGE:

Seeks to change the attitudes, knowledge and behaviour of individuals, based on the underlying assumption that peace is possible if minds and behaviour are positively altered. Individual change includes a shift from hostile and negative perceptions, attitudes and behaviour to legitimization of the opponent, increased understanding and trust, respect for differences, and the resolution of problems or disputes through peaceful means.

Key assumptions for individual change are:

INDIVIDUAL	1. Positive attitudes and perceptions toward the adversary group: Better ability to see the other side's perspective and reasons behind their actions, and additionally, recognition and acceptance of the right of all individuals to have different thoughts, opinions, attitudes, motivations, and behaviour.
	2. Reconceptualised history of conflict: New understanding of the history of conflict, where individuals become aware of their own collective contribution to conflict and recognize that the adversary group has also suffered in the conflict.
	3. Positive outlook on the future: Desire for maintaining peaceful relations with the other group, which emphasizes cooperation and nonviolence as the most effective methods for dealing with problems or disputes.

RELATIONAL CHANGE:

Seeks to change patterns of communication and interaction between adversary groups, based on the underlying assumption that peace is possible if personal relationships between opponents are formed. Relational change includes a shift from a relationship that is mistrustful and coercive to one based on open communication, understanding and trust, and cooperation.

Key assumptions for relational change are:

RELATIONAL	1. Open communication: Sharing feelings, opinions, and experiences of conflict with the adversary group.
	2. Friendship formation: Forming friendships across lines of conflict.
	3. Cooperation/collaboration: Working together towards a common goal.

STRUCTURAL CHANGE:

Seeks to change institutions and structures of the society in conflict, based on the underlying assumption that peace is possible if broader systems and institutions strengthen and support peace. Structural change includes promoting constructive systems of education, positive media messages, engaged leaders, and supportive families and communities.

Key assumptions for structural change are:

STRUCTURAL	1. Constructive education systems: Developing educational materials and curricula that promote positive perceptions and attitudes toward the adversary group.
	2. Engaged leaders: Educating and inspiring leaders to support peace.
	3. Positive media messages: Using the media to promote positive images of the adversary group,

	including modeling tolerant behaviour and supporting dialogue between adversaries.
	4. Supportive community: Encouraging the wider community to adopt positive attitudes, critical knowledge, and peaceful behaviour in order to strengthen and support building peace.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology, including methods for data collection and analysis. The chapter describes the Seeds of Peace program and justifies the selection of the program for the case study. The chapter ends with a discussion on the limitations of the single-case study as well as ethical considerations in the research.

3.1 Research Design

Qualitative research is useful for producing in-depth knowledge of a social situation or problem (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, Emily, 2000). Different types of qualitative research exist and the design of research within each has distinct features. Case study is one type of qualitative methodology. Case studies can deal with either single or multiple cases. For example, a single person, program, event, process, institution, organization, social group or phenomenon can be investigated, using a combination of appropriate data collection methods (Creswell, 1994). Since the researcher has no interest in generalising findings beyond the program studied, the Seeds of Peace program serves as a single intrinsic case study. The intrinsic case study is done to provide an understanding about a particular phenomenon which the study focuses on (Harling, 2002). The purpose of this study is to assess the relationship between theory and practice in conflict transformation and peace education, as demonstrated in one program. Specifically, this thesis will analyse whether key theoretical notions from the literature are incorporated with the Seeds of Peace program. Sources of information

used in this case study are written program documents on Seeds of Peace and semi-structured interviews with ten staff members, including program directors, implementers, and camp counsellors. Findings will indicate to what extent theoretical notions found in the research literature are incorporated within Seeds of Peace programming.

3.2 Identifying the case study: The Seeds of Peace program

The Seeds of Peace International Camp in Otisfield, Maine, United States was established in 1993 for youth from the Middle East. The mission of Seeds of Peace is expressed in its motto “empowering young leaders from regions of conflict with the leadership skills required to advance reconciliation and coexistence,” and in the following statement:

Treaties are negotiated by governments; Peace is made by people. Seeds of Peace is doing what no government can. It is sowing the seeds of peace among the next generation of leaders. It is educating them to develop empathy, respect and confidence. It is equipping them with communication and negotiation skills. It is enabling them to see the human face of their enemies. By empowering them to emerge as tomorrow's leaders, Seeds of Peace is working to forge the personal relationships so critical to peacemaking and reconciliation (Seeds of Peace, “Our Mission & Values,” 2011).

In 1993, John Wallach, an American journalist and author, founded Seeds of Peace with the aim of fostering and promoting peace to prevent violence and empower people to resolve conflicts peacefully. The first summer Camp began in 1993, with a single three-week session with 23 Israelis, 15 Palestinians and 10 Egyptians, ranging in age from 13 to 18. Since then Seeds of Peace has broadened its activities to include youth from other conflict regions including the Balkans, Cyprus,

India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Today, the Camp in Maine consists of two sessions, each of three weeks duration, with a total of approximately 450 teenagers. Since its beginning, Seeds of Peace has graduated nearly 5,000 youth from its International Camp in Maine (Seeds of Peace, "About Seeds of Peace," 2011).

3.2.1 Justification for selection of the program

The Seeds of Peace program is particularly suited as a good case study for this study for several reasons. First, the program is addressing a long-term identity conflict that has not been resolved through traditional conflict resolution methods. Despite years of peace negotiations, conflict and intermittent violence between Israelis and Palestinian Arabs continues. Identity issues that characterize the conflict include negative attitudes and emotions toward the adversary group, including fear, hatred, and a sense of victimhood. Both parties also delegitimize the adversary group and its collective narrative, history, experiences, sufferings, and beliefs (Bar-Tal, 2005). These identity concerns continue to irritate relations between Israelis and Arab Palestinians and present obstacles to building long-term peace.

The second reason for studying this program is that Seeds of Peace is a long standing program that has been praised for its accomplishments within the peace education literature (Kaufman, 2006; Tidwell, 2004). Seeds of Peace is often described as a promising program that can promote the development of positive attitudes, perceptions and behaviour among individuals, and lead to peaceful relationships between conflicting parties that can help build peace within communities. The program has also enjoyed strong support from both the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority who are involved in selecting camp

participants and Delegation Leaders who accompany the youth to the International Camp in Otisfield, Maine. As such, Seeds of Peace appears as one of the most cited and recognized peace education programs within the literature. Further, if the literature is describing key theoretical notions for peace education programs to be successful in conflict transformation and Seeds of Peace is described as a promising program, it is reasonable to assume that key theoretical notions from the literature will be reflected in its programming. The study of this program will determine to what extent these theoretical notions are actually incorporated in practice.

3.2.2 Limitations of the single-case study

The major limitation of a single case study is that results cannot be generalized (Babbie, 2008). It is important to note, however, generalization of the study's findings to other programs or broader populations is not the goal of this study. The purpose is to assess the extent to which key theoretical assumptions from the research literature are incorporated in the Seeds of Peace program. Findings drawn from the analysis of Seeds of Peace programming will thus indicate if theory is being put into practice in at least one peace education program. Results will not infer that all or most peace education programs are incorporating key theoretical notions from the literature. However, findings may provide grounds to conduct future studies on other peace education programs to determine to what extent those programs are incorporating key insights from the literature.

3.3 Data Collection

For this study, sources for data collection are 1) semi-structured interviews with ten staff members who are currently, or have recently, worked at the Seeds of Peace program; and 2) program documents and website information on the program.

3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

The qualitative research interview is a form of conversation with structure and purpose defined and controlled by the researcher (Kvale, 1996). Interviews may be structured, semi-structured or unstructured (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006:40). For this study, the interview process was semi-structured, one-on-one telephone interviews using open-ended questions. The interview protocol is attached as Appendix I. In semi-structured interviews, questions are determined in advance, but the order of questions is not fixed (Kvale, 1996). As a result, the conversation flows more naturally and may lead to new knowledge. Open-ended questions lead to more illustrative answers, thus providing more information. Closed questions, on the other hand, lead to restricted answers (Seidman, 1998). For this research, telephone interviews were chosen to allow a level of personal contact between the researcher and respondent, while providing a less costly data collection method and more rapid responses than using methods such as in-person interviews, questionnaires or observations (Kvale, 1996). To keep record of the interviewees' answers all of the interviews were audio recorded, with permission from participants.

3.3.2 Participants for interviews

Relevant participants for interviews were selected through “purposive sampling” (Babbie, 2008:203). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten staff members of Seeds of Peace, who included program directors, implementers, and camp counsellors. The study did not include program participants, such as camp participants, since the goal of the study was not to evaluate the Seeds of Peace program or its impacts. Program implementers were selected because they are involved in the planning and implementation of the program, and thus should provide significant information on their experience and understanding of the program’s visions and goals. This information is crucial for determining whether key theoretical notions found in the literature are reflected in Seeds of Peace programming.

Before recruitment to interviews was considered ethical approval was sought from the Research Ethics Board (REB) at the University of Ottawa. In addition, permission to recruit staff members was obtained from the Director of the Seeds of Peace program. An invitation letter was sent out by email to all prospective participants (using contact information available on the program’s website and brochures). Those contacted included staff members (i.e. program directors, implementers, and camp counsellors) who worked in the International Camp in Maine as well as the various regional programs offered after camp. The invitation letter sent to members contained an introduction to the study, a summary of the research context, and the contact information of the researcher, thesis supervisor, and research ethics officer at the University of Ottawa. The invitation letter also

explained the participant's right to withdraw from the study at any time and the protection of their anonymity and confidentiality of all data obtained from the interview.

Participants who responded with their interest to participate in the study were invited to a telephone interview at a mutually convenient time. A total of twenty program members were invited to a phone interview and ten of these accepted the invitation. Invitations to those who did not respond to the first invitation were re-sent to increase participation; however, no additional participants responded. The participants' consent to participate in the interview and to recording their interview was audio recorded and documented at the time of the interview. The length of interviews ranged from 30 to 60 minutes, and all interviews were audio recorded, with the participant's consent. All participants were offered the opportunity to review transcripts of their interview after completion to eliminate misunderstandings and for ethical purposes.

3.3.3 Document Analysis

In addition to semi-structured phone interviews, program documents provided a source of data for this study. Documents collected for analysis are materials produced by the Seeds of Peace organization that describe the program and its components, which were found on the Internet and in libraries. The core program documents include: website material, Seeds of Peace Annual Reports (2003-2009), Program Highlights (2009-2010), *The Olive Branch: The Youth Magazine for Seeds of Peace* (2001-2009), *The Olive Branch Teacher's Guide* (2008-2009), and the book, *The Enemy Has a Face: The Seeds of Peace Experience* (2000), written by

the founder of Seeds of Peace, John Wallach, with his son Michael Wallach. This collection of documents presented the goals and objectives, activities, and methods used in the Seeds of Peace program. The benefits of document analysis include low cost and the availability of documents in the public domain, which are often accessible without the author's permission (Bowen, 2009:31). One limitation with this method is that information may be incomplete or inaccurate. Some documents may also be difficult to access, and an incomplete collection of documents can lead to "biased selectivity" (i.e. selected documents are aligned with a particular agenda of the organization's principals) (Bowen, 2009:31). To minimize these limitations, this study combined data from program documents and semi-structured interviews with program staff.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data analyzed in this study were statements from staff members who were interviewed and written information from program documents. The combination of document analysis and interviews together resulted in 'triangulation,' which refers to the use of more than one set of data to corroborate evidence from other sources or to provide broader conclusions than if only one source of data is used (Bowen, 2009; Yin, 1994; Tellis, 1997). The combination of these methods served to elaborate and cross-check findings, thus enhancing the validity of findings and providing a more in-depth understanding of the subject under study. Before analysis of interview statements, all recorded interviews were transcribed into electronic text.

Each interview lasted from 30 to 60 minutes, and a total of 43 pages of transcripts were obtained from these interviews.

The data from interviews were entered into Excel spreadsheets, and selected text was coded under relevant themes (indicators derived from the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education). This method was a suitable tool to organize the vast amount of data that had been obtained from interviews. For the document analysis, written program documents were collected, read, collated, and analyzed for content and themes (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). The process involved in-depth examination, re-examination, and interpretation of text and statements, for eliciting meaning and gaining understanding. These meanings or insights formed the findings of the study.

Data from interviews and program documents was then combined and analyzed. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. This is a widely used approach in qualitative research, which it is a form of pattern recognition within the data that helps to organize data and identify important and relevant themes (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The analysis of data from interviews and program documents identified common patterns and themes related to indicators described in the analytical framework. The extent of gaps between theory and practice were determined by the degree to which key theoretical assumptions of the conflict transformation literature were addressed within program documents and in interviews. Assumptions that received in-depth attention (meaning 5-10 interviewees and in most documents) were categorized as '*well-addressed*'; assumptions that received moderate attention (meaning 3-4 interviewees and in several documents)

were categorized as '*addressed*'; assumptions that received little attention (meaning 1-2 interviewees and in few documents) were categorized as '*partially addressed*'; and finally, assumptions that received no attention (meaning 0 interviewees and no documents) were labeled as '*not addressed*'.

3.5 Challenges encountered during the research

This thesis initially intended to assess two independent peace education programs. This method was chosen to provide a broader understanding of the gap between theory and practice in conflict transformation in two different conflict contexts. Compared to one program, two programs would have provided a broader understanding of the current extent to which peace education programs are incorporating theoretical assumptions from the literature. By studying two cases, it would also be possible to identify factors specific to each case, as well as more general factors that apply across both programs. Several difficulties were encountered during the research process, leading this thesis to adopt a single case-study. Difficulties with recruitment of programs and staff members for interviews delayed the project, and as a result, the comparative study of two cases was abandoned and a single case study was adopted instead. The logistics of recruiting a second program, the process of receiving ethics approval, conducting interviews, and completing the associated analysis would have been difficult within the time constraints for this project.

For the Seeds of Peace program, there were also some difficulties encountered in recruiting participants for interviews. Fewer interviews were secured

as originally planned. A total of twenty program members were invited to a phone interview, however, only ten of these accepted the invitation. An invitation letter was re-sent to staff who did not respond to the first invitation, but none of these people responded. Several factors may have prevented these individuals who did not respond from participating in interviews, including a lack of time, a lack of confidence in their knowledge to answer interview questions about the program, and language barriers (invitation was limited to English-speaking staff members). The lack of representation from all staff members may lead to significant biases and inaccurate representations of the program. For example, the staff who did not participate in the interview may have held different opinions or thoughts on the visions or goals of the program. This could have lead to different findings or further validated the study's current findings.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines were strictly observed in this study. Some of these considerations include respect for human dignity, informed consent, confidentiality of data and anonymity of the research participant (Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, 1998). All participants entered the research voluntarily and their verbal consent to participating in the telephone interview and to recording of their conversation was recorded and documented. Participants were notified that: they could withdraw from the study at any time, refuse to answer any question (or set of questions), and they could have any of their responses deleted. Participants were also asked to confirm that they understood the

nature of the study and obligations involved. They were also told that the research was not an evaluation exercise. Rather, it sought to analyze the program's vision-mission statements, goals, objectives, target groups, activities, and related challenges in order to obtain an in-depth understanding of the program and its links with building peace.

Participants were not exposed to risks greater than those they could encounter in their everyday life. To further minimize risk to the interviewees, no sensitive questions were asked. Rather, the interview was focused only on the components of the Seeds of Peace program. Confidentiality of data and anonymity of research participants was also observed. No real names, initials, or personal information was documented. Participants were assured that if certain quotations will be used in the thesis these will remain anonymous. Finally, all participants were provided with contact information of the researcher, thesis supervisor, and research ethics officer within the recruitment letter and follow-up email, in case they wanted to address any questions or concerns.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter examines the data gathered from the analysis of program documents and websites, as well as semi-structured interviews with Seeds of Peace staff members. Findings from the analysis of Seeds of Peace relate to the individual, relational, and structural factors for conflict transformation, as well as challenges in the practice of conflict transformation and peace education. It is important to note that findings discussed in the following sections are assertions as addressed by interviewees and evident in the document analysis. Findings cannot be extended beyond their claims since the study did not evaluate the program or its impacts.

4.1 Who is Seeds of Peace targeting?

Before analyzing the key theoretical assumptions identified in the Seeds of Peace program, it is important to discuss the pertinence of the target group of the program, as described by interviewees. One of the program staff stated that the primary target audience of Seeds of Peace are young people, between the ages of 14-18, who have *“the greatest potential to be able to emerge as leaders within their own societies”* (Interview 1). Further, the interviewee explained that there are a number of reasons behind this choice. First of all, in the short-term when young people will return to their own respective communities they will be motivated to promote peace and will be empowered to influence others around them, including their parents, friends, and teachers. Secondly, in the long-term when these young people grow up and move into positions of leadership they will be better equipped to

advance peace as effective leaders. This view was typified by the following statements:

I think we're trying to have an impact in two different ways. I think Seeds of Peace's model is that we are giving, umm, a pretty rare transformative experience to young leaders, kids with the greatest potential to be able to emerge as leaders within their own societies at an early age. Then see their ability to have an impact in two ways: in the short term, in the capacity to impact their own communities when they go home. We have year-round programs to support them and continue to work with them in their home countries. The long term, when they move into positions of leadership or influence within their own societies they'll be more and better equipped to be able to advance peace in between their societies (14).

There are two things that can happen. One is that seeds may be able to impact the current conflict, Two, they will be able to step in once there is some sort of peace deal signed...There's people who are able to impact the conflict now, and people who are going to be able to step up and reach out to the other side once there is peace agreement (15).

The interviewees emphasised that Seeds of Peace aims to “empower leaders from the next generation in hope that these kids will go back home and have an influence on their societies. This includes their families, their friends, which can benefit other people (19). Further, the idea is that down the line “these kids will get into positions of power” and they will “have influence in the government (19). Interviewees emphasised equipping youth with skills to become effective leaders to advance peace:

...main goal of the program is long-term, youngsters, who aged 14-16 are going to be the leaders of the country, so this program we are trying to sort of implant, the ideas of tolerance, leadership, communication, this sort of ummm, skills in those youngsters. They do grow with it. So it's all in the hope that someday they become leaders. They will be better leaders than what we have (11).

Our program with Seeds of peace, the overall... the original founder passed away in 2002. His name was John Wallach, John always spoke about the purpose of seeds was to create and help young people become leaders in their society, and give them a proximity to people who weren't like them. In other words, you put a bunch of people in a room who are different religions, different races, different ethnicities, and they learn to speak to each other, and have a common human factor towards each other. Then that would evolve in later on people would see each other as adults, in some form or fashion. He always believed that one day there would be a Seed from Palestine and a Seed from Israel across the table in negotiation, to make their area better (12).

4.2 Individual changes

This category is concerned with individual changes. This section is divided into three sub-categories:

- Positive attitudes and perceptions toward the adversary group;
- Reconceptualised history of conflict;
- Positive outlook on the future.

Table 2 below provides an overview of findings that pertain to individual changes as addressed by interviewees and evident in the document analysis. Specific findings identified in the sub-categories are explained in the text that follows.

Table 2 – Individual Changes

Level of Change	Indicator and Criteria	Well Addressed	Addressed	Partially addressed	Not Addressed
INDIVIDUAL	Positive attitudes and perceptions toward the adversary group: Better ability to see the other side's perspective and reasons behind their actions, and additionally, recognition and acceptance of the right of all individuals to have different thoughts, opinions, attitudes, motivations, and behaviour.	•			
	Reconceptualised history of conflict: New understanding of the history of conflict, where individuals become aware of their own collective contribution to conflict and recognize that the adversary group has also suffered in the conflict.		•		
	Positive outlook on the future: Desire for maintaining peaceful relations with the other group, which emphasizes cooperation and nonviolence as the most effective methods for dealing with problems or disputes.		•		

***Well addressed:** assumptions received in-depth attention (meaning 5-10 interviewees and in most documents). ***Addressed:** assumptions received moderate attention (meaning 3-4 interviewees and in several documents). ***Partially addressed:** assumptions received little attention (meaning 1-2 interviewees and in few documents). ***Not addressed:** assumptions received no attention (meaning 0 interviewees and none documents).

4.2.1 Positive attitudes and perceptions toward the adversary group:

A prominent theme relevant to individual change that was well addressed and discussed in-depth by the majority of interviewees and in program documents was positive attitudes and perceptions toward the other side of conflict. Interviewees and program documents indicate that the Seeds of Peace program aims to foster positive attitudes toward the adversary group by providing groups the opportunity to learn about the other side and their collective narrative through daily dialogue sessions. Campers share personal stories and experiences, and discuss issues affecting their region. For many participants, this is a new experience since interactions with the rival group are limited within their communities back at home. Interviewees explained that individuals becoming “*more open to hearing things that they don’t agree with*” (17) and developing a better understanding of the adversary group. This theme was exemplified by the following statement:

wherever you come from, you are able to take a really hard look at yourself and how you perceive the world. You are ultimately able to listen to a perspective that may conflict with yours, that may be offensive to you, that may be somehow absurd to you... Instead of reacting behind a wall...actually listening empathetically (16).

Interviewees emphasised the importance of “*people changing their opinions*” and learning “*to listen to someone with a vastly, sometimes dangerously, threatening viewpoint to yours*” (18). There was a sense among program staff that camp participants can start to “*really understand and be able to listen to the point of view of others.*” They may also “*start to understand a little bit more, where actions or policies on the part of the other side...where they are coming from.*” They may develop “*a better sense of what’s producing those actions*” (14). Bringing together

adversary groups was regarded as an important approach to familiarize individuals with their enemies, and assist them to realize that,

they are similar and that they can be friends with people across cultures...they are from these different cultures, they come together and they learn that they can live together and that they are the same (19).

The analysis of program documents and websites further highlighted that Seeds of Peace's mission and values reflect the idea that respect for differences and positive perceptions toward the enemy group are essential conditions underlying a peaceful society.

In order to achieve a society free of hatred, terror, and violence, we must establish and follow basic principles of human interaction which create an environment of security, absence of fear and respect for one another's opinions and ways of life (Seeds of Peace, Our Mission & Values, 2011).

Program documents also highlighted that Seeds of Peace seeks to equip participants with a positive understanding of the enemy group to bring an awareness of the need for collaboration between different groups:

We entered camp full of stereotypes and prejudices against our enemy; after three exhilarating weeks of coexistence, we returned home with an understanding of the other side and acceptance of our common humanity. We learned we are strong together (Seeds of Peace, Our Mission & Values, 2011).

Overall, interviewees felt that Seeds of Peace offers opportunities to develop positive images of the enemy group as human beings, rather than enemies:

The intent with the goals for 5 years down the road is to keep doors open for people who want to learn about, as they say, the other side; the enemy has a face kind of an attitude. That's been one of the overall parts of the program, has continued for almost 20 years...It's

getting familiar with the person you thought was your enemy, and you realise they are not. We have activities that support that (I2).

There was a sense among interviewees that participants of the program can begin to “realize *this enemy is not an enemy...it’s another human being*” (I1). An emphasis upon learning about the other side of conflict to develop the “*enemy has a face kind of attitude*” was associated with dehumanizing the other side of conflict, as described by one interviewee:

it can lead to understanding the other side more. Just knowing that they can live with people from the other side...and humanizing the other side. I think that’s also another big thing. Because I think a lot of times these kids do dehumanize the other side...you know, Israelis often don’t think about Palestinians as people, and vice versa. To see them, to learn that these kids are their friends, these kids are like them, and that they could be friends with them...you can see it very obviously (I9).

4.2.2 Reconceptualised history of conflict:

A theme relevant to individual changes that was discussed by some of the interviewees and addressed in program documents, but more indirectly, was developing a new understanding of the history of conflict. In the book “*The Enemy Has a Face: the Seeds of Peace experience*,” written by the founder of Seeds of Peace, John Wallach, with his son, Michael Wallach, the authors explained that individuals who come to Camp “*know little about the history of the other side. Often they know simply to blame them for the suffering of the present*” (2000, p.37). One of the interviewees added that the stereotypes that participants have of one another are often the product of their national media, family and friends:

When we survey our kids before they come to camp and following the camp experience...we see that really their knowledge of each other...comes primarily from their own national media, it comes from

family and friends...they are not really having the opportunity to know each other in any kind of positive or human way, and I think that's what we're trying to be able to provide to those young people who will stand the greatest to be influencers in their societies later on (14).

Wallach and Wallach added that *"some textbooks also have a tendency to skip lightly over historical events that might encourage sympathy for the other side"* (p.38). As such, Seeds of Peace *"allows the youngsters to explain to one another the history of the conflict as they see it, through their eyes and past experiences"* (p.39). Interviewees explained that through participating in daily dialogue sessions, youth can vent their frustrations and anger about how terrible the other group is for causing their suffering. Dialogue facilitators use these moments to encourage participants to share their thoughts and experiences of suffering with the other side. An interviewee explained how participants will often start to talk about personal and family tragedies:

You're going to have times when kids stomp out, I've seen that happen, they leave the cabin where they're discussing, they walk around, cry, or whatever, because it has been very tense times. And there's times when two adversaries will get up and walk out hugging each other with tears rolling down their faces and go back to the bunk and continue their discussions. Because this is what happens. It's getting familiar with the person you thought was your enemy, and you realise they are not. We have activities that support that (12).

The exchange of personal stories of suffering and pain are powerful experiences for the youth. According to Wallach and Wallach, *"often one youngster's tears will inspire another's"* (p.56). In seeing the other group's emotions and tears, individuals can start to see that the other side's suffering *"was real pain, a real loss."* They may begin to see them *"like real people with feelings"* (p.57). Through hearing real stories, they can start to understand that the other group has legitimate sufferings

and grievances. This experience can also help participants *“start to understand a little bit more where actions or policies on the part of the other side are coming from”* (I7). Individuals may realize that people from the adversary group are not these *“terrible people who want to kill us.”* Wallach and Wallach said that individuals *“become aware that their knowledge of history is biased and incomplete”* (2000, p.111). The youngsters *“learn that each side has overemphasized its strong points and ignored, belittled, or ridiculed what the other side considers important.”* One of the interviewees added that individuals may learn that the other side has also suffered in the conflict:

At least they have a chance to take it off their chest. What I’m saying, whatever luggage they have, time where they can talk about and take it off their chests. Does help them a lot to talk about it. It helps a lot to hear others’ sufferings as well. Everybody thinks that the only one suffering, the only one that has history. But others are suffering too. It definitely does make them change (I1).

4.2.3 Positive outlook on the future:

Another theme relevant to individual change that was discussed by some of the interviewees and programs documents, but more indirectly, was positive outlook on the future. This describes a desire for maintaining positive relations with the adversary group, which emphasizes cooperation and nonviolence as the most effective methods for dealing with problems or disputes. Seeds of Peace emphasizes a future that is free of violence, hatred and fear. In addition, it stresses the resolution of conflict through peaceful, rather than violent actions. This view was exemplified in Seeds of Peace’s mission:

Our mission is to empower young people with the understanding and skills needed to lead the way towards a better and more peaceful future, free from violence, hatred, and fear;

Our common ground, however, is the belief in and commitment to dialogue and informed leadership—not violence or weapons—as the basis for meaningful change and the most effective tools for pursuing peace;

In order to achieve a society free of hatred, terror, and violence, we must establish and follow basic principles of human interaction which create an environment of security, absence of fear and respect for one another's opinions and ways of life (Seeds of Peace, Our Mission and Values, 2011).

The problem-solving approach to conflict that Seeds of Peace promotes is non-violent:

One of the main objectives of this training is to control your emotions and be respectful, not aggressive, towards others. A second objective is to listen. I believe that listening is the first step to any conversation or dialogue; it is important that we listen to the message being conveyed by others and do not jump to conclusions. We must accept that others' frames of reference, viewpoints and opinions are true for them (The Olive Branch Teacher's Guide, Winter 2009, p. 10).

One of the interviewees discussed the importance of active listening and dealing with problems or disputes without being aggressive or disrespectful:

Learning to listen is extremely important. Learning to speak to someone after you've listened makes you a more respectful human being. You may not agree with that person, but you can still have a good conversation. That's what dialogue sessions try to create...

You realize once they are in their bunks, they're going to have some tense times, especially when things are going on during the time of camp. There have been times where you had bombings, all kinds of things occur. And the reactions kids have. But there are certain rules when I ran camp that I established. And they still continue those things. They still maintain those. There is no violence. People realize that there is a way to have discussion without screaming or hollering (12).

4.3 Relational changes

This category is concerned with relational changes. This section is divided into three sub-categories:

- Open communication;
- Friendship formation;
- Cooperation/collaboration.

Table 3 below provides an overview of findings that pertain to relational changes, as addressed by interviewees and evident in the document analysis. Specific findings identified in the sub-categories are explained in the text that follows.

Table 3 – Relational Changes

Level of Change	Indicator and Criteria	Well Addressed	Addressed	Partially Addressed	Not Addressed
RELATIONAL	Open communication: Sharing feelings, opinions, and experiences of conflict with the adversary group.	•			
	Friendship formation: Forming friendships across lines of conflict.	•			
	Cooperation/collaboration: Working together towards a common goal.	•			

***Well addressed:** assumptions received in-depth attention (meaning 5-10 interviewees and in most documents). ***Addressed:** assumptions received moderate attention (meaning 3-4 interviewees and in several documents). ***Partially addressed:** assumptions received little attention (meaning 1-2 interviewees and in few documents). ***Not addressed:** assumptions received no attention (meaning 0 interviewees and none documents).

4.3.1 Open communication:

A common theme that is relevant to relational changes that was well addressed and discussed in depth by all interviewees was open communication. Grouped by conflict region, groups of about fifteen Seeds of Peace campers meet and discuss issues pertinent to their conflict for 90 minutes in daily dialogue sessions. During these sessions, Israelis and Palestinians share their frustrations and personal experiences of pain and suffering with one another. The interviewees noted that dialogue sessions provide participants with the opportunity to openly and honestly discuss issues relevant to their conflict:

Each day for about one hour and half will be with kids from their respective conflict, and they delve deeper and deeper about issues of their conflict, particular experiences, their feelings about conflict in these dialogue sessions. That's a daily thing (18).

The intent of the dialogue is to create a safe focus and constructive environment for people to discuss issues of identity, issues of conflict, and issues of loss. I think it serves several really important roles; one is to make sure that people are talking about the conflict (17).

Following the camp experience, *Advanced Dialogue Sessions* and *Cross-Border Events* focus on “*strengthening relationships with the other side*” (Seeds of Peace, Annual Report, 2009). Program documents indicated that these events provide older graduates of the summer camp with the opportunity “*to continue the difficult conversations begun at camp.*” In these sessions, graduates continue to listen to opinions and experiences of the other side and continue to learn “*lessons in tolerance and respect*” that started at camp (Seeds of Peace, Annual Report, 2009). Through sharing personal stories and thoughts in dialogue, participants can “*challenge inherited prejudices with real stories and experiences expressed openly*

by peers.” In addition, trust and understanding can be fostered, which “*encourages participants to empathize, communicate effectively and demonstrate respect without regard to personal differences*” (Seeds of Peace, International Camp – Dialogue,”2011).

To help graduates of the summer camp stay in touch and engage in continued dialogue with the other side, Seeds of Peace publishes a newspaper, *The Olive Branch*, which is written and edited by Arab and Israeli graduates of the Camp. When asked about the intentions behind the creation of *The Olive Branch*, one interviewee said:

The Olive Branch started fairly early on in 1996 or 1997. Initially Seeds of Peace only ran a camp and after camp kids returned home and there wasn't much involvement on the part of organization until next summer when some of the kids were invited back. But we quickly realized that we needed to be running programs for graduates of the program year-round in their home countries to continue bringing them together, to continue the conversations that they started in the camp. The idea of the Olive Branch in particular was to keep kids communicating with each other, and it took the form of a newspaper with articles by the Seeds and news articles as way of tying over years the kids who graduated. Over the years it evolved into a magazine, with the same purpose, that idea to keep the kids communicating with each other (15).

Through personal stories and reflections written in *The Olive Branch*, the interviewee explain that Seeds of Peace graduates are able to continue dialogue with one another related to issues of conflict, including their “*reflections on dialogue, reflections on recent political developments*” and their “*reflections on their experience at camp, their reflections on their experience on returning home*” (15).

Seeds of Peace has also designed *SeedsBook*, an online secure chat room that provides graduates of the program with a daily forum in which they can maintain

dialogue with others across borders (Seeds of Peace, Annual Report, 2008). Program documents indicate that during times of violence, the online site allows participants to share personal reflections pertinent to their conflict. Participants can also exchange personal photos, films and music. *SeedsBook* provides participants information about what is happening on the other side, news that might not otherwise be heard. Palestinians and Israelis can explain to each other the suffering and pain they have experienced, and both groups can see the effects that these experiences had on their lives and loved ones. The Seeds of Peace 2008 Annual Report further noted that a neutral moderator hosts weekly online discussions with participants on various topics, which may further stimulate continued dialogue between opposite sides about the future and about possible solutions to the conflict. In addition, *SeedsBook* may help graduating Seeds maintain optimism and hope for the future. By seeing that both groups are still talking to each other, supporting each other, and discussing possible solutions to their social and political climate, they may be encouraged to keep fighting for a more peaceful future. Finally, it is also noted that *SeedsBook* may motivate participants after they have returned home to continue their discussions with the other side, while reinforcing friendships formed in camp and fostering leadership skills necessary for individuals to become effective leaders in their community.

4.3.2 Friendship formation:

Another theme relevant to relational change that was well addressed and discussed in-depth by the majority of interviewees and program documents was

encouraging adversaries to form friendships with the other side. According to Wallach and Wallach (2000), *“the strongest way to break down stereotypes is through personal relationships”* (p.39). Furthermore, *“as long as their relationships are primarily with members of their own delegation, the campers may never have the opportunity to see through the stereotypes they came with. And they will not develop the personal trust that allows for successful discussion”* (p.39). At Seeds of Peace, interviewees claim that camp participants are repeatedly reminded to *“make one friend”* from the other side of conflict—a friend with whom they can share their personal stories, and a friend they will want to see when they return home. This idea is typified by one of the interviewees:

I think Seeds of Peace’s take on this is that it will take relationships across lines of conflict in order to be better equipped...better equipped to be able to advance peace. No side is going to pull themselves out of conflict by themselves. Those relationships are useful (14).

According to interviewees, the approach to building personal relationships at Seeds of Peace is through a wide range of activities at camp, including playing soccer, sleeping in the same bunks, eating meals together, and discussing painful memories in dialogue sessions. The interviewees emphasized that friendships blossom at the camp and become an important tool in repairing strained relationships:

I would say in some cases, you really do see profound friendships being formed. Friendships that last... What you so see is really lively act of summer camp-- people interacting in a fun way with each other. These relationships are still real. Everybody develops a strong emotional bond with the place, and people are really a big part of the place... I often see kids coming from particular sessions, coming out with tears. They can be very emotional. Through that process, you often see dynamics within those groups changing. People can actually start to move from this sort of young viewpoint to actually listening to the other side by the end of it (18).

I think a lot of kids learn too that they want to be friends with kids from other cultures. Whether it's the culture that they are in conflict with, but they always do remember their experience with these kids. Just something they will remember forever, that they are able to live with people not from their own culture or country, or religion, or background (19).

The Seeds of Peace website notes that participants “develop the friendships and trust necessary to build lasting peace” (Seeds of Peace, “International Camp – Overview,” 2011). According to Wallach and Wallach, “making friends with the youngster by your bed means overcoming long-held, physical fears” (2000, p.111). Having formed meaningful friendships with people of the other side, the idea is that participants may challenge negative reactions encountered from people in their communities:

Seeds of Peace is really well documented; there are great pictures all through camp...Kids can look back upon them, when they are home, when people are saying, “Why are you wearing a shirt from Seeds of Peace, you're a traitor, why would you ever defend a Palestinian or Israeli?” They can at least look back on those pictures and remember a friend that they had in their bunk, or in a soccer game they played (17).

In addition, friendships formed in camp help to motivate campers to stay in contact with the other side after they have returned home:

Most emotional is last day where each delegation would be travelling back home, everybody in the so disturbed and upset that they are leaving their friends. And they do stay in touch after. I know who 29 years old now, and still keeping their friends. Believe me, this is the most important mission accomplished from camp (11).

A lot of time the visible relationships change once they are at home. You can really see this on Facebook. A lot of kids don't seem that they are really close with other people from the other delegation, but then you see on Facebook that they keep in touch really well-- they talk, they Skype. Even girls from my bunk, who I didn't think were very close, they Skype a lot and they keep in touch (19).

Interviewees noted that after returning home from Camp youth try to re-create projects and events from Camp that are designed to sustain communication and interaction between groups in conflict. One of the interviewees explained that after Camp, a group of Israelis and Palestinians did “a mini kind of camp” where they brought young kids together and put them through “all these activities like basketball and soccer” (I2). Others have come back to the Seeds of Peace Camp to work as dialogue facilitators, hoping to foster peaceful relationships between other groups in conflict:

When we reached the point in the early point of 2000-2001, we were able to begin to look for our own seeds who had graduated from college, who were doing their masters degree, and they went on to become, many of them now are facilitators for camp. So they come back and they are facilitators for camp. So what you have now is a collective group of people who facilitate young people (I2)

The importance of personal relationships between adversaries is further reflected on the Seeds of Peace website. Under its mission and values, it is noted that the “shared community and shared peaceful living environment” created at the Camp in Maine is “a reminder of the way life could be, of the relationships and understanding that are critical to creating a different future (Seeds of Peace, Our Mission & Values, 2011).

4.3.3 Cooperation/collaboration:

Another theme relevant to relational change that was well addressed and discussed by several interviewees and program documents was cooperation and collaboration. Several interviewees explained that cooperative activities help to promote positive interdependence where participants learn skills of collaboration to

reach a desired goal. One of these group activities is *Group Challenge*; an event that occurs six times over the course of three weeks and involves a series of activities where individuals have to work together as a group to achieve common goals. Participants take part in various activities – from soccer, sailing, singing, and creating artwork – with the same people with whom they participate in dialogue sessions. One interviewee explained that the objective of these group activities is “to challenge kids so they learn to work together” (12).

There they are: Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Israeli, Palestine, they're all on the field and they are playing. First the kids only pass to certain people...and later on, they pass to a guy who may not be from his home. ..We're playing and over time a young man from Palestine passes a ball to an Israeli and the Israeli has a choice, he can pass to Israeli friend or he can pass it to a young man from Egypt who is closer to the goal. Now a week before he would have passed to his Israeli friend, instead he passes to the Egyptian friend. To make sure they won (12).

Another interviewee discussed how working together toward a common goal can foster greater cooperation between adversaries:

What group challenge involves is getting, it's figuring out how to accomplish different physical activities. It starts off being where they have to all pass from one block to another without touching the ground sort of. Depending on each other to work together, to figure out these different physical activities. In the last session of group challenge is them going up on the high ropes. It's not like rock climbing, but it's sort of like that where they are in harness they are going really high up and accomplishing these things. A lot of kids are really, really scared of doing it, and they have a partner and when they do this with this partner...often times it takes a lot of trust, and a lot of times these kids, we pair them with kids that they think they think they don't trust, and they complete this activity that's very scary for them with this person, and when they come down and they realize how much that person helped them (19).

Apart from *Group Challenge*, Seeds of Peace has designed another group activity called *Color Games* (or the Camp Olympics), which is the culminating event of every camp session. Campers are divided into two large teams; the green team and the blue team. Over the course of three days, the teams compete against each other in various activities, including sports, drama, music, and creative arts competitions. According to the Seeds of Peace website, these activities encourage an “*intense cooperative spirit that rises above ethnic and national divides*” (Seeds of Peace, International Camp – Activities, 2011). Several interviewees further discussed how these activities can help youth learn how to help their team members reach a desired goal– regardless of that person’s identity:

During the course of three days, you will have every single country represented on each team. This whole new color-based team identities arise in the course of these three days, which is pretty interesting to see. At the end of it...when winner is announced, everybody, and the other team sort of run into the lake in this big euphoric moment because everyone was competing for last few days, and camp is coming to end, and get emotions. Kids exchanging their color t-shirts with friends from the other side. It's interesting, the other side has become their team as opposed to the other side of the conflict (I8).

I always knew whether it was a successful camp by what happened at color games, and by what happened in end. Everyone goes in the lake, males, females, councillors, facilitators, some delegation leaders even go in. They go in the lake and amazing thing is, everybody understands they were blue or green, but once they go in lake, they go back to wearing the seeds of peace green shirts. They no longer blue or green, they are one camp again. And you see people in the lake hugging each other from both sides...the green team, and the blue team, they are hugging each other (I2).

In these games, the aim is for Israelis and Palestinians to help each other win. Documents indicate that the experience may help each team become a family, which can be seen as participants run to get water for each other, celebrate victories

together, and walk hand in hand after a close loss to the other team. Group Challenge “*cultivates cooperation, communication and trust*” among campers (Seeds of Peace, Annual Report, 2009, p. 4). According to Wallach and Wallach (2000), “*to think of someone as an Israeli or a Palestinian during the games is almost unthinkable*” (p.84). Over three days, “*team allegiance supersedes national identity*” (Seeds of Peace Annual Report, 2010, p.5). The use of Group Challenge and Color Games is “*an important tool to explore personal and group identity, while helping to further solidify friendships that have formed at Camp*” (Seeds of Peace, International Camp – Activities, 2011).

4.4 Structural changes

This category is concerned with structural changes. This section is divided into four sub-categories:

- Constructive education system;
- Engaged leaders;
- Positive media messages;
- Supportive community.

Table 4 below provides an overview of findings that pertain to structural changes, as addressed by interviewees and evident in the document analysis. Specific findings identified in the sub-categories are explained in the text that follows.

Table 4 – Structural Changes

Level of Change	Indicator and Criteria	Well Addressed	Addressed	Partially Addressed	Not Addressed
STRUCTURAL	Constructive education system: Developing educational materials and curricula that promote positive perceptions and attitudes toward the adversary group.	•			
	Engaged leaders: Educating and inspiring leaders to support peace.	•			
	Positive media messages: Using the media to promote positive images of the adversary group, including modeling tolerant behaviour and supporting dialogue between adversaries.			•	
	Supportive community: Encouraging the wider community to adopt positive attitudes, critical knowledge, and peaceful behaviour to strengthen and support building peace.	•			

***Well addressed:** assumptions received in-depth attention (meaning 5-10 interviewees and in most documents). ***Addressed:** assumptions received moderate attention (meaning 3-4 interviewees and in several documents). ***Partially addressed:** assumptions received little attention (meaning 1-2 interviewees and in few documents). ***Not addressed:** assumptions received no attention (meaning 0 interviewees and none documents).

4.4.1 Constructive education systems:

An area related to structural change that was well addressed by some interviewees and in program documents was developing educational materials and curricula that promote positive perceptions and attitudes toward the adversary group. Seeds of Peace creates and distributes educational materials to Israeli and Palestinian schools, including *The Olive Branch* and *The Olive Branch Teacher's Guide*. One interviewee explained that through personal stories and reflections written in *The Olive Branch*, Seeds of Peace graduates can share their positive views and experiences with a broader audience:

Over the years it evolved into a magazine, with the same purpose, that idea to keep the kids communicating with each other, to give them a platform for reaching each other, and for reaching a wider audience with their perspectives, their views on their experience and the conflict and peace (15).

Analysis of several issues of *The Olive Branch* (2001-2009) available online reveals that various issues surrounding their conflict are discussed, including reflections on dialogue, thoughts on recent political developments, experiences from camp, and feelings and experiences on returning home after camp. Through personal stories and reflections Seeds of Peace graduates are able to promote positive images, especially to people who never had the chance to attend the summer camp:

First of all, it helps them understand the experience that the kids have had...I think it's the first time many non-Seeds have heard the voice of someone from the other side, who is their own age, and who may be now friends with their friends. I think it's first time where many Israeli students have heard a Palestinian their own age...

I mean, it's important when it comes to Seeds themselves, but also for the non-Seeds who never had the opportunity to meet someone their

own age from the other side of the conflict. Here, for the first time, they're hearing through Seeds or hearing indirectly through materials like The Olive Branch, what their experiences have been (15).

In addition to *The Olive Branch*, Seeds of Peace has designed *The Olive Branch Teacher's Guide*. This guide allows adult educators in Israeli and Palestinian schools -- who include teachers, school counsellors, principals, and officials of the Ministry of Education -- to share best practices, reflections and accomplishments, as well as tools and resources with their colleagues and other adult educators. *The Olive Branch Teacher's Guide* is a tool that can “*expand, strengthen and deepen the work of Seeds of Peace*” (Seeds of Peace, *The Olive Branch Teacher's Guide*, 2011). Analysis of several issues of *The Teacher's Guide* (2008-2009) shows that the guide provides tools and resources on teaching knowledge, skills and values that can promote an environment of peace. For instance, the guide provides descriptions and discussions on: teaching open communication and active listening; teaching students to respect others and different opinions; and teaching how to resolve problems or disputes in a peaceful manner. Other tools and resources include: *cooperative games* that teachers use to teach youth to learn to work together to achieve a common goal, and *personal reflections* that are used to help students explore what they have learned in these particular activities.

4.4.2 Engaged leaders:

Another theme relevant to structural change that was well addressed and discussed in-depth was educating and inspiring leaders to become committed to advancing peace. Seeds of Peace has created several programs to educate and inspire current leaders to become committed and empowered to advance the

mission of peace. Through the *Delegation Leader Program*, *Cross-border Workshops*, a *Mediation and Facilitation Training Course*, and *Peaceful Learning Environment Workshops*, Seeds of Peace aims to strengthen and expand the network of leaders dedicated to advancing peace.

Delegation Leader Program

Seeds of Peace campers are escorted from their home countries by an adult from their country. These adults, called Delegation Leaders, participate in selecting campers and represent participants while they are at camp. Delegation Leaders meet with their campers twice weekly, engage them in discussions, and assist them in their adjustment at camp. Delegation Leaders also participate in their own coexistence program at camp with leaders from the other side of conflict. In addition to this coexistence program, Delegation Leaders also share daily meals and participate in sports, hiking, or local touring with people from the other side. After camp, Delegation Leaders participate in further dialogue activities within the regions and they work as educators in their communities at home. The intent with the Delegation Leader program is to increase the number of people who support peace and to ensure that when young people return home after camp their positive insights and experiences will be welcomed and supported, rather than mocked or challenged. This idea was explained by one of the interviewees:

The delegation leaders are critical on many levels. They are critical at the camp. They are very important in helping the Seeds maintain a level of legitimacy once they return home. Many of these kids have had experiences that none of their peers will ever have. They are very excited to talk about their experiences, but at same time their peers may not be receptive of what they are saying. There needs to support

coming from many different quarters; if not from the families the parents, then from the schools and teachers (15).

Mediation and Facilitation Training Course

In addition to the *Delegation Leader program*, Seeds of Peace offers a *Mediation and Facilitation Training Course* to train young leaders. Dialogue sessions at camp in Maine are guided by Seeds of Peace-trained facilitators. These facilitators complete the 15-month training course that educates them in skills required to advance peace. Program documents reveal that through this course, Seeds of Peace continues to develop young leaders who will have the capacity and knowledge to advance peace through facilitating dialogue sessions in camp and back in the regions, where advanced dialogue sessions build on experiences started at camp.

Cross-border Workshops

Seeds of Peace—with the support of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) – also organizes three-day *Cross-border Workshops* to bring together Palestinian and Israeli educators. These workshops are open to all adult educators, including Delegation Leaders, graduates of the Seeds of Peace facilitation course, and participants in USAID-funded workshops for educators. Areas where these workshops have been held in the past include Jordan, Tiberius, Neve Ilan, the deserts of Wadi Rum, and outside of Jerusalem (Seeds of Peace, *Cross-Border Workshops for Educators*, 2011). These cross-border workshops provide further opportunities for Palestinian and Israeli educators to share their experiences, reflections, and best practises with the other side of conflict. During

these workshops, educators explore various aspects of peace education, including human rights education, the role of media in conflict, facilitation as an educational process, and best practises in peace education.

Model Schools Initiative

Another program designed by Seeds of Peace to empower leaders to advance peace is the *Model Schools Initiative*. As part of this initiative, Seeds of Peace works with the network of Palestinian and Israeli Delegation Leaders to reach new educators in Palestinian and Israeli schools. Seeds of Peace selects a group of approximately 20 Palestinian and 20 Israeli adult educators and works with them to create new methods and curricula, develop actions plans, and educate and inspire adult educators. These initiatives are comprised of workshops as well as site visits and online support. The objective of this project is to increase the number of educators and community leaders in the region who support the mission of Seeds of Peace. According to one interviewee, adult educators offer a level of support after participants return home after camp:

The teachers are broadening that circle. The delegation leaders are critical on many levels. They are critical at the camp. They are very important in helping the Seeds maintain a level of legitimacy once they return home. Many of these kids have had experiences that none of their peers will ever have. They are very excited to talk about their experiences, but at same time their peers may not be receptive of what they are saying. There needs to be support coming from many different quarters; if not from the families the parents, then from the schools and teachers (15).

Peaceful Learning Environment Workshops

Also with the support of USAID, Seeds of Peace has organized *Peaceful Learning Environment Workshops* for Palestinian educators from across East Jerusalem and the West Bank. *Peaceful Learning Environment Workshops* were designed to motivate and teach adult educators the skills that are necessary to advance peace, including communication skills, active listening, respect for others, cross-cultural understanding, coping with violence in schools, and leadership and community engagement. From 2007 to 2009, Seeds of Peace successfully organized 13 three-day workshops on peaceful learning environments for Palestinians educators from across East Jerusalem and the West. Seeds of Peace has also organized a workshop in Gaza for Palestinian educators in August 2009 (Seeds of Peace, *Peaceful Learning Environment Workshops*, 2011).

4.4.3 Positive media messages:

One area that was only partially addressed in Seeds of Peace programming was positive media messages. None of the interviewees discussed using media channels to promote positive perceptions and attitudes toward the adversary group. Further analysis of program documents and websites revealed that Seeds of Peace has developed some social media programs that promote positive images of the adversary group. However, this approach adopted by Seeds of Peace could be more direct. The Seeds of Peace approach relating to the media seems to be limited to former participants of the summer camp. None of the interviewees discussed that Seeds of Peace has programs targeting mainstream media, such as television networks and radio stations, which are accessed by the majority of the population on

a regular basis. One of the initiatives is the *Seeds of Peace Music Program*. This program provides graduating students with a creative forum through which they can come together and create music (Seeds of Peace, Annual Report, 2008). Documents reveal that since 2008 this program has encouraged Israelis and Palestinians to come together and creatively express themselves through writing songs, listening to one another's favourite music, and studying how music can be used to further foster communication between adversaries. The participation of these individuals culminated in the creation of a band and recorded album called "Tomorrow is Coming" (Seeds of Peace, Annual Report, 2010). This album includes songs that were written, sang and played by 10 Palestinians and Israelis, which highlight their individuals' personal experiences, sufferings and accomplishments related to their conflict.

Seeds of Peace has also created its own *YouTube* channel on the Internet. This channel documents experiences from Camp, activities from regional programs, personal comments from Seeds of Peace graduates, news clips about the program, and speeches about Seeds of Peace from important figures such as former President Bill Clinton. Since October 22, 2007, the Seeds of Peace *YouTube* channel has received a total of 54,641 total upload views (Seeds of Peace YouTube Channel, 2011). Seeds of Peace has also created its own *FaceBook* page. This page highlights photos of Israelis and Palestinians working together in Camp and in regional programs. The page also contains links to videos and news articles about Seeds of Peace's activities and initiatives, along with online discussions between Israelis and Palestinians. As of November 13, 2011, the Seeds of Peace *Facebook*

page has a total of 15,091 followers. Both *Facebook* and *YouTube* are social media sites that allow users to stay in touch and continue discussions with each other across borders despite ongoing conflict. These media sites adopted by Seeds of Peace, however, appear to be indirect in their approach to targeting the mainstream media and spreading positive media messages to a larger audience.

4.4.4 Supportive community:

Another area related to structural change that was well addressed and discussed by the majority of interviewees and program documents was fostering a supportive community. Seeds of Peace has formed activities to ensure that the participants' families, friends, and community members are impacted by its programming. One of the interviewees discussed the role of graduates of the Seeds of Peace camp in influencing others in their own communities back at home:

When they return to high school that fall after camp they are able to model these friendships to other students. So we are able to very quickly change many of the dynamics in these high schools in a more positive direction. Those kids graduate...and take what they have learned to their communities and their families (I5).

Another interviewee added that *"it really comes down to person-to-person interactions. That's what Seeds of Peace is based on and what it does really well"* (I6). According to Wallach and Wallach, in this way, *"the program begins to change not a thousand youngsters, but a thousand communities"* (2000, p.90). The idea is that graduating campers will be able to impact others in their home communities with

their perspectives and skills they gained in camp. It is about strengthening the support systems back at home:

I think they definitely can have an influence. I think especially when they get their friends excited about Seeds. A lot of times you will see kids who are friends whose friends have been Seeds from the past. They come back and tell them about seeds, and then their friends want to go to Seeds. It can influence by them going to seeds in the future. I believe it's really hard when they come home, but I think they can have an influence from them (18).

This idea of person-to-person influence was also identified with Delegation Leaders:

If one Delegation Leader becomes a committed Seeds of Peace Educator, he or she has the potential to reach hundreds or even thousands of students. By reaching other educators, the impact multiplies (Seeds of Peace, Delegation Leaders Program, 2011).

Analysis of program documents and websites further identified that Seeds of Peace tries to affect the community at large through a program called *Seeds Café*, a public speaker series that brings together graduates of the camp and the public, where they are encouraged to engage in discussions with each other on issues pertinent to their conflict:

That's something that's open to everyone. They will bring speaker to deal with issues related to the conflict. That's something that's actually designed to deal with the community at large. They engage people in conversations about issues pertinent to the conflict (17).

Seeds Café "reaches out to a broad cross-section of interested Israelis and Palestinians from the local community" (Seeds of Peace, Annual Report, 2009). It is a "rare occasion of cross-cultural networking" that "allows for deeper understanding and opportunities for cooperation."

Another component of regional programming aimed at impacting the wider community involves community service projects. Program documents indicate that these initiatives encourage graduates of the camp to raise awareness about and promote the values of Seeds of Peace within their home communities. Participants implement their own programs in their communities, which target high school students, orphanages, and other youth and adults. Community service projects enable graduating Seeds to *“contribute to their communities while raising awareness about and promoting the value of Seeds of Peace, and continuing their pledge to make coexistence a reality within their home communities”* (Seeds of Peace, Community Service Projects, 2011). These community service projects are an extension of the ‘Peer Support’ program, which offers graduating Seeds who have shown *“exceptional leadership”* the opportunity to come back to camp for a second time and become further equipped with *“skills, knowledge, and experience to become change makers in their communities”* (Seeds of Peace, Peer Support Application Process, 2011). One interviewee described what happens at the Peer Support program:

When you come back to camp in Peer Support, you go through the same kind of coexistence through sports and art, and drama, and the typical American summer camp thing, but now you are coming back as a role model, and a leader for, and a support person, for the 1st year campers, whom you kind of come back as a big brother or big sister (I6).

The Peer Support program is made up of two main components: “Leadership Dialogue” and “Unleashing Change.” In Leadership Dialogue, participants go through:

a self-awareness analysis of what [their] values are, what [they] will compromise, what [they] won't compromise, what different styles of leadership there are, and how to empower other people in the group through communication and act of listening (I6).

The other component of the Peer Support program is Unleashing Change, which is aimed at:

developing the tools, attitudes, skills, and perspectives it takes to ultimately go back home to your community, and become a change maker, become an agent of change, who can positively influence and empower the community (I6).

The Seeds of Peace website notes that in the Peer Support program, participants are encouraged to design and implement their own projects “to improve camp” and make “positive impact in their communities” (Seeds of Peace, Peer Support Application Process, 2011). The Seeds of Peace website further notes some examples of community service projects that recent graduates of the Peer Support program have implemented in their home communities include:

- Volunteering on a bi-monthly basis at the Abu Rayyah Center for the Disabled (Ramallah);
- Raising funds to purchase clothing and other supplies for a local orphanage (Gaza);
- Developing programs to lower the high school drop-out rate (Jenin);
- Building dialogue programs between Jewish and Arab schools (Haifa);
- Creating an after-school community center for children (Taybe);
- Running a day camp for children of Ethiopian immigrants (Jerusalem);
- Hosting a Ramadan meal for 100 orphans (Cairo);
- Organizing a sports day for underprivileged youth (Amman).

In an effort to reach even younger children, Seeds of Peace has also partnered with Sesame Workshop, a non-profit group that produces Sesame Street, to form

Sesame Seeds. As part of this program, a group of 20 Israeli and Palestinian Seeds, split evenly, work as informal educators in kindergarten schools in their communities to spread the message of tolerance and coexistence between the two groups.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This thesis assessed whether theoretical assumptions found in the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education are reflected in one prominent peace education program, Seeds of Peace. The results of the study indicate that it is possible to argue that Seeds of Peace programming incorporates most key theoretical notions from the literature because many recommendations of the theory relating to individual, relational, and structural factors were reflected in its programming. However, although findings indicate that theoretical insights from the literature have been influencing Seeds of Peace practice, theories of change were more implicit than explicit. Most interviewees did not state explicitly why or how Seeds of Peace activities chosen for addressing a particular problem will work. Most practitioners listed the main goals of the program, the people targeted by the program, and the various activities offered at camp and in regional programs. As a result, it is unclear whether program staff are aware to what degree their programming is influenced by theoretical insights.

Findings indicate that Seeds of Peace programming has incorporated most theoretical assumptions relating to individual factors, including: 1) promoting positive attitudes and perceptions toward the adversary group; 2) encouraging participants to develop a better understanding of their conflict; and 3) stimulating among parties a greater desire for maintaining peaceful relations with the other side, which emphasizes cooperation and nonviolence as a way to deal with problems or disputes. Relational factors that were incorporated include: 1) encouraging both

parties to share their feelings and personal experiences of conflict openly and honestly with the adversary group; 2) stimulating friendships across lines of conflict; and 3) supporting cooperation and collaboration between adversaries, In terms of structural factors, Seeds of Peace has incorporated the following: 1) supporting the development of educational materials and curricula that promote positive attitudes and perceptions toward the adversary group; 2) seeking to educate and inspire leaders to advance peace; and 3) working toward encouraging the wider community to adopt positive attitudes, critical knowledge, and peaceful behaviour between adversary groups.

Findings also indicate that Seeds of Peace programming reflects several challenges identified in the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education. These challenges include: 1) sustaining desired program outcomes overtime and 2) working toward positively influencing larger groups of people beyond program participants. The global theory that emerges from the analysis is that Seeds of Peace hopes to bring about a change in individuals and their relationships with the adversary group, and ultimately in the broader society that promotes nonviolence and collaborative means of dealing with conflict. The idea is that these actions can prevent reoccurrence of violent conflict, and hence promote long-term peace.

Seeds of Peace aims to prevent reoccurrence of violent conflict over the long-term by empowering young leaders who have the greatest potential to emerge as leaders in their community. Israeli and Palestinian children in this conflict region develop negative attitudes about the other side in early childhood. These attitudes

are transmitted by their parents and are embedded in cultural norms and social institutions. Through socialization, children are taught to fear the opposing side. Furthermore, Arabs and Jews generally live in separate areas and attend segregated schools, promoting further negative attitudes and reinforcing fear and hatred toward the other side (Bar-Tal, Rosen and Nets-Zehngut, 2009; Salomon, 2009; Hertz-Lazarowitz, Mor-Sommerfeld, Zelniker & Azaiza, 2008). Through engaging in dialogue and other shared events with the other side of conflict, Seeds of Peace is working toward enabling young leaders to see their enemies as human beings who have legitimate needs and goals. Through open and honest discussion of the conflict and their personal experiences, dialogue can also help participants recognize that the other side has also suffered in conflict, and that one's own group has participated in prolonging conflict. Participants may realize that their existing knowledge of history is biased and incomplete. Through the process participants may also learn communication and negotiation skills to resolve conflict and disputes peacefully, rather than through violence.

By empowering young leaders with these skills and knowledge, Seeds of Peace is working toward forging personal relationships between adversaries which is necessary for conflict transformation. As participants are forced to live with their enemies and interact with them on a daily basis, cross-group friendships can be encouraged as participants overcome biases that previously prevented them from listening to or trusting the other side (Tomlison & Lewicki, 2003; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005; Bar-Tal, 2000). Adversaries often have a tough time considering that they could ever be friends with members of the other side. However, having

conflicting parties work together to come up with solutions to problems and reach common goals can assist them in learning that they must rely on someone, whom they do not trust (Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005). Participants may learn that they have common interests with members of the other party, and that members of the other side can be trusted- regardless of that person's identity.

Recognizing that the summer camp experience is only the beginning of conflict transformation, Seeds of Peace has formed regional follow-up programming to continue and build upon what began in camp. This is important as these follow-up activities can sustain positive program outcomes overtime. Many participants return home after camp with a hopeful vision of the future and they think others are willing to see the point of view from the other side of conflict. Having made friends at camp, many participants are also willing to maintain contact with members of the other side. However, due to pressures experienced from community members who cannot relate, or who are opposed to such positive changes, participants of such programs tend to return to their previously held negative attitudes and beliefs (Schimmel, 2009; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005; Salomon, 2011).

A significant challenge in peace education is to ensure that participants remain committed to peace when other people are pressuring them not to be involved. This is especially important when ongoing violence in conflict-affected societies risks adversely impacting positive impacts achieved by the program (Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005). Positive perceptions, attitudes and relations between adversary groups cannot be sustained where they are under constant threat by hatred and a belligerent social atmosphere. Follow-up programming at

Seeds of Peace provides the needed continued contact between adversaries and reinforcement of positive changes. To further support graduates of the program and their positive experiences, however, Seeds of Peace should make campers commit to participating in follow-up programs once they have returned home from camp.

While participation in such activities is encouraged in the different regions where programming is available, there is no certainty that people will participate in any further programming once their camp session has ended. Making these follow-up activities a required component of the initial program could help build upon the campers' experiences in camp and sustain desired outcomes after participants have returned home. This is especially important given the ongoing violence, which can suppress previously attained positive program effects (Kilpatrick & Leitech, 2004; Salomon, 2006).

In an effort to spread desired program outcomes beyond camp participants, Seeds of Peace has formed regional programs that are aimed at educating and empowering the wider population to develop the skills and knowledge to advance peace. This is important since positive change achieved from participating in peace education programs will be unsustainable unless such changes are developed and supported by the majority of society members (Schimmel, 2009; Bush and Salterelli, 2000; Bar-Tal, Rosen, and Nets-Zehngut, 2009). Young people are part of the larger community in which they live and are greatly influenced by the views expressed in it. As such, it is important that positive changes from peace education programs spread to the wider community. This is to ensure that when young people return to their community their positive insights and experiences will be welcomed and

supported, rather than mocked and resisted by their friends, families and teachers. Through expanding access to its initiatives and programs to wider circles of individuals, including adult educators, community leaders, parents and friends, this approach can produce the needed ripple effect of peace education, thus improving the level of support within communities and the prospects of conflict transformation (Salomon, 2011).

Findings of this study also indicate that Seeds of Peace programming suffers some of the limitations described in the literature. The main limitations include: 1) not taking into account the differential needs, goals and interests of adversaries within its content and methods; 2) biases in program participants; and 3) not recognizing underlying assumptions, goals and values of trainers and teachers.

Salomon (2011) has indicated that many peace education programs employ the same content and methods for all sides of conflict, which leads to inconsistent levels of success across different groups. For example, programs are aimed at having both Israelis and Palestinians learn the same fundamental lessons. The assumption appears to be that the process of attitudinal and behavioural change is similar for both parties. However, “one size definitely does not fit all.” Furthermore, “cultural contexts, different needs, conflicting narratives and expectations, and opposing political agendas affect what each side brings to and takes from a program” (Salomon, 2011:53). One source of asymmetry between Israelis and Palestinians stems from the fact that “one side has a state; the other does not” (Maddy-Weitzman, 2007:203). Israelis are considered the stronger party since they have economic, political and military superiority.

Although both groups have suffered in conflict, “Palestinians have significant less control over their lives due to the occupation and living under the rule of the Israeli army” (Maddy-Weitzman, 2007:203). Failure to attend to the differential needs and goals across groups can negatively impact participants and undermine the program. At Seeds of Peace, results indicate that the objective is to have both Israelis and Palestinians learn the same set of fundamental lessons (Wallach & Wallach, 2000). This includes acknowledging their own group’s accountability in prolonging conflict and legitimizing the suffering and pain of the other side. Although these individual changes are important for both parties, failure to recognize each group’s differential needs and goals may be reinforcing existing negative attitudes and relations in which one group regards itself as superior to the other (Salomon, 2011). As a suggestion, the program could develop methods and contents that strengthen the identity of Palestinians more so than Israelis. As for Israelis, the contents and methods could be tailored more to legitimizing the suffering of Palestinians. Halabi, Sonnenschein and Friedman (2004) addressed this asymmetry between Israelis and Palestinians through the development of differential programs that recognized conflicting contexts, needs, and expectations between parties.

Another limitation observed in Seeds of Peace is biases in program participants. Most first year campers are chosen by each of the governments, usually by the Ministries of Education or community organizations in their respective communities (Wallach & Wallach, 2000). One advantage of this strategy is that official support from both governments can contribute toward the legitimacy of the program, a factor that may persuade those who are hesitant, or who oppose the

peace process to join the program (Bar-Tal, 2005; Bar-Tal, Rosen and Nets-Zehngut, 2009). Another advantage of government involvement and sponsorship is financial and political support for the program. Seeds of Peace's recommended criteria for participants include: intelligent and confident youth aged 14-16 who take initiative and are likely to emerge as leaders in their community. Participants must also demonstrate proficiency in English so they can communicate with the adversary group while at camp and upon returning home.

This process of selecting camp participants, however, presents limitations to the program. The program's reach tends to be limited to youth who already exhibit some commitment to engaging with the opposing party and the peace process. All interviewees reported that campers are chosen based on their leadership potential. However, by focusing on youth who will be the leaders of the future generation, Seeds of Peace could be limiting access to peace education to youth who are unwilling to interact with the enemy group, or who are opposed to the peace process. The fact that youth are willing to write an essay and compete to attend the Seeds of Peace summer camp speaks to their interest in meeting the rival group and working toward peace. The conflict transformation approach does not limit itself to a segregated group of people, but envisages changing the attitudes, perceptions and behaviour of the society at large. The assumption is that there is a need for all members of society to be positively influenced, in addition to political, social and cultural structures that prolong conflict and shape conflict transformation. Thus, finding a way for peace education programs to reach all school-age children and adolescents, as well as adults could ensure broad societal impact (Salomon, 2009).

One approach may be to implement peace education as a school-wide outreach, as is done in most schools in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Danesh, 2006), as well as a society-wide outreach that involves families, the media, leaders, and community members. In the context of conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, however, this may be more difficult due to barriers such as restricted freedom of movement, curfews, border checkpoints, and ongoing shootings, killings and other violence (Bar-Tal, 2005). In addition, schools in Israel are generally segregated by nationality and also the degree of adherence to religious practices. There are separate schools for religious and secular Jewish children, and separate state and religious (Christian and Muslim) schools for Arab children (Hertz-Lazarowitz, Mor-Sommerfeld, Zelniker & Azaiza, 2008). Due to the segregation in the education system, physical distance of residence between Israelis and Palestinians, and ongoing violence, opportunities for Israeli children to meet with Palestinian children are limited.

These challenges make it difficult for peace education programs, such as the Seeds of Peace program, to bring together all school-aged children and adolescents from both sides of conflict. In response to this difficulty and the limited resources for programming, the Seeds of Peace program has therefore decided to focus on a group of young people who have the greatest potential to become future leaders. The interest in youth who are likely to emerge as leaders of the next generation may be based on the program's vision that peace will happen in the future.

Changing people's minds and behaviour is a long process that will take many years. Such changes are particularly difficult in contexts of long-term ongoing

conflict. Youth likely to emerge as leaders can play an important role in bringing about positive change. The reasons for this are: in the short-term when young people return to their own respective communities they will be motivated to engage others around them to support peace, including their parents, friends, and teachers. In the long-term the hope is that when they grow up and become leaders and active members of their communities, they will be better equipped to support peace rather than violent solutions to conflict.

In addition to limitations in terms of people who participate in camp, there are limitations in participation in Seeds of Peace's various regional follow-up programs. Many intergroup activities in the regions are held in locations controlled by Israel. In order to attend them Palestinians from the West Bank or Gaza have to first obtain permission from the Israeli authorities and pass through border checkpoints. The process of needing permission and passing through checkpoints, however, prevents many Palestinians from participating in such activities. The Seeds of Peace program has responded to this challenge by introducing uni-national programs. This approach involves separate programs designed for Israelis and Palestinians in their respective communities. These programs appeal to Palestinians since it is easier for them to participate and they do not have to obtain permission from the Israeli authorities to attend events. For example, they can attend workshops and volunteer in community activities in Gaza, and in the process learn leadership skills and help to improve conditions in their own communities. Intragroup or uni-national models have recently become an alternative when obstacles prevent bringing both sides of conflict together. Intragroup models seem to offer a more realistic, although not

ideal, alternative to intergroup contact between parties (Doubilet, 2007). This approach can complement intergroup programs by preparing participants for binational interventions with the other side. Nonetheless, opportunities for both parties to meet each other are crucial and should be promoted.

Seeds of Peace seems to suffer from the limitation found in many other peace education programs, which is the failure to recognize underlying assumptions, goals and values of trainers and teachers. Schmelzle (2006) has warned that the training process in conflict transformation risks resistance and difficulties if one is not aware of underlying assumptions of trainers or teachers in the practice of conflict transformation. Teachers bring with them their own personal values and beliefs, and may promote a particular viewpoint or beliefs that favor one group over the other. At Seeds of Peace, Delegation Leaders at camp and in regional centers risk imposing on participants particular values and lessons that may lead to increased frustration among individuals and lead to further conflict and violence between groups. At the outset of the program or community workshops it is important to be aware of assumptions and beliefs that guide training and teaching, since they consciously or unconsciously influence their effect. At the outset of the program, all Delegation Leaders and adult educators should be given time and space to examine their sets of values and assumptions and think about how they might influence others and the long-term purpose of conflict transformation. As it appears from the results of this study, this is rarely provided.

On a related note, although Seeds of Peace targets the education system and teachers through the development of educational materials such as The Olive

Branch or The Teacher's Guide, the reach of such materials and curricula is limited. These materials tend to be used only in schools where school officials and teachers have interest in using them in their classrooms. This presents another limitation in the program as it is unable to reach all schools, and hence all-school aged children and teenagers in the regions with its programming.

Finally, it is essential that Seeds of Peace be more explicitly aware of theory in order to be able to determine the extent to which their practice relates to theory and research. Being more explicitly aware of the connections between theory and practice would allow the program to be able to revise or improve its practice as the research literature evolves. More explicit connections between theory and practice would also allow scholars to incorporate the expertise of skilled practitioners in their development of theory. Validating theoretical insights in practice can provide suggestions as to how theory may be further refined or improved to address the challenges observed in practice. Overall, stating more explicitly the connections between theory and practice can advance research that both refines theory and improves practice.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

This thesis sought to determine whether theoretical notions found in the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education are reflected in the programming of one prominent peace education program, Seeds of Peace. The review of the research literature was conducted to highlight key theoretical assumptions that should be incorporated in peace education programs if they are to address crucial identity issues of conflict and help promote long-term peace. The analytical framework created from this review of the literature was used to analyze statements from semi-structured interviews with ten program staff members and written information from program documents. Findings of this study indicated that Seeds of Peace has incorporated most key assumptions from the research literature, but not all. Therefore, it is possible to argue that Seeds of Peace has potential to address underlying issues of identify conflict and help promote long-term peace between conflicting groups because many recommendations of the theory relating to individual, relational, and structural factors were reflected in its programming. However, it is important for the program to state more explicitly how their practice relates to theory in order to minimize the theory-practice gap.

To further enhance the Seeds of Peace program's potential in achieving conflict transformation some improvements are suggested. First, increasing participation to a broader participant group, especially to individuals who are more resistant to interacting with the rival group could ensure greater impact for building long-term peace. The conflict transformation approach is based on the idea that

there is a need for all members of society to be positively influenced. Through socialization, children are taught to fear the opposing side of conflict. Negative attitudes are transmitted by their parents and are embedded in cultural norms and social institutions. Overtime, these conflictual attitudes and perceptions may be held by the majority of society members. Seeds of Peace provides opportunities to begin to encourage individuals to overcome stereotypes and negative attitudes that prevented them from listening to or interacting with the opposing party. To ensure that positive insights and experiences of program participants are supported and welcomed within their communities and so that positive outcomes are more sustainable overtime, Seeds of Peace should expand its programming to larger groups. The program could be limiting access to peace education to youth who are unwilling to interact with the enemy group, or who are opposed to the peace process. It is noted that certain barriers may be making it difficult to include a broader participant group in Seeds of Peace. For example, restricted freedom of movement, curfews, border checkpoints, and ongoing shootings, killings and other violence may limited the ability to increase participation to a broader group. Limited participation, however, prevents broader societal impact and the potential in achieving conflict transformation.

Secondly, a challenge for the program is to design interventions that serve the different needs and goals of all parties involved. Both parties come to joint peace education programs with incompatible or very opposing agendas and perceptions that should be taken into consideration when planning interventions. The process of attitudinal and behavioural change is not the same for all groups. Cultural contexts,

different needs and expectations, and opposing political agendas, for example, affect what Arab Palestinians and Israelis bring to and take away from the program. Failure to attend to the differential needs and goals across groups can negatively impact participants and undermine the program. For example, failure to recognize each group's differential needs and goals may be reinforcing existing negative attitudes and relations in which one group regards itself as superior to the other. By employing different content and methods depending on the particular conflicting groups involved, Seeds of Peace could ensure that the particular needs, goals and interests of each group are addressed and that outcomes will benefit both groups more equally.

Having campers commit to participating in follow-up programs after they have returned home is another suggested improvement to the program, which could help sustain desired program outcomes overtime. Participants may come home with a hopeful vision of the future and be willing to trust the other side of conflict. However, many pressures from their community, including ongoing violence and individuals who are opposed to their positive changes can challenge their experiences and new insights and lead them to return to their previously held negative attitudes and beliefs. Follow-up programs can help reinforce developments in positive attitudes, perceptions and behaviour, and encourage different sides of conflict to maintain contact with each other. Follow-up programs can therefore prevent erosion of positive program outcomes overtime, especially in contexts where positive outcomes are threatened by continued conflict and a belligerent social atmosphere.

Recognizing and acknowledging underlying assumptions, goals and values of trainers and teachers at the outset of a program could also minimize biases that could reinforce negative attitudes and exacerbate conflict. At the beginning of program interventions, it is important to be aware of how assumptions and beliefs of trainers or teachers may influence practice. For example, Delegation Leaders and adult educators could be given time and space to examine their sets of values and assumptions and think about or discuss how they might influence others.

In addition, targeting more directly the mainstream media that is accessible to the majority of society members could ensure that positive messages toward adversary groups and the conflict are seen and heard by a larger audience. In addition, spreading positive messages through different media avenues to a larger audience could ensure that positive program outcomes are maintained over time. Through expanding the reach of such initiatives to wider circles of individuals, including adult educators, community leaders, parents and friends, this can produce the needed ripple effect of peace education, thus improving the level of support within communities and the prospects of conflict transformation

Finally, findings of the current study indicated that the Seeds of Peace program has incorporated most key assumptions from the literature; however, theories of change were more implicit rather than explicit. As a result, it is difficult to conclude how aware program members were of the extent to which their programming is influenced by the literature and theory. One way to minimize the gap between theory and practice is to articulate the underlying theories of change that

shape practice- these are the underlying assumptions about what changes are needed to transform conflict and the strategies for bringing about such changes. More explicit connections between theory and practice can advance research that both refines theory and improves practice, as theorists and practitioners could inform each other and share best practices. The interplay between theory and practice is bidirectional. Theory informs practice by ensuring that programs are informed and decisions for practice are based on evidence and are logical, and at the same time, theory can benefit from practice through testing the relative validity of different approaches or in differentiating the conditions under which each approach might be useful. Through more explicit examination of connections between theory and practice, researchers and practitioners can ensure that the key individual, relational and structural factors for conflict transformation are addressed. Furthermore, surfacing underlying theories of change in current practice could build theories that are grounded in good practice, and help in evaluating the validity of given theories and revising practice when assumptions are found to be imprecise or unfounded. Overall, greater collaboration between theorists and practitioners is important for refining theory, improving practice, and ensuring appropriate use of interventions.

The current study is not without its limitations. First, this study is focused on determining whether there is a gap between theory and practice of conflict transformation. This is demonstrated by analysing one case study, the Seeds of Peace program. Using one case study provides an opportunity to produce an in-depth understanding about the extent to which key theoretical notions from the literature are reflected in the practice of one program. However, using only one case

study does not allow the findings from the data to be generalized across other peace education programs. A limitation of this research design, then, is that it cannot be assumed on the basis of this study alone that key theoretical notions from the literature would appear in other peace education programs. A related limitation is that results cannot be extended beyond the claims of the interviewees and program documents since this study did not evaluate the program or its impacts. Findings are assertions as addressed by interviewees and evident in the document analysis.

Another limitation in this study is the researcher's bias. The researcher does not believe that research is ever value neutral. However, it is essential that the researcher acknowledges biases and how they may influence the study. At the start of the research, the researcher's own bias influenced the development of the analytical framework that was used for data analysis. This framework was created from reviewing the key literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education. Thus, the researcher's bias may have introduced error in selecting key assumptions for conflict transformation for the analytical framework. This may have led the analytical model not to include all of the necessary theoretical notions that were discussed in the literature, or incorporated insights may not have been significant factors.

The researcher's own bias also influenced interpretation of the data. The questions that were asked in the semi-structured interviews were designed by the researcher and hence may have had bias towards producing certain answers from the interviewees. An attempt was made to minimize bias by asking interviewees

open-ended questions. The combination of interviews and program documents further minimized bias through triangulation of the data. The researcher's bias may have further influenced the data during the interpretation of data. The majority of interviewees themselves did not identify theories of change; rather the researcher used descriptions from the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education and interpreted the implied theories of change from the original data. The researcher's bias therefore influenced the resulting coded themes collected from the data, and thus the findings of the study. The researcher's bias may have resulted in an over-- or under-- exaggeration of the extent to which the Seeds of Peace program is actually incorporating the specific theoretical assumptions from the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education

Another limitation in this thesis is the sample of participants who took part in the interviews. The current study had a limited number of participants, consisting of ten English-speaking individuals. The researcher was not able to interview everyone who works at Seeds of Peace, particularly those involved in all the different regional programs. As a result, the sample selected may not be representative of all staff members and their views on the program. With a greater sample, the study could have obtained a broader understanding of the program, which could have produced different results or further validated findings of this study.

Despite these limitations, the strengths and contributions of the current study are significant. This study addressed a topic on which there is limited research. Few studies have been conducted to date on the extent to which theoretical notions from

the literature on conflict transformation theory and peace education are incorporated within current peace education programs. The study's findings do not infer that all, or most, peace education programs have incorporated these key insights from the literature. However, the study provides a starting point for future studies to investigate the relationship between theory and practice in other peace education programs. In particular, the analytical framework that was developed for this study can be utilized and improved upon in future studies.

This study begins to inform the literature on the relationship between theory and practice in one prominent peace education program. In highlighting gaps between theory and practice in Seeds of Peace, this study highlights the importance of fostering dialogue between scholars and practitioners so that relevant research findings are shared with practitioners, and at the same time, practitioners play a key role in shaping theory development. By minimizing the gap between theory and practice, the field of peace education and conflict transformation will benefit through ensuring that appropriate strategies are implemented. The overall aim of these interventions is to prevent reoccurrence of violence and help to transform conflict; the way to achieve this is to tie theory and practice together.

Although the study revealed that most key assumptions for conflict transformation are reflected in at least one peace education program (although addressed rather implicitly), findings also indicate that further studies are needed in order to understand and improve connections between theory and practice. An area that could be addressed in future research is to examine the effectiveness of the

program. The current study assessed the existence of gaps between theory and practice in the Seeds of Peace program. It did not assess whether the different components of the program, or the program in general, is successful in achieving conflict transformation. Further research to evaluate the program and its impacts could reinforce the value of key theoretical notions from the literature by validating them. Currently, there is limited evaluation of peace education programs to verify that interventions are effective in achieving its goals or are effective in building peace. Despite the large number of peace education program implemented in conflict-affected contexts, there is limited evidence showing that such programs succeed in attaining their goals or that they are effective. Without such evidence, it is unclear whether theoretical notions from the literature are valid.

Related to the evaluation of peace education programs, another suggested area for future research is to assess the relative importance of each factor from the analytical framework under various contexts. Not all conflicts are the same; each conflict context presents unique challenges and each group involved in conflict has different needs, goals and interests. There may be some aspects of the theory that may apply across different peace education programs; however, other aspects may be relevant to only certain cases. Therefore, further studies are needed to not only to determine the extent to which other peace education programs are incorporating key theoretical assumptions from the literature, or whether programs are effective in achieving their desired program outcomes, but also to determine the relative importance of these key assumptions from the literature for programs under different circumstances.

Peace education is important for addressing underlying identity issues involved in conflict. It can play an important role in reaching new generations and begin to develop individuals with a new outlook on the conflict, the rival, and the peace process. Peace education can enable individuals to look at the future with new goals of establishing peaceful relations with the opposing party and support conflict transformation. Without peace education it may be difficult to establish long-term peace and prevent reoccurrence of violent conflict. Thus, to ensure that peace education is an effective form of conflict transformation the gap between theory and practice needs to be minimized. If theory is able to inform practice it will ensure that peace education programs are informed and decisions for practice are based on evidence and are logical. In addition, theory will benefit from practice through testing theories discussed in the literature and validating specific aspects of theories in practice.

It should be noted that peace education is only one of several measures needed in the midst of violent conflict. Peace education on its own cannot resolve identity-based violent conflicts and should be seen as one part of a wider conflict transformation approach. Complementary political, economic, and social initiatives remain necessary in conflict-affected societies. However, while these initiatives may help with the immediate and tangible issues of violent conflict, they do not necessarily address the underlying issues that lead to renewed violence.

In summary, the above suggested areas for future research indicate that this area of research is still at an early stage. Nevertheless, the research conducted in

this thesis constitutes an important contribution to the development of the research topic. Taken as a whole, this thesis highlights the need to conduct further studies on the extent of incorporation of key assumptions for conflict transformation within peace education programs. Moreover, the results and analytical framework provide a foundation for future research to assess the relationship between theory and practice in the field of conflict transformation.

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APPENDIX I: Interview Protocol

BACKGROUND

1. Tell me about your major roles with Seeds of Peace?

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

2. What long term goals does the program aim to accomplish? (e.g. 5-10 years or more)?
3. What are the program's immediate objectives? (e.g. 1-3 years)?

TARGET GROUPS

4. Who is being targeted by the program?
5. Why is it important to target these particular groups?

ACTIVITIES

6. List the main activities used to achieve the program's goals and objectives.

For each activity mentioned:

- i. What changes are expected from this particular activity?
- ii. How will these changes bring about peace?

CHALLENGES

7. What have been and/or continue to be the main barriers to achieving the program's goals and objectives?
8. Have there been any significant changes made to the program's goals, objectives or activities in the last few years?
 - i. If yes, what kind of changes?
 - ii. Why were these changes made?

CONCLUDING

9. Would you like to add anything else that you didn't get the chance to discuss, or come back to any question that we have discussed?