

PART III - EVALUATION PEACE STUDIES IN AUSTRALIA AND PNG

CHAPTER EIGHT

Evaluating Peace Studies

8.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on past evaluations of Peace Studies. Evaluation gives feedback to the implementors regarding the value of a designed course and whether the course has made an impact on students. Since the beginning of Peace Studies, limited work has been done in evaluating its effectiveness. In the push for its greater recognition and acceptance, evaluation of Peace Studies courses and programs is an essential component that needs to be further developed.

8.2 Previous Evaluations of Peace Studies

What makes Peace Studies different from other academic courses? Eckhardt (1987) a leading researcher in this area, sees Peace Studies as being different in that it seeks to incline the minds of learners towards peace and not violence. Peace Studies is not interested in facts alone, but searches deeper into the hearts of learners in the hope of changing their values and attitudes so that learners will be active in advocating nonviolent peace and justice. The question is just how effective these efforts are? Do students in fact undergo value and attitude changes as a result of Peace Studies or peace education? (An economist would ask further questions about the cost effectiveness of present peace education: are there alternative ways of achieving these desired changes, and what are the relative costs of these alternatives?).

Very little research has been conducted in western universities on the effects of peace education on students (Harris 1988:182) and usually this has involved very small numbers of students and limited time periods. The limited number of evaluations of Peace Studies has produced varying results. William Eckhardt (1984) conducted an evaluation of a Peace Studies course taught at Washington University, St. Louis, in 1983, emphasising changes in values. Attitudes tested before and after the course indicated changes towards pacifism and internationalism and this attitude change was maintained one year later. Feltran's (1984) research on a Peace Studies course at Southern Illinois University found a change of attitudes from nationalism towards internationalism. Sandole (1980) was involved in teaching peace studies to military officers, foreign affairs officials and business people. These were students who had been exposed to the realities of power politics and the course exposed them to 'non-realistic' alternatives. Virtually no significant changes in attitude or values were recorded. One of the reasons given for this was that these were mature students who were committed to their jobs in which realpolitik was an essential part.

The studies by Kemp (1986), Eckhardt (1984), Lyou (1986) and Harris (1991) will be further elaborated later to give insight into how such studies can be conducted. Kemp's study of the impact of a fact-oriented Peace Studies course on attitude change found no significant changes. The study indicates that information transfer by itself is not enough to change students' values and attitudes towards compassion. Lyou's study focused on the historical, political, psychological and technological aspects of the arms race together with ways of promoting public awareness and skills to achieve social change. However, it did not change student attitudes towards pacifism and internationalism. Eckhardt's study found that a Peace Studies course may have a significant effect in shifting student's compulsive (i.e., 'authoritarian and 'militaristic') values towards a more compassionate and altruistic orientation. Harris' study found that Peace Studies had no significant impact on the attitudes of students but that they became more willing to undertake action for peace.

8.2.1 Eckhardt's study

In Eckhardt's study (1984) a compassion questionnaire called the CPRI-74 (Eckhart, 1972 & 1976) was administered at the beginning and end of the course to measure attitude change (Eckhardt, 1987). The questionnaire contained 80 items to measure the attitudinal dimension from compassion to compulsion. The measure included 6 scales:

- (1) personality (6 Scales) [irresponsibility, impulsivity, neuroticism, misanthropy, frustrating childhood disciplines and fatalistic definitions of love].
- (2) ideology (3 scales) [militarism, nationalism, capitalism].
- (3) morality (7 scales) [conformity, religiosity, bureaucraticism, conventional, morality, authoritarianism, egoism and law and order].
- (4) cognitive (1 scale) [positivism vs humanism].

The students were asked to respond to questions under each of these items on a five-point scale (from 0-4), ranging from strong disagreement to strong agreement. The following are examples of the type of statements.

- (1) I like to follow rules and regulations.
- (2) Most people are likely to help others.
- (3) My country should strive for power in the world.
- (4) I have never been in trouble with the law.
- (5) It is all right to get around the law if you don't break it.

The results showed that most of the attitude changes were in the compassionate direction. For example, in the ideology section, militarism and nationalism changed in the direction of internationalism and pacifism, and capitalism to socialism. In the area of morality, bureaucratic, conformist, conventional and egoistic morality moved in a compassionate direction. The cognitive change was from the positivist philosophy of science to a humanist philosophy. Attitude changed mainly in the areas of ideology, morality and philosophy.

As a result of doing the Peace Studies course, 8 of the 10 students emphasised that they had undergone changes which led them to accept humanism as an alternative to

positivism and structural violence. Although these experiences indicate positive changes, questions remain concerning the persistence of these changes over time. A similar concern is shared by Harris (1991); ideal study would be to follow such students throughout their lifetime to record their continued interest and involvement in peace-related activities. Most fundamentally, however, this study is limited by its failure to use an appropriate control group. The changes identified amongst the students may have also occurred amongst other students doing a different subject at the same time, with some common factor responsible for the change in both groups.

8.2.2 Kemp's study

The purpose of Kemp's study was to examine the impact of peace studies on student attitudes and opinions and particularly whether students move towards compassion or compulsion. Kemp's questions were based on Eckhardt's (1984) CPRI-74 questionnaire of compulsive/compassion. Compassion was defined as the valuing of persuasion and reasoning in solving problems. Compassion included: pacifism, religious non-conformity, socialism, internationalism, political idealism, mental health, faith in human nature, rational childhood discipline, social responsibility and empathy. Compulsion is defined as the valuing of threats and force as the means to resolving conflicts. This study aimed to test the view that there is a set of attitudes which is related to a pro-war or compulsive view.

The study was conducted with three main goals:

- (1) To obtain results comparable with Eckhardt's study (1984) concerning attitudes to war.
- (2) To empower individuals so that they can take on the responsibility for war and peace issues. One concern of course was to combat political alienation and personal ineffectiveness.

According to Kemp, previous studies have not examined peace studies to students' alienation and/or ineffectiveness. Concern is raised that increased knowledge of nuclear war may lead to 'psychic numbing'. Psychic numbing means to block out information received because of the view that nothing can be done. Through open

discussion, this view can change given the knowledge, and avenues for action where one can take on the responsibility and be empowered as a group or as an individual.

- (3) To assess the impact of increased knowledge about the possibility of nuclear war e.g. whether it raised anxiety levels, increased passivity, and/or more motivated to work for nuclear disarmament

Three hypotheses were tested:

- (1) Peace Studies will lead to a decrease in militarism, nationalism, compulsive, personality, compulsive ideology compared to the measurements taken at the beginning of the course.
- (2) Peace Studies will lead to a decrease in political alienation and personal ineffectiveness.
- (3) Peace Studies students will have increased concerns about nuclear war at the end of the course.

The subjects involved 41 undergraduate political science students at the University of Nevada-Reno during Fall semester 1984. These comprised 17 students (14 males and 3 females) enrolled in a course titled The Nuclear Arms Race, Disarmament and Global Security; 14 students (9 males and 5 females) studying World Studies; and 10 students (5 males and 5 females) studying The Legislative Process. Their average age was around 21 years.

A pre-test and post-test were completed by the three groups of students. The third group were the control group who were not given the material on nuclear issues. The second group were given a modest amount i.e. a two week segment teaching nuclear issues. The first were the experimental group being exposed to a full semester of study on nuclear issues. The information to which the last groups were exposed included the effects of nuclear weapons, the nuclear arms race, arms control and disarmament proposals, alternative defence strategies, and potential world security arrangements. A one semester course was taken by the first group. A simpler version of these themes was taught to the second group for a two week period.

For the hypotheses stated, all results showed no significant changes. The students came to class with set opinions and attitudes and left with no obvious changes. More students

in fact left with fewer concerns about nuclear war. The purpose of the course was not to direct teaching so that students would change in specific variables, but to see what changes might occur in a peace studies course taught using the traditional lecture method. The study concluded that knowledge alone cannot change students attitudes and values.

8.2.3 Lyou's study

The research was conducted during the first two weeks of the Fall 1985 academic quarter at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Before and after questionnaires were used to measure changes in students' knowledge and behaviour. A pre-course questionnaire was distributed to control groups (studying 'War & Sociology' or 'The Crisis in South Africa') and to an experimental group (studying 'Nuclear Weapons: Effect, Proliferation & Control').

The questionnaires were designed to measure students' values, knowledge, behaviour and opinions regarding nuclear weapons issues. A total of 150 questions were used adopted from Eckhardt's CPRI -74. The first 72 questions were modelled on the CPRI -74 measure of compulsive/compassionate values characterised by its measurement of effect, ideology, morality and philosophy. In addition, 25 multiple choice questions were included to measure students' knowledge of nuclear weapons. Another 33 questions measured students' behavioural involvement in nuclear weapons issues. The final questions measured student's opinions regarding nuclear weapons.

Students studying the three courses were not significantly different in respect of their values, knowledge, behaviour and opinion measures on the pre-course questionnaire. A significant correlation was found between knowledge and self-reported behavioural involvement. The values-knowledge and values-behaviour correlations were not significant.

As regards the post-course questionnaire, group analysis of differences among students in the three courses were not possible because of the low response rates for students in the two control groups. A one-way within-group analysis of pre-course/post-course differences for the experimental group was conducted. Each of the dependent measures

(values, knowledge and behaviour) showed significant post-course differences in knowledge scores and behaviour scores, but no significant changes in values.

8.2.4 Harris' study

This study attempted to overcome a major problem of previous studies - that of limited time available during which change can occur. In this study, a questionnaire was distributed on the first day of class in 1984 to students of both the peace studies group and a control group at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the University of Missouri-Columbia. The control groups were enrolled in 'War and Peace in American History', 'Problems in International Relations' and 'Astronomy'. The peace studies groups studied 'Introduction to Peace Studies', 'Politics and Nuclear War' and 'Perspectives on Nuclear War'. At the end of the course, students filled in the same questionnaire to see how their values, attitudes and behaviours had changed. One year later, students were mailed the same questions to measure further changes. Follow-up interviews were conducted using a random selection of students to gain further insight into their participation in peace activities.

The questionnaire was designed to test whether or not students had adopted attitudes and values that support peace, had adopted a more peaceful lifestyle and had become more active in working for peace and justice. Responses to the first issue were measured on a Likert scale concerning nuclear issues, defence priorities and relations between the superpowers. The second issue was measured by asking students if they had conducted their lives in a more peaceful way. Included in this section was an open-ended question asking what useful things they had learned as a result of taking the course. The third issue question was designed to obtain information on whether their peace involvement in peace issues remained the same, increased or decreased.

In comparing the attitudes towards war and peace, the attitudes of Peace Studies students did not indicate any significant changes. Indeed, the control group made more, if slight, progress towards assuming peaceful attitudes than the Peace Studies group. Response in other items by the peace studies groups continued to show non-significant attitude changes in a more peaceful direction than the control group. Therefore, the study does not support the hypothesis that students in Peace Studies class made

significant changes in attitude in a more peaceful direction compared with the control group students.

In respect of behaviour changes, most of the students indicated that they tried to conduct their lives in peaceful ways. In the Peace Studies group, there was a significant increase in this proportion during the course of their study as compared with virtually no increase in the control group. More significant were the comments students made at the end of the course indicating that they had changed their lifestyles in peaceful directions. Some of the types of changes were expressed as "using more peaceful means of solving problems in my own personal affairs", "I haven't punched anybody", "Taken a spiritual turn", "I am learning to find peace within myself" (Harris 1991: 12).

Some quotes provide useful and interesting insights into the potential for peaceful change:

- "I have placed more emphasis on maintaining peace within myself. If I can do this, it is easier for me to pass it on to family and friends, work, the world and the environment."
- "Besides what has already been listed, I believe the most significant effort that I have undertaken is a continual challenging of my thoughts, beliefs, and actions concerning violence in my life. Culturally imposed violence through stereotypes, the media, traditions, etc. is the root, I believe, of an unstable world."
- "Learned to mediate so I can become more at peace within myself, so I can become a more loving and peaceful person and have a positive effect on other people and promote peaceful attitudes among other people through example."(Harris *ibid*: 12-13).

In items concerning actions to promote peace, 15% of the peace studies group versus 4% of the students in the control group had attempted to influence friends about the threat of war. In the follow up interviews, students made the following comments:

- "I am more actively involved in that I promote discussions with friends on this issue - handle it in my own sphere of associates (work) and faculty/friends. I did not know enough to attempt a stance."
- "I am at the same level of involvement but not the same level of awareness. I talk about it with other people. I try to practice it in my daily living."

- "I am learning to find peace within myself. I am learning more about world problems and how to promote peace to enable me to try convincing others that this is an important, urgent problem facing us now."
- "Talk about it to anyone who will listen. Hand out information on nuclear threat. Promote a global consciousness. Maintain a greater awareness of political events. Pray a lot!"
- "I have become keenly interested and involved in peace education involving children and adolescents - decision-making, values clarification, self esteem, and service orientation." (Harris *ibid*:13).

Of these students, 9% joined a peace organisation and students taking the peace studies courses became significantly more active in peace activities than those in the control groups.

There were some differences in the questions asked of UPNG students in both the questionnaires and interviews from those asked of UNE students. This was deemed necessary to suit the different cultural context. The thrust of questions was, however, quite similar and of similar type to those employed in Eckhardt's CPRI-74 compassion questionnaires (see section 8.2).

8.3 The evaluation criteria

How might the study of peace lead to changes amongst students? Drawing on the work of several researches, particularly Foh and Floresca-Cawagas (1987; 1989), we believe that such changes can come about in four dimensions. As a preliminary point, we note that the study of peace logically occurs in an environment significantly different from that typical in more traditional university disciplines. In essence, learning is co-operative and participative rather than dominated by the lecturer. The learning process in this course certainly involved input from the lecturer but also drew heavily on the experience and opinions of students (Giroux, 1990; McLaren & Leonard, 1993). Thus learning that took place at UPNG with the peace studies students involved traditional sources (the lecturer, course material, journal articles), the experience of other participants and the personal experience of each learner. The course thus provided a framework within which students could make sense of their own attitudes to and experiences of conflict,

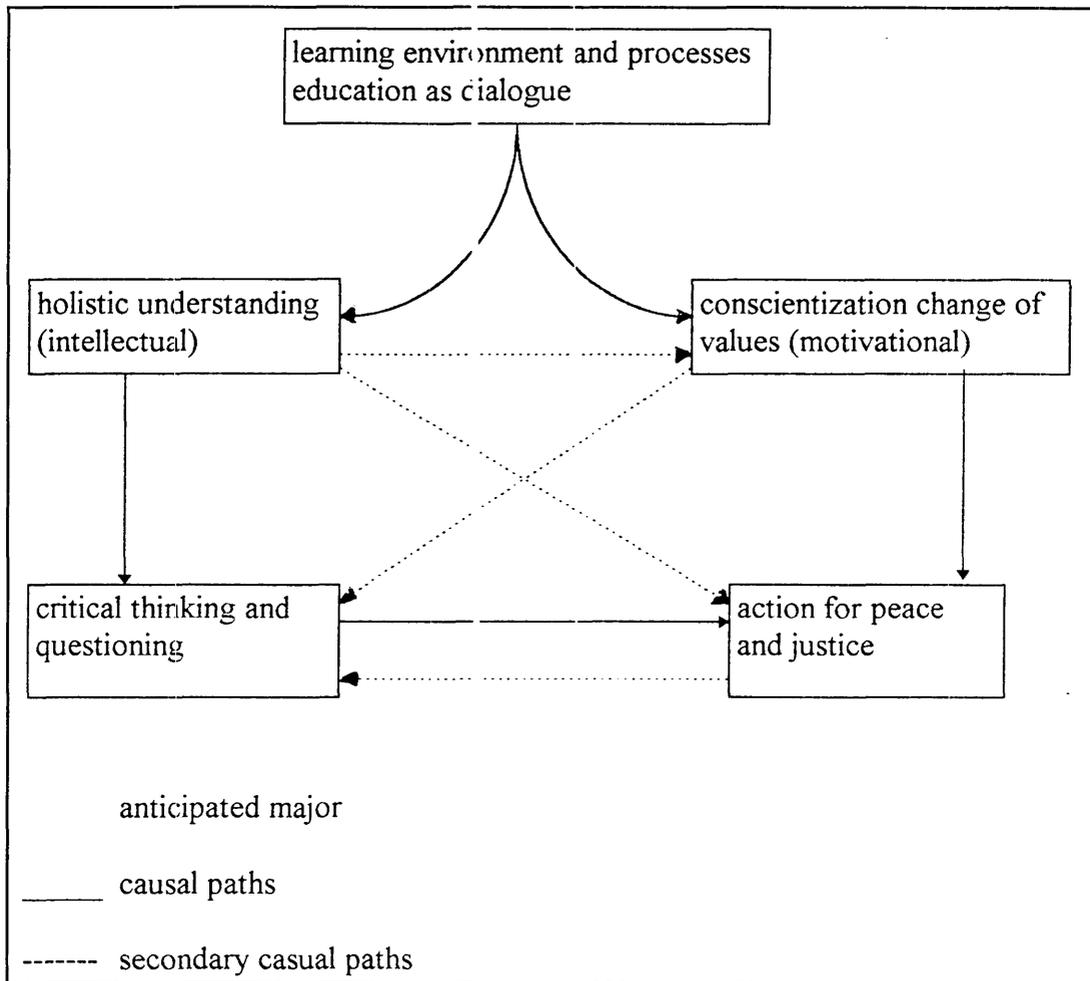
violence and peace. Toh and Floresca-Cawagas (1987:30) describe such a learning environment as 'education and dialogue'.

Within such an environment, we might expect learners to be influenced in four ways. The first involves the intellect as learners approach issues to better understand the interconnections between variables normally studied in isolation. An example of such holistic understanding might be a budgetary decision to allocate large amounts of resources to the military and the implications this may have for the strength of civil government and for the exercise of basic democratic rights. This holistic understanding is likely to lead to critical thinking, and questioning of conventional understandings of conflict, violence and peace issues. A third expected change is at the level of values and motivation. To use the jargon, peace studies will conscientize learners and alter the way they feel about conflict, violence and peace.

The experience will have a different impact on different students. Many students, having reached this level of learning, will develop compassionate feelings and develop a deeper sense of empathy and solidarity with the poor particularly in the Third World. For many, it is a moving experience with reactions of anger, frustration and even hate for the perpetrators of direct and indirect violence. At the same time it incites a feeling of compassion, love and empathy for the poor and downtrodden in the Third World. Learners take on a more optimistic view that they can make a difference for a better world and secure a brighter future.

It is likely to increase both the desire to work for appropriate social change and the optimism they have about the effects of their efforts. These efforts are measured in the fourth dimension - the individual's action for peace and justice. Thus teaching peace studies gives attention to the content as well as the pedagogical processes (Stuart, 1992; Burns & Weber, 1993) of teaching peace studies elaborated in section 10.5. These four potential impacts of studying peace - holistic understanding, critical thinking, values and action - are presented diagrammatically in Figure 8.

Figure 8.1 Potential impacts of peace studies



The unbroken main casual paths illustrate strong linkages between the different processes of learning. The broken paths show secondary linkages.

8.4 Summary

The relatively few studies which have attempted to evaluate the effect of Peace Studies at university level provide mixed results concerning the impact of Peace Studies. The studies almost always use a single method, some of which have some important limitations. The evaluations carried out in this thesis, both in Australia and in Papua New Guinea, involve a range of methods in order to minimise these limitations: pre- and post-study attitudinal questions with both experimental and control groups; personal interviews during the course; post-study mail questionnaires containing open-ended questions; and student journals or diaries.

CHAPTER NINE

An evaluation of Peace Studies at UNE

9.1 Introduction

In part as a preliminary to the UPNG study, but also as an evaluation in its own right, a study was carried out amongst a group of undergraduate students at the University of New England (UNE) enrolled in PEAC 200 Introduction to Peace Studies in second semester, 1995, and a group of students who had completed a Master of Letters in Peace Studies, by distance education, during the early 1990s. The course content for the undergraduate unit is included in Appendix 5.

With respect to the undergraduate students, three methods – before and after questionnaires, personal interviews and student learning journals were used. The data on postgraduates were collected by mail questionnaire.

9.2 Undergraduate students

9.2.1 Before and after questionnaires

In order to test whether the study of peace makes a difference to students' attitudes and behaviour, a questionnaire comprising 20 questions (included as Appendix 2) was drawn up, measuring each of the four main dimensions - holistic understanding, conscientization, a critical and peace values and, action for peace and justice derived from Toh and Cawagas (1987:29-32) as discussed in section 8.3.

The questionnaire was completed by 12 of the 15 students undertaking the Introduction to Peace Studies Unit in second semester, 1995 and by a control group consisting of 43 second year Politics (15) and Economics (28) students. All three groups were tested at both the start and end of the semester, a gap of some 15 weeks, and average scores were

calculated for each dimension. Four specific null hypotheses were tested in order to determine whether Peace Studies made a difference in relation to attitude development:

- (1) There were no significant differences between Peace Studies and Economic/Politics studies at the start of the semester on each of the four dimensions.
- (2) There were significant differences between the start and end of the semester for Peace Studies students on each dimension.
- (3) There were significant differences between the start and end of the semester for Economics/Politics students on each dimension.
- (4) There were significant differences between Peace Studies and Economic/Politics students at the end of the semester on each of the four dimensions.

In brief, it was hypothesised that students in Peace Studies changed as a result of their educational exposure and consequently developed different attitudes towards peace and justice compared with other students. The first hypothesis deals with the possibility that Peace Studies students were initially different from other students in ways which motivated them to enrol in the unit. The statistical test employed was the well known t-test involving the comparison of two sample means. A significant difference between the two groups is revealed by a probability value of 0.05 or less.

Data relevant to Hypothesis 1 is presented in Table 9.1. Whereas the two groups were not significantly different with respect to facts and beliefs at the start of the semester, there were significant differences with respect to consciousness and action.

Table 9.1: Mean scores at the start of semester

	Peace Studies	Economics/Politics	Significance of t statistic
Facts	9.0 (2.2)	9.2 (2.3)	0.80
Beliefs	14.3 (2.9)	12.8 (2.5)	0.06
Consciousness	16.1 (4.5)	20.8 (4.2)	0.00
Action	14.1 (2.6)	11.6 (3.1)	0.01

Note: Bracketed figures are standard deviations.

Data relevant to Hypothesis 2 is presented in Table 9.2. There were no significant differences on any of the four dimensions for Peace Studies students between the start and end of semester. On face value, this suggests that Peace Studies does not make a difference, a crucial conclusion which will be considered in more detail later.

Table 9.2: Mean scores at the start and end of semester, Peace Studies students

	Start of Semester	End of Semester	Significance of t statistic
Facts	9.0 (2.2)	8.8 (2.6)	0.86
Beliefs	14.3 (2.9)	16.2 (2.2)	0.10
Consciousness	16.1 (4.5)	13.7 (3.2)	0.16
Action	14.1 (2.6)	15.5 (3.0)	0.26

Note: As for Table 9.1

The third hypothesis concerns change between the start and end of semester for Economics/Politics students. Table 9.3 reveals no significant differences between the start and end of semester.

Table 9.3: Mean scores at start and end of semester, Economics/Politics students

	Start of Semester	End of Semester	Significance of t statistic
Facts	9.2 (2.3)	9.1 (2.2)	0.87
Beliefs	12.8 (2.5)	13.8 (3.3)	0.08
Consciousness	20.8 (4.2)	19.3 (3.3)	0.10
Action	11.60 (3.1)	11.81 (3.7)	0.77

Note: As for Table 9.1.

Table 9.4 presents data relevant to the fourth hypothesis, that the students will be significantly different at the end of the semester in respect of the four dimensions. This does appear to be the case for three of the four dimensions – beliefs, consciousness and action. However, a comparison with Table 9.1 shows that the most significant differences between the two groups occurred with respect to the dimension of beliefs.

Table 9.4: Mean scores of Peace Studies and Economics/Politics students at the end of semester

	Peace Studies	Economics/Politics	Significance
Facts	8.8 (2.6)	9.1 (2.2)	0.723
Beliefs	16.2 (2.2)	13.8 (3.3)	0.033
Consciousness	13.7 (3.2)	19.3 (4.1)	0.010
Action	15.5 (3.0)	11.8 (3.7)	0.004

Note: As for Table 9.1.

To sum up:

Hypothesis 1 was partially supported, with the two groups of students not being significantly different in respect of facts and beliefs at the start of semester.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 were not supported with neither group of students changing significantly over the semester.

Hypothesis 4 was supported in that there were significant differences between the two groups at the end of the semester on three dimensions, although this was only one more than at the start of semester.

Overall, the foregoing is not particularly positive for those who hope that Peace Studies will make a difference. The control and experimental groups were initially different with respect to consciousness and action; there were no significant changes in either group over the semester; and, as a result the differences between the groups at the end were not much greater than at the start. Before and after questionnaires are not, however, the only method of examining the impact of Peace Studies and we now examine the results from alternative research methods.

9.2.2 Interviews and journals

The interviews were conducted well into the course and responses reflect students' exposure to peace studies' concepts and issues. They were conducted mainly in the University cafeteria because of its relaxed environment. The interview time for each respondent was approximately one hour. In the interview, the researcher used a set of

structured questions (see Appendix 3) to help guide the interview which was recorded. All respondents were keen to participate in the interview which contributed to the smooth conduct of the interview process. The researcher encountered no major problems during the course of the interview although it became apparent that the construction, phrasing and probing of questions influence the responses obtained. The researcher felt that on occasions she allowed her own biases and assumptions to intervene. In order to obtain a better understanding of what the respondent was saying, interviewing skills need to be strong and the researcher realised a need for improvement before undertaking the UPNG study.

In addition to interviews, the researcher had, at the end of the course, access to 'learning journals' which were kept by the students as part of the assessment tasks in the course. In brief, these required the student to reflect on their involvement with the unit as they proceeded through it. The instructions for the writing of journals for the unit are included in Appendix 4. What follows is largely derived from personal interviews, but this is supplemented at times by material drawn from the student journals. Individual responses are included insofar as they represent typical responses or, occasionally, unique ones.

9.2.2.1 Background of respondents

The interviewees comprised of twelve PEAC 200 Introduction to Peace Studies students from a class of fifteen. Three students were not interviewed: they could not be reached because of their preparation for the end of year exams. Of those interviewed, there were seven females and five males, with ages ranging between 20–35. These students were in their second, third or fourth year of their undergraduate degree programmes in a variety of disciplines. Their views, knowledge and experience are as diverse as their academic discipline, perhaps illustrating the holistic nature of Peace Studies.

9.2.2.2 Prior understanding of peace

Respondents were asked to state their understanding of what peace meant to them before enrolling in PEAC 200. According to most, peace meant no war and they associated peace with war at the international level. A female student commented as follows:

I always thought of peace at a more global level. Say, the absence of war. That was what I thought peace to be; living in peaceful global situation. Absence of war, absence of any sort of violence. Australia is a country I considered for example as fairly peaceful.

Some students, however, indicated that their prior understanding of peace meant being allowed to live how one wanted to live. One female student emphasised acceptance and tolerance of human differences and the eradication of stereotypes that are predominant in society. She also said she learnt something new being exposed to the idea that environmental issues and structural violence are part of Peace Studies. A male respondent said that he understood peace to mean non-violence and an active effort to resolve conflict. Another female respondent was of the opinion that peace meant equality for everybody and also harmony, i.e., to have a balance between everything.

9.2.2.3 Their motivation for studying peace

Respondents were asked what motivated them in deciding to do PEAC 200. For a few respondents, their selection of the course was due to the fact they needed another course for their degree and not because they had the initial interest in the topic. This was not, however, typical. A male respondent majoring in Agricultural Economics and a female student studying Social Sciences were interested in learning more about the underlying causes and issues of conflict and violence. Two respondents of Christian persuasion had developed an interest in mediation and thought Peace Studies would be a good course to support this.

According to all the respondents, the fact that the course seemed interesting was a major reason for their decision to take it. When probed further as to what made the course interesting, respondents referred to the fact that many of the themes and issues overlapped with their specific discipline which they found beneficial and stimulating. A Law student commented as follows:

Initially I was motivated when I was reading a syllabus for it last year and it was talking about environmental issues. I am a fairly keen environmentalist. I thought it would be interesting to get an insight to it. But I wasn't quite sure how law fitted in with peace studies.

For some students, their previous studies pointed them towards Peace Studies. Three Politics students mentioned issues which had captured their interest e.g. units such as International Relations. Three Natural Resources students had previously taken a unit called Resource Management in Developing Countries where the conflicts inherent in natural resource exploitation in developing countries were examined. Their comments were as follows:

Basically I studied 'Resource Management in Developing Countries'... and I found it interesting and enjoyed it so much that I thought a good follow on unit from that would be a Peace Studies. I wanted to find out more about the empowerment of people and how to make a difference on the individual basis to the world.

Another female respondent majoring in Politics and Communications had this to say about the difference between Politics and Peace Studies:

I am doing Politics and it's really complementary to it because some of the topics crossover. Especially environmental issues. Last semester, I did International Relations which included nuclear topics. This semester, I did Australian Politics. It was not so radical as the approach taken by peace studies, like learn to care a bit more about the environment. More human issues. Politics is basically power and government. I did a topic on transnational corporations. Although the lecturer in Politics was negative about it, and condemning, it wasn't like in peace studies how we learnt about transnational corporations and their effect on the environment and things like that. What we did in Politics was more an analysis of what transnational corporations do and what they have done for the country they come from. They are actually helping their own country. They didn't talk about environmental pollution. They just concentrated on how they are helping their own country economically and relation wise. But I didn't get this other view as expressed in Peace Studies which would have given a balanced view.

9.2.2.4 Religion and peace

The role that churches should have in the practice of peace was a question that generated some interesting responses. One purpose of this research question was to gauge student views with respect to the practice of Liberation Theology which links peace and

development issues. Few commented on their own spirituality, in contrast to a number of postgraduate responses (see section 9.3.2.2).

The view of many of the respondents was that churches as a body are powerful and can have a large influence on the practice of peace and support peace initiatives. Respondents did acknowledge the work towards peace by some churches such as the Uniting Church and the ecumenical work of the Catholic Church. One respondent who belongs to the Uniting Church commented that:

... Most Protestant churches are pretty gutless. The Uniting church has more guts on social issues. I think we should become more involved. I certainly would like to pursue and follow up in my church. The churches have a lot to say rather than just evangelising. The church and peace can go hand in hand. I don't think the bible should be watered down any more.

A male Agricultural Economics student added this comment:

If you ever sort of really want to achieve or do anything, ... you got to be an example to the community both through institutional ways and also through the people. If the people believe in something, they should show other people if they believe in that, by living that way. A lot of people get annoyed with the churches because they are so hypocritical. I think to a certain extent, in a lot of things, religion is very hypocritical. So I think the church has got to be doing something and for the right reasons...

Another respondent distinguished between appropriate and inappropriate church involvement in developing countries:

I think the churches can play an important role in that most of the values which are in peace studies are also in the values of most religions. So I think whether you call it peace studies or call it religion, it's very similar thing. I think what gets confused is religion as a body, the church as a body gets carried away. It is big organisations turn it to hierarchical structures with all kinds of problems. ...the church can join peace issues. See the point where they can help in peace and peacemaking, but draw the line, say for example going into Third World countries such as Africa, when it comes to forcing change of ideas upon people in the country. They can and help make peace in the country without having to deprive people of their culture; they can try and understand the cultural context rather than imposing their own ideas upon their culture.

Similarly, a female Natural Resource student had this to say:

Churches; some have had quite a bad influence. A bit too domineering. I think churches have a role to play. Respect the churches, but churches should also respect other people and other religions rather than saying that their way is the only way to go. Promote self-awareness, ... Allow people to do things for themselves, interpret their religion as they see fit. Allow people to do things themselves, for example encourage and promote communities to organise to work together.

9.2.2.5 Being personally peaceful

Respondents were asked whether they considered themselves as peaceful and to state what they identified as being peaceful. For the majority of respondents, this was a difficult question because many had not seriously reflected on their own attitudes, behaviour and values in association with peace. There were a whole range of phrases describing individuals' peaceful qualities, such as: "I don't support war, I don't have a rifle, I avoid conflict and violence"; "I don't like any real conflict and hate violence"; "I am reasonably peaceful because I don't like to hurt people"; "I have taken on board values that are peaceful-enhanced by my religious principles"; "I am more peaceful than most – most people tend to be biased, racist and say things off-handedly"; "I am more at peace with the environment"; "I get aggressive but not physically violent"; "I face the problem directly with the person involved"; "I try to avoid conflict as much as possible"; "I walk away from conflict"; "I do whatever I can to avoid conflict."

The range of responses can be further illustrated by the responses of two students. A female respondent studying Social Science considered herself a very peaceful person. She reported hating any kind of violence and finding it offensive. She keeps away from any person she knows who is violent. She regarded herself as very tolerant of other people, does not discriminate and considers everyone as equals. A male respondent in Natural Resources expressed how a physically violent experience turned him against the whole idea of resorting to violent action; he felt intimidated by the experience and realised it was wrong. He commented that he found it difficult to handle emotional conflict and is struggling with this.

Another respondent stated that she has the urge to contribute to peace outside her own family, such as with school children, but in her own home with her partner, her stand is quite different. She refuses to be the victim of a violent relationship and retaliates with aggression, which she sees as 'part of human nature'. Another female respondent in Politics and Communication pointed out the same flaw when she made this comment:

Peace ... doesn't mean you don't have conflict with people that you live with or your friends or family members ... conflict happens all the time. It is just part of human nature. I want peace on a more general, bigger level. Everyone should want it because if we fail it means the destruction of everyone.

Another female respondent in Natural Resources expressed a broader understanding of the personal peace with this remark :

I really do not like violence. Even watching violence on TV is difficult to watch sometime. I care for the environment and animals. Sometimes I cannot see why people want to hurt somebody. I cannot see why they want to inflict violence to somebody or put them through so much emotional violence. I guess most they do without knowing why they kill people. Things like how the army can move in and kill people. I just do not know. Probably they are far removed from people e.g. they do not regard other races so much as people e.g. Aborigines. That is why I regard myself as fairly peaceful. I have conflict in my life, but I am generally peaceful. Changing myself, self awareness, social development, are all part of learning ... not just passive learning.

9.2.2.6 Expectations and their fulfilment

Respondents were asked what they expected to learn in the course and whether this had been fulfilled. Many of the respondents had expected the course would focus more on practical aspects of conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation. For example, a male Economics student stated:

I really didn't know, perhaps ways that people brought peace. One of the things is probably, like the Israeli situation where there is a lot of talking going on. I suppose I expected to learn how you do that talking which is not something covered in the course. How to participate in negotiation. You look at situations and there is no hope. How can we ever be friends and have the hope that there is a way through? There are a lot of history, issues which are so complex on both sides and working

that out. I suppose another thing I expected to learn was the difference between peace, peace within someone during war and peace as absence of war. Real peace as opposed to no fighting...

Although there was some expectation of learning the skills and practice of peacemaking, the course did not include this aspect of learning, although this is available in a later year Peace Studies course. Some respondents mentioned, however, that the course went beyond their expectations and broadened their understanding of peace. A male Agricultural Economics respondent said:

I didn't know human rights issues was part of peace studies course. I didn't expect that initially. My view was narrower, I thought peace studies and peace meant conflict resolution.

In addition, a female Law respondent made this remark:

I learnt a lot more than I ever thought I was going to learn. It is a very large topic. There is so much in it. The only thing is I thought is I got so overwhelmed with the amount of knowledge. There is no way I was disappointed at all. I needed a year to cover it all adequately. It covers all things; international relations, economics, it is all there. I think it is excellent.

Another respondent expected that the course would focus on wars, that it would be all theoretical and not practical; she was surprised it analysed contemporary issues and she found it far more applied than expected.

9.2.2.7 Did their understanding of peace change?

Respondents were asked to state whether their understanding of peace had changed as a consequence of studying PEAC 200, and what they regarded as the most important things they learned. Many of the respondents claimed to have learnt far more than they had expected. Some of the respondents felt overwhelmed by the extent of the study and the issues covered. A couple expressed concern at not being exposed to the practical aspect of conflict resolution and peacemaking. Almost all respondents commented on the holistic nature of peace studies which helped to broaden and widen their understanding of peace and assisted them in thinking more laterally. For example, a female Natural Resource respondent mentioned how the course made her aware that

peace means changing at the personal level as part of, and preliminary to changes at other levels in society.

Many other respondents commented on aspects of the course which they had not previously considered as part of Peace Studies, such as inequality, the environment, exploitation by TNCs and military expenditure. Specifically, they found the drawing of links between disciplines to be both interesting and novel. A male Natural Resources respondent, for example, remarked that the unit showed him that developing countries put much money into the military at the expense of humanitarian needs such as health services. He stressed that the military is no solution to any problem, and that there was a need to resort to alternative non-violent means of resolving conflicts. Similarly, a female respondent in Politics and Communications remarked:

Peace Studies showed me how developing countries put a lot of money into weapons and how it affects a country's health and medication. Government is just wasting resources on the military and inviting wars that really I don't think solve any problem. It makes them worse instead. So I guess it made me anti-military. It really is so destructive. I think there are many alternatives to solving problems.

Did the course change you in any way?

Most respondents commented that the course had changed them and increased their level of motivation and optimism concerning peace and justice. It also provided an avenue for new knowledge and broadened their narrow understanding of peace. For instance, one respondent asserted that studying 'Resource Management in Developing Countries' and PEAC 200 made such an impact that she had decided to change the direction in her future career:

I did a course last semester about Development and Environment ... I am really interested in the environment. But now, that sort of changed to the plight of the tribal people which I am interested in working with. I thought that by doing peace studies, it would give me a different avenue to sort of look at why there are so many problems in the Third World and let me look at it from sort of peace studies point of view and sort of mediation built into it. It was amazing. It was the best course I have ever done. Before, I was interested in animals and wildlife. But [these courses] helped change my direction completely.

There were also divergent opinions expressed. For example, an Economics respondent commented that nothing had really changed for him, partly because he felt he had a good understanding of peace prior to the course. Indeed, through doing the unit, he had become more optimistic that peace was possible. One respondent, a male Economic History student, was highly sceptical on the whole idea of peace. He defined himself as liberal and conservative and found it difficult to accept many of the ideas put forward in the unit. He felt personally threatened by the first two topics (Domestic Violence and Aboriginal Issues) and from then switched off from the class discussions. A male Politics respondent also stated that he had not changed for peace, and he was quite pessimistic that ultimate peace could be achieved. He suggested a mediated form of peace because he believed people to be violent by nature and that nothing much could be done to change the way they act. Another female Politics and Communication respondent was sceptical of efforts for peace, such as banning nuclear testing, believing that there would be little change for the better since the powerful countries would continue to control the direction of the world. She believed that there was almost nothing that any person or group can do to influence such countries. She cited the case of French nuclear testing in the Pacific which seemed to be unaffected by worldwide protest. According to her, opposition to nuclear testing is probably a waste of time because the French Government will not change, having conducted its nuclear testing at Mururoa since 1967 despite the presence of Greenpeace and other protest groups. Nevertheless, she did send a letter to the French President which made her feel better. She recalled another example to do with a protest organised by students at the UNE in 1995 regarding student allowances which saw a turn up of about six students. This made her disillusioned and doubtful of such protests saying: "I thought, why am I here; this is not doing anything; it's just a waste of time for me". She added:

I still think money is everything to most people and capitalism runs this country and most countries in the world and you know, you need to influence people who have the money, like Kerry Packer and people who have power in society and connections. Like the Australian boycott of French products. ...it has got to be far reaching and widespread. People in powerful positions make a difference. That kind of thing has to happen if we want to change. At the moment I don't see any hope for it, although it is better than it was previously. For example, politics at University would not have topics like environmentalism ten years ago. We are moving ahead.

Another respondent commented that in some situations, humans have to go through a bit of conflict to get peace. According to her, in the past she would have thought there really was no justification for war. Now she claims that some benefits could come out of it and that some struggle towards securing peace may be necessary sometimes. This comment mirrors a view predominant in the mainstream conservative camp supporting the 'just war' theory.

Respondents were asked the most important things they have learnt and were they aware of these issues. Whilst a number of themes emerged, most could be classified under the heading of conscientization (see section 8.3). A number of respondents commented on the analysis of domestic violence which they did not realise was so widespread in their own society. A female Natural Resource respondent, whose parents had recently separated, was deeply affected by the domestic violence topic. A male Natural Resource respondent added that he now understood domestic violence to include emotional and psychological violence. A male respondent commented that while he knew that the problem of domestic violence did exist, he now understood its nature and extent to a far greater degree. It even inspired him to get more involved and he now believed it was his responsibility to intervene in cases of domestic abuse. A male Politics respondent expressed shame and admitted guilt at his chauvinistic attitude. The unit has helped him understand women more, although he retained a negative view on extreme feminism. One female respondent in Politics and Communication added that Australian society was not as peaceful as she had believed, given the extent of physical, emotional and psychological violence affecting a large sector of society. Furthermore, whilst aboriginal-white relations had been studied by a couple of students in other courses, Peace Studies presented them with a whole range of other issues related to race relations, including poverty, environmental issues, discrimination against minorities on a broader scale.

A female respondent in Politics and Communications explained that the environment was an issue discussed in Politics but the opportunity was not provided for learners to critically analyse underlying problems such as the Franklin Dam controversy or deforestation in Australia. She found the focus on possible nonviolent action students could take to be helpful and enlightening. On a more pessimistic note, she added that

while supporters will recycle and become more environmentally aware, it would be hard to convince the older generation who would label such initiatives a "greenie thing". A female respondent stated how her consciousness was highly raised and that she has become more critical of a lot of issues than when she first enrolled in the peace studies course:

I think a lot of the discussions we have about Government and multinational companies ... really changed the way I think about things. When I see something on the television now, I think very differently now about what they are saying to me. I tend to be much more critical. Even a politician I support I tend to be much more critical of what he/she is saying and I think of other motives that are probably going to be behind it. I think it is from learning about corruption and whatever goes on. I mean I knew that was there but didn't know the extent. Also the sheer fact of poverty and oppression in the world which you have an idea it is going on but, you become numb to it.

Two female respondents realised that individuals must change in order to make a difference in peacemaking in situations which may seem impossible. It does not have to make a huge difference; it may simply create a spirit of hope where there seems to be no hope. They emphasised how important it was for everybody to believe that peace can be achieved and to actively try to facilitate it on a global scale and also at the individual level. Whilst students felt the impact of certain sections of the unit, the main impact was one of conscientization: students were motivated to work for peace in themselves and in the wider world.

9.2.2.8 Connections between peace studies and other disciplines

Respondents were asked what connections they could make between Peace Studies and their own subject discipline.

Nearly all the respondents were able to make a link between their own discipline and peace studies. A male Politics respondent saw a range of connections between Peace Studies and Politics courses. He found Peace Studies provided a framework for understanding the links. For example, an examination of transnational companies should not only be concerned about generating profit generating but also focus on values such

as environmental effects, the distribution of benefits and whether or not it is an appropriate form of development.

A female Politics and Communications respondent recalled an exercise in Peace Studies where students were asked to look more carefully at advertisements such as BHP's "Are You Getting The Full Picture?", which formed part of its campaign defending its Ok Tedi mining activities. The respondent was critical of Politics teaching which skimmed over environmental issues whereas, in Peace Studies, environmental subjects were well addressed and issues such as deforestation and protection of the natural environment loomed large. In Politics, some of the negatives of TNCs were covered, but most emphasis was given to their economic advantages. This is what she has to say:

I think Peace Studies made me more aware since it focussed on the negatives. It didn't cover any positives. Politics had to cover the advantages. Bit of a conservative course. It is very economic based. They have to say what the economic advantages are for the country. ...Peace Studies taught me to be aware that there is no real line of communication from the countries that are being exploited by TNCs such as BHP. There is no real communication between Third World countries. It is one way communication. ... It is damaging. Made me realise how people have power over the media. Learnt to be more aware of what I'm taught and read. Don't only regurgitate and promote more balanced reporting.

A female respondent in Arts related Peace Studies to an Education History course where she was first exposed to Paulo Freire's educational philosophy. Although she said she found it interesting, the whole practice of considering students as equal partners in the classroom setting was overwhelming for her. Although the Education class used some of Freire's ideas, the content and method were more structured and involved all students whether they liked or not. In Peace Studies, on the other hand, a fairly relaxed teaching style was used where a student could contribute or remain silent. Given some reluctance to participate because she is not a good public speaker, she prefers a setting where she is made to participate.

Almost all respondents studying Natural Resources were able to link peace studies with their own discipline. One respondent saw the issue of land use and how tribal people are tied to the land as an important connection between two areas of study. Another respondent noted any action taken by natural resource managers without due

consideration of the environment and its implication on people, plants and tribal ownership could be seen as an act of indirect violence. Peace Studies has raised her awareness and motivated her to communicate and negotiate with people who are part of the decision making process. The purpose of this is that all parties should work to find a commonly accepted solution to a mutual problem. Another Natural Resources student indicated her desire to work with tribal people to assist them develop an appropriate resource management strategy in the face of increasing pressure by governments and TNCs to exploit natural resources. She valued the perspectives provided by the unit.

Upholding the more conservative view, a male respondent in Economic History saw no connection to his discipline in the first section of PEAC 200 (see Appendix 5). As the course progressed, however, he was able to make greater connections and as a result found later themes to be interesting. He admitted to becoming easily discontented with what did not interest him. He said that he had a passion for economic history and that any other course was a bit of a non-event. By contrast, a male Agricultural Economics respondent saw a huge link between Peace Studies and Economics. In his view, it was essential to put a human face on economics in order to be able to make decisions which would be beneficial to the individual and wider society, rather than simply the profit-makers.

Whilst all students noted that they had learned new facts, many of them 'eye-opening', most of their responses emphasised the holistic nature of the unit material and the methods of teaching and learning.

9.2.2.9 Challenges of the unit

Students were asked to consider which parts of the unit they found most challenging. 'Challenge' was interpreted by some in a positive sense and by others negatively. Three themes were mentioned by three or more students.

First, the learning method was very favourably received. A female Natural Resources student provided a typical response. The relatively high level of student participation and discussion led to a high level of personal involvement and engagement in the classroom. Journal entries reflected this degree of involvement. Two students, however, expressed

some dissatisfaction with this method, because it allowed students with strong opinions to push views (e.g. boycotts of certain country's products) with which they did not necessarily agree. The respondents recognised the twin challenges of remaining tolerant and expressing their own opinions in such situations, so as to allow a balance of views to be heard.

A second challenge was the holistic nature of the unit. Its very breadth made it difficult for some to grasp but for most it provided a framework within which to think about the unit and wide-ranging issues examined in the unit.

The third challenge can be described as the personal impacts of the unit. Some of this was to do with facts – the extent of violence in Australia, and the causes of poverty in developing countries, for example – but respondents went on to discuss how these facts represented a challenge to personal action. Several referred to the fact that they now recognised the importance of their own individual actions as part of the process of change – "it has got to be you or it's not going to happen". A number came to realise that conflict is not something to be avoided, but it needs to be dealt with in such a way that it is resolved and will not recur. A number, also, were challenged about the level of violence which they perpetrated, individually and as a consenting part of a structurally violent society. The choice of living and resolving conflict nonviolently was seen as a distinctive challenge of the unit.

9.2.2.10 Critical thinking

Ideally, Peace Studies should lead to a strengthening of critical consciousness (see section 8.3) and a continuing search for the root causes of violence. It should also enhance the ability to reflect and dialogue with greater confidence and compassion on a wide range of issues. Respondents were asked whether they were able to reflect on issues from a more critical frame of reference. As the unit unfolded, respondents reported becoming active participants in the course, debating and critically analysing theories and facts to promote holistic rather than partial analysis of issues raised by the subject material.

Most respondents said that the course had raised their consciousness and to consider issues which they have taken for granted in a new light. As a result, many students reported an attitude change going beyond a simple acceptance of what they hear, read and see in the media or in conversations with other people, and are questioning the content of the messages they are receiving. They feel confident and assertive enough to raise alternative views and put forward different options that others may not have looked at or about. One said:

I now have a more critical outlook on all issues, as well as more information to be able to talk about issues and show people the other story. I analyse everything...I am pretty sceptical about the media...I think the NGO journals are more accurate.

A female Politics and Communication respondent had this to say:

Peace Studies has taught me to always research issues than listen to one form of media. I listen to one form of media. I listen to a variety of programmes than only the news media. I have become more critical. I also feel confident because I feel more educated on issues. I can talk to peers about issues in the news...but, I still feel a bit powerless.

All respondents said the unit was different to other courses in respect to teaching and learning methods. They explained that in a highly structured teaching setting, the students remain passive and silent listeners while the lecturer is very much in control of what is to be learnt and how it is to be taught. Students are then expected to take it all in and to regurgitate it during exams. A male Natural Resource respondent commented that rote learning was not learning at all and suggested that the 'old style' really had to go. He noted that there are a lot of facts students can learn from books rather than going to lectures and he found the interactive teaching method employed in Peace Studies to be stimulating. A male Politics respondent commented that when students become participants in the learning process, they can identify relevant examples and discuss how they would deal with them. To him, the fact that students are encouraged to actively think about an issue is itself a form of positive peace. Other students referred to the ways by which student motivation was maintained, and the value of using other students as sounding boards for partly-formed ideas.

9.2.2.11 Values

Ideally, Peace Studies should help students to develop values such as compassion, respect, tolerance, empathy and altruism which can enhance their relationships with other people and how they deal with issues. Respondents were asked whether they believed Peace Studies had resulted in changes to their values.

For most respondents, their responses were positive on two levels. One group said that the discussions and sharing ideas helped them to reassess their own values and to adopt many of the nominated values. For the second group, the feeling was that they already possessed these values. Doing the Peace Studies unit further strengthened and gave meaning to these values. Here are some of the representative statements:

I think I have always had real compassion for suffering people in ways which many Westerners overlook – compassion, respect, tolerance. What Peace Studies has done is to enhance these; and made me more aware of some values I had lost. So I think it's been fairly complementary to how I already thought and to my views. But one thing is now I could change things. I may have had belief in those things in my head but now it's made me more active towards doing something.

A number of respondents reported changes in their values. A female Natural Resources respondent expressed her value changes as follows:

Once the awareness was raised, it opened a whole new sets of values of empathy, respect, justice and so on. I hope it keeps going. One of the reasons of doing Peace Studies, is the thought of stimulating and nurturing these values. It definitely made heaps of change considering that most people want to just get a degree. I don't want to be like that. I want to get involved as much as possible...I think the course makes you more compassionate.

9.2.2.12 Action For Peace

According to peace advocates, it is not sufficient to read and think about peace and peace making. A further step is to do something positive about it. Respondents were asked whether they have been active in peacemaking. Most respondents noted that they did not have the time for active participation in peace issues because they were busy with

their University studies. A male Agricultural Economic emphasised that change has to start with the individual:

I think it has to start with personal change, but then if you do change correctly then you have a desire to get involved in things ...I'm not part of any organisation and I have tried to make myself actively involved, maybe within myself, and within my interaction with people but, I haven't taken that extra step. Maybe I would like to try. I would probably get involved in anti-nuclear organisation...

Another theme was a sense of being overwhelmed by the enormity of the issues of justice and peace. This seemed to be balanced by a recognition of the importance of peaceful individuals, and most respondents saw themselves as potential agents for change in the places they lived and the jobs they hoped to get. Many had hoped of working in an area where their desire for peace and justice could be fulfilled. Only a few respondents were currently participating in a small way, such as recycling, tree planting, letter-writing and attending rallies organised by others.

9.2.2.13 Summary

This component of the pilot study suggests that Peace Studies can make a significant difference. According to the respondents, it raised their awareness towards their practice of peace in the wider society. In addition they value the interconnectedness of promoting peace values across subject disciplines. According to some students, they actively learned something new and interesting which they were not aware of, raised their critical consciousness and most importantly, saw the need to change and practice peacebuilding within themselves, amongst friends, within their own society and globally.

Commenting on the method of learning, a few students felt intimidated in the classes, where some students talked more and dominated the class while passive students were not comfortable in speaking openly in the lecture or felt intimidated by the more outspoken students. On a more positive note, one student suggested that the method of active student participation in lectures should be promoted in all subject disciplines. The selection of subject content was seen as appropriate and welcomed by most students since it covered practical issues and problems which they could easily identify with.

One of the limitations of this research is the time period involved. The impact of studying a unit like PEAC 200 may well 'develop' over a previous of years.

9.3 Postgraduate students

The next component of the study centres on students who have graduated in Peace Studies with a Master of Letters from UNE. This degree is almost always taken part-time over two years by mature age students and involves both course work and a research dissertation. The median age of students is perhaps 35 but the range is very wide.

The purpose of this research was to assess whether the Peace Studies course had affected the graduates' beliefs and practices in the long term. A research questionnaire (included as Appendix 6) was mailed to 30 graduates and 15 were completed and returned.

9.3.1 Motivations for studying peace

In response to the question regarding what motivated them to undertake Peace Studies, many respondents referred to previous work/life experiences involving a peace or justice emphasis as being a critical factor in influencing their decision to study the course. Among the typical responses was the following:

I worked as a volunteer in Third World countries and teaching in refugee camps was an inspiration; I developed the theoretical understanding to what was practiced as a Union Organiser; I had involvement in peace activities and development and environment issues as a Community School teacher. My desire to associate theory and practice grew when I was working as a community development person in South Africa.

Other respondents emphasised that their decision to study peace was a "matter of the heart" for them. Typical responses included:

- I was inspired by peace movements and was perturbed by inequality in the world.
- I have always wanted to learn about alternatives to violence.

- I have always wanted to understand how the bits and pieces of peace and justice fit together; the M.Litt allowed me to find out.

9.3.2 The four pedagogical principals

9.3.2.1 Holistic understanding

There are, in essence two approaches to knowledge. One views knowledge as neutral, static and need not be challenged. This type of knowledge or epistemological standpoint sees little need for active participation in the learning process by the student, and usually promotes the maintenance of the status quo. The other is that knowledge is a cultural construct which emerges within the discourse of the student and the educator. Under this approach, where students are involved in critical thinking and problem solving, a connected, holistic understanding of issues can emerge. It is in regard to these notions of knowledge and learning that respondents were asked to describe their own learning experiences and the extent to which they were challenged to develop critical thinking.

Almost all the respondents expressed how most of their learning in Peace Studies had involved holistic and critical exposure to issues, theories and assumptions. This, in turn, had a profound impact on their capacity to explore and debate issues in a more connected way than was permitted in mainstream learning. A number of respondents reported that, for the first time, they were exposed to concepts (e.g. structural violence, nonviolence) which were not discussed in conventional course work and which acted as a means of connecting previously separate concepts. "I have a much better knowledge of how the system works", said one. A number emphasised the value they found in developing a holistic understanding of peace and justice. Two comments illustrate this:

Economic theories!! Wow - they were a challenge. *A Fate Worst Than Debt* [a book studied in a unit concerned with economics of developing countries] was an eye opener. I don't pretend to be an expert, or even someone with a sound grasp of them. But they made me see how the World Bank, IMF and powerful first countries force their own economic theories onto less powerful countries.

I became much more personally aware that violence is a pervasive cultural and structural action (not just war and physical harm) and that peace is much more dynamic than the simple absence of violence.

9.3.2.2 Conscientization and critical thinking

The dominant view from almost all respondents was that Peace Studies had conscientized them. They frequently connected this to critical thinking, as if the conscientization of their hearts had given their minds a license to be critical and challenging. They expressed how learning exposed them to the value of debating issues, dialoguing more actively with assertiveness and confidence, seeking out a range of options for balanced learning rather than following traditional approaches of learning facts and memorising without any critical thinking.

The value placed on compassion and altruism become more important when an individual's awareness of injustice is increased. Further the value of searching for peaceful alternatives becomes an important corollary. Students were asked about their own experience in this respect. According to almost all the respondents, the Peace Studies course did draw many of them to assess their own values.

A male Police Officer expressed how he was able to search for nonviolent alternatives to the existing ways of doing his job. A teacher was one of several who found that the course helped to bring about a better understanding of a past relationship breakdown and also helped in dealing with difficult children. No less than five respondents said they appreciated the freedom they felt to integrate their spirituality into their new understanding of peace.

9.3.2.3 Action for peace and justice

While an awareness of peace issues is necessary, it remains merely an academic exercise unless there is a concerted action for peace in society. A question asked of the respondents was to assess the impact of the course on their action. Most of the responses indicated that they would be doing no more (the breadth of the respondents' involvement was formidable) but would be focussing their efforts and doing them with greater confidence and effectiveness. Typical of the responses, were:

The M.Litt program permitted much that was not articulated within me, to be explored and to emerge more clearly and forcefully in my consciousness. From a perspective of human and ecological morality, I cannot avoid the effort to enact that consciousness.

(Male Curriculum Developer)

9.3.3 Have the respondents changed?

Respondents were asked whether they felt they had changed as a result of having studied peace and then to state how they have changed. While three respondents identified no particular changes, and one claimed to have always maintained principles of peaceful living, the majority stated how the course had changed by raising their awareness of peace values and its practices.

A female Union Organiser wrote that she had become more reflective upon the complexities of achieving peace and the link between peace and social justice. A female teacher was inspired by the course, demonstrating a tendency to think more and to question more in order to understand the root causes of conflict before forming an opinion. A Police Officer mentioned feeling more at ease with environmental issues and becoming more tolerant of different cultures. In addition, a retired male commented on how the course has strengthened his peace ideas and motivating him to do more writing on the topic. A few added feeling more confident in tackling issues, more optimistic of changing things and more tolerant of people with opposing views. A male consultant remarked:

... for a start, I feel empowered by the knowledge. There are other people who believe we can build, no, weave a peaceful world. While people perceived it a non-career move, in fact it has thrust me on to the leading edge...in charge of management and conflict resolution.

The Peace Studies course for many of the respondents was an area with which almost all had direct experience before undertaking to study peace. Much of their understanding of peace, however, was limited and studying the Peace Studies course made a large impact in expanding their appreciation of the holistic nature of peace and to their already high levels of motivation. A final quote speaks of significant change:

I realised peace is not possible unless it starts with the individual. 'Walking your talk' is the only way e.g. the notion of the U.N. Peace-Keeping Forces is ludicrous. You cannot force peace. Walking your talk helps you to learn how to own your power – where you care about others because you understand you are connected with everyone and everything else; you begin to learn to love yourself, which means equality for women, elimination of nuclear weapons; equitable distribution of world's resources to bring hope to more people; environmental issues; corporate humanitarian issues; action for sustainable development; wilderness movements, influence more local efforts because of less influence on the international level; conflict resolution teaching where you begin to love others. You begin to realise that making someone less powerful than you, making yourself more important and powerful, means you cut off a huge number of creative ideas and positive solutions; respect for yourself emerges and respect for the world – and altruism is seen as the most sensible thing in the world! Walking your talk helps to cultivate and strengthen the values encompassed in PEACE.

9.4 Summary

This chapter has described two evaluative studies carried out, on Australian peace studies students, using a range of methods. The experience of this research feeds into the design of research questions and methods for the UPNG study to which we now turn. The UNE pilot study allowed the researcher to practice and sharpen her interviewing skills, to modify the actual questions asked (in both questionnaires and interviews) and to refine the ways in which these were asked. As a result, the quality of UPNG data were enhanced.

CHAPTER TEN

Research methods - UPNG study

10.1 Introduction

A number of complementary methodologies are employed in this thesis, as means of contributing to an answer to the central question 'Can the study of peace make a difference to individuals?'

The Australian segment consisted of evaluating the impact of an undergraduate course by collecting data at its commencement, during its progress and at its end; and by a post-completion study of postgraduate students. The PNG segment involved the design of a Peace Studies course, teaching this course and evaluating its impact. The evaluation of these courses comprised a selection of methods of which this chapter will give a detailed description.

10.2 Questionnaires - before and after

At the beginning of the semester, a questionnaire (included as Appendix 7) was distributed to the experimental and control groups to be filled in. Students were instructed to read each question and indicate with an 'x' in the appropriate section on a scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Unlike the UNE study, the UPNG questionnaire included four rather than five responses. The rationale was to encourage students to either agree or not agree than adopt a 'middle of the road' position. It took approximately 30 minutes for the questions to be completed. The same questionnaires were distributed to the same groups of students at the end of their course i.e. Politics students who were the control group and Peace Studies who formed the experimental group. It is possible that Social Work students, who voluntarily took the course, were more inclined towards peace than Politics students. In the event, the two groups did not differ significantly as regards values, critical thinking and action for peace before the start of the Peace Studies course (see section 13.6) and Tables 13.1 and 13.2).

This part of the research was aimed at gauging whether the course had made any significant impact on students in terms of the four pedagogical principles of peace discussed in section 8.3. The approach taken in the design of the questionnaires was also followed in the interview component of the research and also helps to further reinforce the aims of the research study (Smith, 1981:155). Most important, the variety of methods applied helps to reinforce concepts, ideas, themes about a particular issue than if the research was confined to one particular method (de Vaus, 1986:70-71).

10.3 Interviews

The interview was structured around 16 sets of questions designed to help guide the interview along the main aims of the research (included as Appendix 8). The questions were categorised into two main groups. One category of questions (Q1-4) was aimed at eliciting from students their prior attitudes about peace which may have motivated them in deciding to undertake Peace Studies. The second category of questions (Q5-16) focused on the four pedagogical principles. These questions were aimed at obtaining from students whether and how Peace Studies may have led to changes.

The 16 questions comprised the questions for all 20 Peace Studies students interviewed. Three students missed out on the interview for reasons beyond the researcher's control. Student interviews were conducted in the second last week of the semester which was also an exam week. An interview time-table was issued to each student based on their preferred time and day of the week. All interviews were conducted in vacant classrooms, a convenient location because most students were on campus studying for their exams. Most interviews were taped.

English being the students' third language, in most cases, there was need for great care that the questions asked were not offputting, misleading or threatening in any way (Smith, 1981:155). It was important for the purposes of the research to elicit clear statements from students on every question. The quality of these interviews was enhanced by the previous experience of interviewing UNE undergraduates (section 9.2 and Appendix 3) and some modifications were made to these earlier questions. During the interview, the researcher was able to paraphrase, prompt and probe interviewees where necessary to clarify both questions and responses. On occasions, students went

off on a tangent and commented on issues unrelated to the question or were inconsistent. In such situations, the researcher had to be careful not to appear rude or confrontational by interrupting the student, but to refocus on the particular question or issue and ask the student to comment. To be able to do this well required considerable concentration and active listening on the part of the researcher.

The other advantage of the interview was understanding the cultural context of the students being interviewed. Papua New Guineans use gestures as an important means of communication and it was important for the researcher to be sensitive to the application of such non-verbal cues. Being ignorant or insensitive to this type of communication could have easily affected the quality of the information obtained (Smith, 1981).

Casual conversations became another source of data. At times these occurred in an informal setting but sometimes in a class setting where students were freely expressing their own views regarding various aspects of the Peace Studies course. Informal discussions often occurred in the researcher's office when a student or groups of students dropped in for a chat, often about assignments, which often led to talk about some aspect of the course.

10.4 Journals

Students were required to keep a learning journal i.e. a personal diary to document their feelings and thoughts on the course as it unfolded. According to Holly (1984:4):

A journal is not merely a flow of impressions, it is impressions plus descriptions of circumstances, others, the self, motives, thoughts and feelings. Taken further, it can be used as a tool for analysis and introspection. It is a chronicle of events as they happen, a dialogue with the facts (objective) and interpretations (subjective), and perhaps most important, it is an awareness of the difference between facts and interpretations with the perspective of time. Overtime, patterns and relationships emerge that were previously isolated events 'just lived'.

In the journal students were required to provide the following: a brief outline of the topic and issues for each topic; a summary of the relevant readings from the Book of Readings; their reflections on the course i.e. a commentary on what they learnt from the readings and the class. The journal was to encourage students to think deeply about the

issues, rather than falling into the practice of taking lecture notes as the main way of passing exams. Students made four submissions of their journals during the course, which contributed towards their assessment. For a sample of student journal, see Appendix 9).

10.5 Cooperative learning and reflective teaching

Reflective teaching is part of the move away from the mainstream teacher-dominated style of teaching to a more participatory style of teaching. This teaching involves an attempt by educators to develop a greater critical awareness of their teaching through evaluative reflection (Schon, 1983; Cruickshank, 1985; Gore, 1987; Giroux & Simon, 1989).

The method of learning is crucial to peace studies in developing the discourse between students and between teacher and students to critically evaluate accepted wisdom against the practices and forces that shape society. A co-operative approach to learning draws on the range of resources available, including student knowledge, attitudes and experiences. (Freire, 1976; Apple, 1979 & 1982; Giroux, 1984). It is non-hierarchical and co-operative and therefore particularly appropriate to Peace Studies.

Reflective teaching encourages the search for suitable alternative approaches to teaching and learning (Schon, 1983). It provides greater flexibility for dialogue and active participation by both teachers and students to critically explore their values, knowledge, perceptions, and biases. It adopts a problem-solving, interactive, dialectical frame of teaching in partnership with students (Freire, 1972 & 1974; Smith & Lovat, 1990; Giroux, 1990). Two central tenets of reflective teaching are that the teacher does not know everything and that knowledge is no longer right or wrong, but is open for discussion and interpretation. While technical knowledge is concerned about efficiency and control, it is insufficient given that most knowledge dealing with curriculum is not value-neutral.

Through co-operative learning and reflective teaching, shared meanings and perceptions are derived through negotiation, critical thinking and reflection to develop an understanding and a consciousness of the socio-political context in which they are

located. This raises the concept of curriculum praxis (Freire, 1973 & 1985; Grundy, 1987; Smith & Lovat, 1990). Teachers and students are treated as equal partners and joint experts in the teaching-learning process. Learning becomes the collaborative effort by both teachers and students. Teachers reflect on their own performance premised on a democratic classroom environment emphasising the holistic growth of students. The aim of this methodology is to enhance alternatives for greater participation in cultural action for freedom and ultimately toward peace.

Traditional approaches, by contrast, are vastly different: Gandhi for example, conceptualised conventional education as a means to study the dominant cultures imposed upon society through colonialism which inevitably rendered the learners silent and inert. The modern curriculum models adopted widely by Third world education systems depend upon curriculum models that are highly technically designed to control the teaching and learning processes, specifying objectives, subject contents, method of implementation, planned instructional sequence and evaluation (Apple, 1979). This model of curriculum is described metaphorically in this way:

The curriculum is a means of production, the student is the raw material which will be transformed into a finished product under the control of a highly skilled technician. The outcome of the production process is carefully plotted in advance according to rigorous design specifications, and when certain means of production prove to be wasteful, they are discarded in favour of more efficient ones. Great care is taken so that raw materials of a particular quality or composition are channelled into the proper production systems and that no potentially useful characteristic of raw materials is wasteful.

Pinar, 1975:84

Critical advocates such as Freire (1974) and Pinar (1975) assert that traditional teaching approaches are dehumanising when the individual uniqueness of each student is lost in a conveyor belt system of education. In this sequence of curriculum design, no conscious effort is made to include the teachers' and students' own experiences. Teaching becomes an act of mechanically depositing information by experts into the learner's mind. Meanwhile the learners remain passive recipients of facts, assumed to have no voice of their own and ready to be shaped into the desired finished product (Freire, 1974; Apple, 1985). The result of this form of educating is that the information the student

gains remains in a static and theoretical state. The practical reality and application of such knowledge rarely affects and changes the consciousness of the student. Consequently the end result tends to be a student who can accept information without critical analysis but whose skills in regard to evaluating information is limited (Giroux & McLaren, 1989). The search to explore underlying causes is either not promoted or poorly presented, leaving students confused and accepting mainstream ideologies as truth. To Freire, such an approach to learning encourages individualism, greed, competitiveness, and also coincides with the dominant modernisation ideology that 'to be more human is to know and have more'. Whether all that is learnt is relevant and of any practical use to the learners is given little or no consideration (Stuart, 1992: 2).

The reflective teaching did not include students evaluating the performance of the researcher. The sort of evaluation done occurred to some extent in the comments of students in their journals and the interviews where most made reference to the content and performance of the researcher. The comments students shared inside and outside of the classroom did impact greatly on the way the researcher conducted the teaching. For example, most students were comfortable with the participatory method of teaching but some were not adjusting as well, preferring the lecture type. This is why some lecturing was included although the balance was strongly in favour of student dialogue. In some other respects it was more difficult to be flexible. For example, one student felt that he was quite conversant with such topics as violence against women and tribal fighting and saw no reason to spend more time on them. Whilst coming from a position of considerable knowledge, most often students felt that the approach adopted in the course meant, for example, that their own attitudes were subject to challenge, and that they were able to make holistic sense of previous fragmentary pieces of information.

10.6 Limitations

In any research, the question is whether the data collected accurately represents reality. In general, the researcher is quite confident about the data quality. Data derived from different methods were quite consistent.

One of the limitations that may have affected the validity and reliability of this research - in terms of the major research question - is the short time over which the course was

conducted. Whether the apparent impacts on students, as reported in chapter 13, remain and grow in the long term remains to be seen. Perhaps the quality of the data would have improved if the research was conducted over an extended period of time and well after the course is completed. The researcher could follow up these Peace Studies students to see whether the impact has been retained.

10.7 Overview

Having 'set up' the UPNG research, the following three chapters report respectively on the curriculum which was devised, the process by which students learned and an evaluation of the effect of the course on the students.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The UPNG Peace Studies course : curriculum

11.1 The philosophical basis for a Peace Studies curriculum

11.1.1 The five directive principles and Matane's philosophy of education

Following independence, the PNG Government adopted the *Five National Goals and Directive Principles* enshrined in the National Constitution and based on the Eight Point Plan. The Five National Goals and Directive Principles emphasise:

- *Integral human development*
- *Equality and participation*
- *National sovereignty and self-reliance*
- *Conservation and sustainable development; and*
- *Papua New Guinean ways*

The first of these is of particular importance for the education of children because it sets out the foundation for the achievement of the other goals. The National Constitution defines *integral human development* this way:

“We declare our first goal to be for every person to be dynamically involved in the process of freeing himself or herself from every form of domination or oppression so that each man and woman will have the opportunity to develop as a whole person in relationship with others”.

Paulias Matane developed a philosophy of education based on the Five Development Principles and has since remained a dominant player in influencing goals and directions of

all levels of education (Ministerial Committee Report, 1986: 6). There is a good deal of connection between Matane's philosophy and the co-operative learning - reflective teaching approach adopted in setting up and teaching the Peace Studies course. Matane's philosophy of education centres on four main principles: socialisation, participation, equality and liberation .

Socialisation is both challenging and possible when the classroom entertains divergent views and presents challenging learning experiences. The teacher and students form a social group, promoting a sense of unity and building a classroom relationship that reflects the community relationship practiced in traditional Melanesian culture. The dynamics of the group is important to generate feelings of solidarity, hope, compassion and tolerance.

Participation refers to students taking an active role in learning - making decisions, engaging in dialogue and debating issues. Students are acknowledged as the focus of education and not the teacher.

Equality refers to a belief that each student has their own feelings, values, and knowledge which can be tapped into. Each person is made to feel they have an intrinsic worth and are valued as a human being. This can be reinforced by the integration of the student into all aspects of learning; and a recognition of individual differences by the teacher. Most importantly, both sexes are treated fairly and on equal terms.

Liberation is possible through the processes of participation, socialisation and equality. Students can emerge from their state of oppression where they have felt dehumanised to take on the challenges of society with confidence. When students move into society they are equipped not just with knowledge, but also the skills to encourage other individuals, particularly the marginalised and poor to act constructively to overcome their poverty.

11.1.2 UPNG's vision and philosophical orientation

The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into University Development (the Gris Report) of 1964, was an attempt to ensure that UPNG acted consistently with the Eight Point Development Plan and the Five Directive Principles in meeting national needs and priorities. The Gris Report put forward the following vision statement:

- (1) Melanesian men and women should be well-educated and striving for excellence in all that they do.
- (2) They should be responsible and accountable citizens abiding by the traditional and Christian values of Papua New Guinea
- (3) They should contribute meaningfully to the development of their people and the growth of new knowledge and skills and competently face the challenges of daily life in a rapidly-changing society.

In the National Education Plan produced by the Commission For Higher Education (1990) the future for higher education centred on three key questions:

- what kind of society should we build?
- what kind of individual should we develop?
- what role should education (including higher education) have in shaping individuals to play their social role.

The Plan goes on to state:

In the present-day Papua New Guinea there is widespread concern that our society more than ever before, is in a state of lawlessness, instability and general disorder at all levels. They feel that the beneficiaries of our higher education institutions lack a sense of social responsibility, are deficient in respect for themselves or for others, and lack the facility of self-criticism. There is also a feeling that our universities and colleges often contribute towards these problems by alienating students from their communities

(Commission for Higher Education, 1990:3).

In 1996, a major report was carried out in response to a World Bank recommendation to restructure UPNG (Report of the Group Appointed by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Planning & Development) on Academic Restructuring, 1997). The Vice Chancellor added that the change *'should provide scope for more trans-or interdisciplinary study and would offer greater flexibility to both students and teachers than the current structure'* (Hills, 1996). The restructure is aimed at achieving the following goals which are consistent with those of Matane and Gr:s:

- (a) promote effective learning and contribute to their personal development.

- (b) develop students who would become productive and responsible citizens.
- (c) create a sense of social responsibility among students and a strong identity with their own communities.
- (d) produce students who would promote critical and free inquiry into human nature, the society and the world.
- (e) produce students who are capable of providing leadership for political changes, national unity and social development and produce students who accept a critical analysis of their own work.

However, structural change at UPNG will not meet these high objectives. Also, they will not substantially alter the discourse that dominate the current culture. What is needed is systematic curriculum and teaching approach that reflect national objectives and are culturally sensitive.

The Peace Studies' course content and the process used coincide with the above philosophy and goals. Students' learning takes place in such a way as to lead to a holistic understanding, and to challenge students' values and attitudes. As a result, they are conscientized to be both critical of conventional wisdom and motivated to act for justice and peace.

11.2 The Peace Studies course : background

The Peace Studies course was taught within the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at UPNG during the second semester of 1996 and comprised three parts: the design of the Peace Studies curriculum, the teaching of the course and the evaluation of the impact of the course on the students.

The choice of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology in which to conduct the research was because of several factors. The Dean of the Faculty of Arts, also a member of that Department, was supportive of the project and this smoothed the way for both teaching the course and carrying out the research. Staff of the Department also gave their support, making it possible for the research to proceed as planned. The departure of a lecturer of a course, 'Crime and Criminal Justice' to undertake further study meant that the Department needed an extra staff member to teach a course for the second semester of 1996. Hence, Peace Studies was approved as a substitute and offered under the same course number, 21-216.

The class started with 29 students. With student movements for various reasons, a total of 23 students remained to complete the course. The class comprised of second, third and fourth year social work students and included 7 females and 16 males with ages ranging between 23 to 40.

The Peace Studies course material comprised a book of Readings (see Appendix 10) and a course Handbook. Seven books of Readings and 30 Handbooks were prepared in advance at UNE. Because of the limited copies of the book of Readings, a number were placed on the Special Reserve in the UPNG Library. The Handbooks were distributed to students.

The semester comprised 17 weeks. Holidays and class interruptions took up about three weeks and the last week of the semester was allocated for examination, leaving 13 weeks of teaching time.

The course did not have a final exam, although the researcher had to obtain an official exemption notice which was granted by the Dean. (It is a rule of the University that exams are compulsory and must constitute a minimum of 60% of the overall assessment for any courses). Student marks were derived from three assignments and the journals which were kept from the start of the course.

11.3 Course content

The course content (see Appendix 11) was divided into four main topics as follows:

Topic One: Theories of Conflict and Peace

Topic Two: Violence in PNG

Topic Three: Issues of Peace and Development

Topic Four: Ways of Achieving Peace

We now examine the rationale for the course content. The course content was built around the major types of conflict and violence in PNG, as discussed in Chapter 3, and the sources and causes of these conflicts. Four types of violence were examined in detail:

- Violence against women
- Urban criminal gang activity
- Tribal warfare
- Bougainville conflict

To a considerable extent, this was intended to directly challenge what students have learned, from a number of sources, about conflict and violence. Unlearning and re-learning therefore has to take place. Having been educated in an education system where students passively accept knowledge to conform to the dominant 'white' culture, the researcher is adamant that fundamental to Peace Studies is the embracing of new and radical epistemological standpoints. The motivation to do so comes from feelings of compassion for the poor and anger at the systems which oppress them. Such shifts in thinking will stimulate a critical evaluation of other accepted knowledge. Conscientization and critical thinking together lead to action for peace and justice. This is why it is important to introduce the modernisation and PEACE paradigms (see chapter 5) to enhance critical thinking. These paradigms present competing broad holistic approaches to conflict, violence and peace and the linkages between them, their underlying causes and how they impact on humanity at the personal, local, national, international and global levels.

In the third topic, seven clusters of problems and issues of conflict and violence were used to emphasise the contrasting arguments between the modernisation and PEACE paradigms.

- *Food and Population*
- *Transnational Companies and the Environment*
- *Foreign Aid*
- *Education*
- *Human Rights*
- *Militarisation*
- *Cultural Solidarity and Identity.*

The fourth topic introduced learners to skills and strategies for nonviolent action and avenues by which they can exercise their power to bring about a more peaceful world.

11.3.1 Topic One: Theories of Conflict and Peace.

The objective of the first topic was for students to develop a broad understanding of the concepts of peace, conflict and violence. Three particular conceptual frameworks were used: Galtung's definitions of violence (see section 5.2), Toh and Cawagas' Map of Conflict/Violence (discussed in section 5.7) and Swan's concept of Transcendental Peace (see section 6.3).

Galtung pioneered the theory of structural violence in the Third World. He argued that violence of this form is deeply entrenched in the structure of society resulting in social inequalities and discrimination based on gender, race, class and ethnic differences. Structural violence is illustrated by his Violence Strata Image (depicted in Figure 5.1). It means, for instance, that poverty-related diseases are a result of an economic system that exploits the poor, many of whom come to accept it as inevitable and psychologically internalise it. This is because they are either ignorant or powerless and see no hope of changing the situation, allowing the practice to become both entrenched and culturally acceptable. Galtung offered a broad definition of violence implying that the attainment of peace had to be equally broad.

Toh and Cawagas (see Section 5.7) present a multifaceted and integrated approach in their conceptual map of conflict and violence. The idea of Peace Studies is to develop an understanding and a critical consciousness concerning all forms of violence - direct, structural, psychological and environmental - and to show how each form impacts at the global, national, local and individual level. Their approach gives particular attention to the unlearning and relearning that must take place in specific areas of study such as disarmament education, development education, human rights education, multicultural education, conflict resolution education, anti racist education and nonsexist education.

Swan offers an approach to peace which he calls transcendent peace, that has a spiritual orientation. He identifies four types of peace (see section 7.2):

- *Negative Peace (type i)*, where peace is viewed as an issue of law and order to mean the absence of war
- *Negative Peace (type ii)* questions the conventional wisdom that military strength deters aggression. It argues for alternative defence such as disarmament, transarmament, mutual confidence building measures, nonmilitary and even nonviolent means of defence.
- *Oppositional Peace*, recognises that the absence or threat of war is no guarantee of peace, thus tying in with Galtung's notion of structural violence
- *Positive Peace*, has a concern with peacebuilding to enhance social justice and equality and a quest for development that is humane and ecologically sustainable.
- *Christic Peace*, suggests dynamic partnership between humankind and God. Peace at this level is seen at its richest and most comprehensive, placing God above all else. Structures are evaluated according to spiritual principles of peace and justice.

11.3.2 Topic Two: The Nature and Extent of Violence In PNG

The next appropriate step to take was to contextualise the theories of violence and peace covered in Topic One and use them to analyse important types of conflict and violence in PNG. The content of this topic derives from Chapter Three. Although violence is part of Melanesian culture and practiced in various degrees throughout the country, traditional sanctions and peacebuilding mechanisms were in place to deal with its various manifestations. Four contemporary and common and prevalent types of violence were examined:

- violence against women
- urban criminal violence
- tribal fighting
- the Bougainville conflict

11.3.3 Topic Three: Issues of Peace and Development: A Global Analysis

Proceeding from the local level, the study moved on to an investigation of how local and national level violence has a direct link to global level violence. The modernisation and PEACE paradigms (see chapter 5) were important in order to comprehend the root causes of violence and Galtung's concept of structural violence was again a central concept.

The specific issues studied were as follows (based on the details presented in section 5.6):

- Food, Population and Peace
- Foreign Aid and Peace
- Transnational Companies, the Environment and Peace
- Militarism and Peace
- Human Rights and Peace
- Education and Peace
- Cultural Solidarity and Peace.

11.3.4 Topic Four: Ways of Achieving Peace

The aim of this topic was to show that there are alternative ways of dealing with conflicts and building a culture of peace. The emphasis was on nonviolent means of achieving these goals. It was anticipated that students by this stage in the course had an improved understanding of the root causes of violence, felt a sense of compassion for the oppressed and wanted to make changes for equality, justice and peace. Their vision for a peaceful and a just world would centre on components of the PEACE paradigm in order to build a better world for everyone. The following sub-topics outline how individuals could either participate in or support groups with such a vision.

Nonviolence: theory and practice

The sub-topic covered the practices of tactical and principled nonviolence (see section 6.2). The two methods involve different means although both emphasise nonviolent ways of achieving peace. These alternatives are empowering and cause no or less damage compared to the use of violence against violence. Gene Sharp provided the main theoretical framework for tactical nonviolence, whilst Ghandi and Martin Luther King were the main examples of principled nonviolent approaches available. The purpose, it must be emphasised, was for students to see that there are alternatives to violence. This was both valuable for itself and also part of the re-learning and unlearning process.

Mobilising human resources for peace

Development in PNG has for so long been thought of as 'pre-packaged' and brought to the people in the form of roads, bridges, cars and money. This has misled a lot of people into thinking development in terms of tangible modern goods and projects rather than fulfilling their basic needs (including that for security) and strengthening the richness of their living. Typically, people have been forced into being observers of development rather than taking an active role.

The imperative is for individuals to join together to build peace and justice in the wider community. Examples include active membership of groups which empower communities to take control of their own development aspirations, participation in nonviolent protests and teaching children about nonviolence.

Many NGOs have goals founded on justice, equality, peace and human development. The NGOs active in the country examined in the course included; PNG TRUST (literacy and awareness); ICRAF (human rights); Melanesian Solidarity (Melanesian culture); Melanesian Environment (environmental awareness) and Conservation Melanesia (resource-based exploitation, peace and development).

11.4 Overview

This chapter began by demonstrating that the important philosophical underpinnings of education in PNG coincide with the content and process of Peace Studies.

The course content was then outlined and linked to various more theoretical discussions earlier in the thesis. We now discuss the learning process involved.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The UPNG Peace Studies Course : Process

12.1 Introduction

The process is consistent with the hoped-for outcomes, as outlined in section 8.3. The teaching is centred on co-operative learning and reflective teaching approach as described in Section 10.5.

Given the fact that Peace Studies was being offered for the first time at the UPNG, the participatory and cooperative nature of the learning process was discussed with the students on several occasions in order to help maximise the benefits from the non-traditional approach. The following contrasts were drawn:

Traditional/conventional

1. education is neutral
2. subjects compartmentalised
3. promotes positivism/facts
4. left brain (facts)

Peace studies

education is either for maintaining the status quo or for empowerment and liberation. interconnectedness/holistic values
right brain (morals and ethics) spiritual.

12.2 Topic One: Theories of Conflict and Peace

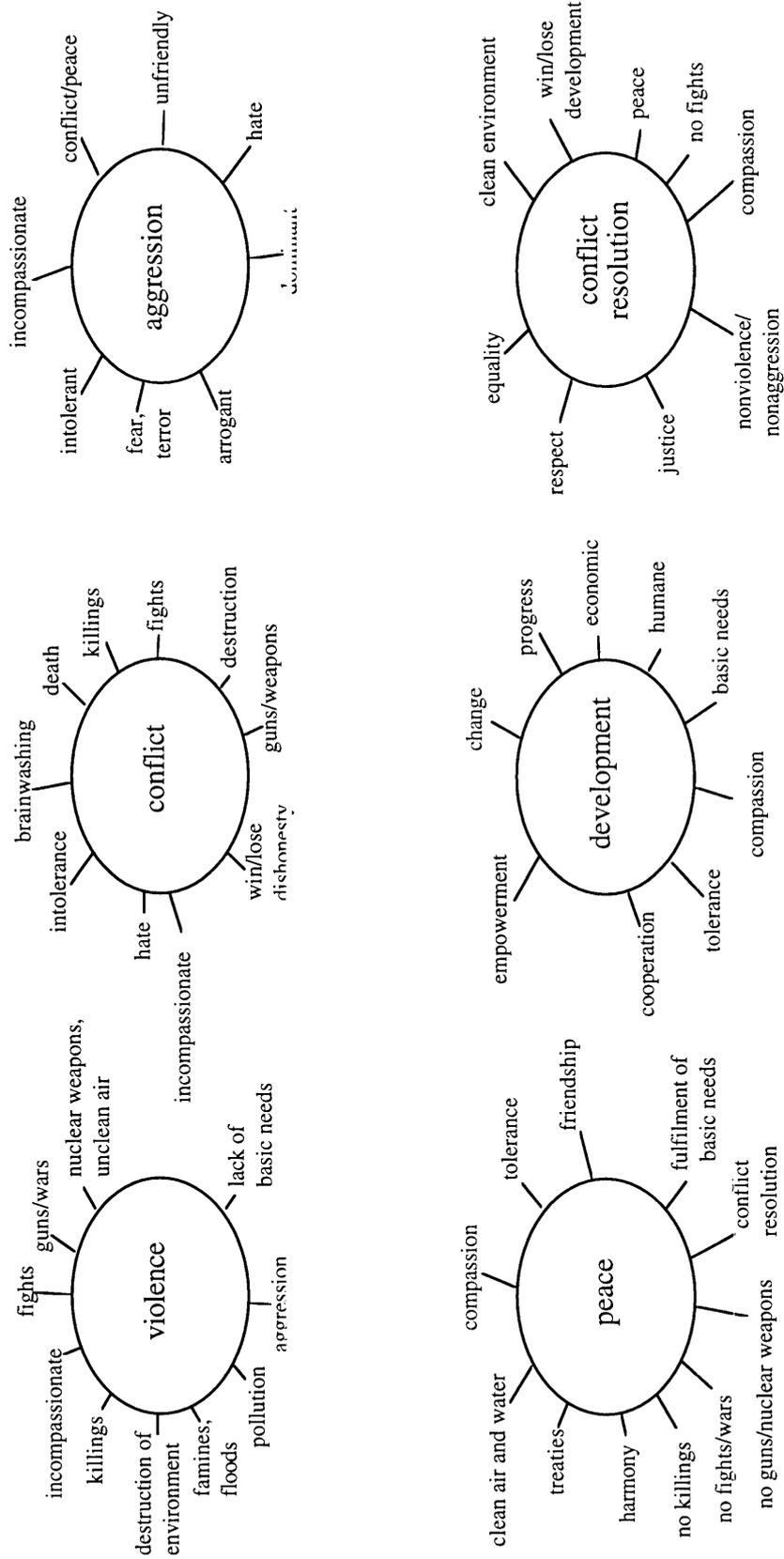
The concepts of violence and peace needed to be clearly defined. While teaching focused on these two concepts, other related concepts (e.g. conflict, aggression, development, conflict resolution) were also defined before embarking on a further analysis.

12.2.1 Open forum

In the open forum, the researcher took the lead in opening up the session to allow students to have an input into the learning process, a deliberate move away from learning being dominated by the lecturer. The approach is described in the following:

1. Students were introduced to the concepts; *violence, peace, conflict, aggression, development* and *conflict resolution*. The lecturer led a brainstorming session to define these concepts. For example, student ideas about the two main concepts (violence and peace), student ideas were displayed on the board linking to the main concept/word in a web chart along the lines of Figure 12.1.

Figure 12.1 Defining Concepts of Violence and Peace



2. Students considered the two main concepts (violence and peace), thought of examples and then classified them under personal, interpersonal, local and international categories. For each example, students recommended ways of resolving the conflict for a peaceful outcome.
3. The concept of violence/conflict were further broadened using Toh and Cawagas' Conceptual Framework of Conflict/ (see Section 5.7) displayed on the overhead. Here, a more holistic explanation was explored linking the different types of violence (direct, indirect/structural, socio-psychological and ecological) prevalent in society at the different levels: personal, interpersonal, local, national and international level. Galtung's concept of structural violence was carefully introduced and examples were given and sought. The peace opposites to each kind of violence were introduced: negative peace, oppositional peace, positive peace and Christic peace (see Sections 5.2 & 6.3) and the class then attempted to link each peace concept to Toh and Cawagas and Galtung definitions of violence.
4. Students formed into groups to identify specific examples of each type of peace and to discuss how each form of peace can be practiced at different levels of society.

12.2.2 Questions

After the open forum, students were given questions on which to write their brief answers. Discussion with other students was encouraged.

1. Using Galtung's 'Violence Triangle' or the 'Violence Strata Image' (see section 5.2), explain structural violence. Choose two issues within the PNG context to explain this concept.
2. State one example of the four types of violence (direct, structural, socio-psychological & ecological violence) from the macro to the micro level.
3. How has the exercise helped you to link the theory of violence and peace to practical examples in society?

4. Has your understanding of peace and violence before Peace Studies challenged concepts you have examined thus far? Explain how.

12.2.3 Follow-up

1. Students were encouraged to refer to their Readings booklet and to summarise the key points in the selected readings under Topic One. These points, and student reaction to them, were recorded in the students' journals.
2. Students were encouraged to read reports from the daily papers on issues related to peace displayed on the Department noticeboard under the title 'Peace Corner'. This was updated every week by the lecturer as another source of reference for Peace Studies students. This initiative also aimed at relating the theory to reality. Students were also encouraged to listen to other forms of news media such as broadcast news and, for a few, television. Students were encouraged to include items of significance to them in their journals.

12.3 Topic Two :Violence In PNG

12.3.1 Open forum

The topic aimed to contextualise the theories of violence and peace covered in Topic One. Before moving on to the main activity, the topic coverage began with students discussing their assigned readings on violence and its resolutions, based on their readings, media items and items from the 'Peace Corner'. From what they contributed, a summary was formulated which synthesised the main points raised regarding violence and peace. For example, the social, political and economic structures which have developed in PNG are causally related to the existence of rich and poor classes in society. The poor become frustrated as a result of being marginalised and left on the periphery of development and the involvement of some of them in criminal violence has encouraged the violent structure of society.

12.3.2 Discussion questions

1. Are humans by nature violent and therefore is there nothing that can be done by way of nonviolent means?

2. Is PNG a violent society as the media portrays? Can its major social problems be resolved? Can you suggest ways to resolving some of these problems?
3. Courts are seen as not being an effective means of resolving conflicts. What do you consider are the problems with a courts-based means of resolving disputes?
4. What are some of the Melanesian ways of resolving conflicts which could be encouraged and developed as a substitute for the imported legal approach?
5. Select one of the major conflicts. Compare the likely effectiveness of traditional and legal means of resolving such conflicts.

12.3.3 Violence Against Women

12.3.3.1 Brainstorming

Students were asked to brainstorm some of society's understanding of the common characteristics of women. Responses were illustrated on a web chart on a board such as: docile, vulnerable, stupid/unintelligent, sex objects, low status, insignificant beings/ less value than men, unimportant, housewives and weak. A similar exercise was repeated for men. Men were described as: clever, hardworking, breadwinners, physically strong, intelligent, industrious, smart, adventurous and many more. Next, with all characteristics displayed, students were asked to cross check each characteristic and state whether it was only confined to one sex or both sexes.

Students, for example pointed out that there were both males and females who were stupid, as well as; clever, docile, intelligent/bright, weak, strong, clever, industrious until all characteristics were adequately covered. The conclusion drawn from this brief exercise was that human beings possess such characteristics irrespective of gender.

This proved to be a most effective method to clarify and confront stereotypes which Melanesian cultures have reinforced throughout generations. The conclusion by the students was that males and females are equal in almost all respects, the only major difference being their physical strength. However, the discussion concluded by portraying women as being stronger, not in their physical strength but in their emotional and psychological strength. The brainstorming session was an ideal exercise to stir up

discussion on a controversial and more sensitive issue. The exercise was challenging for males in class who disputed much of what was discussed on the grounds that it was highly biased. They preferred to hold onto their traditional beliefs that women are inferior to men. As the course progressed, however, some of these made significant shifts in attitude and came to value women's positive roles in society to a much greater extent.

12.3.3.2 Small group discussion

For each of the different types of violence (Violence Against Women, Urban Criminal Violence, Tribal Fighting, Bougainville Conflict, Child Abuses), a brief introduction in class was followed by students forming into groups to conduct research on their specific topic. The groups' tasks involved the following:

1. Identify the main causes and victims of the particular type of violence. Describe how the violence (both direct and indirect) affects victims at all levels (personal, local/grassroots and national level).
2. What measures has the Government taken to deal with violence in PNG? Give specific examples. How successful have these been? Comment on the costs involved (monetary, human, ecological).
3. Even though measures have been taken to directly deal with violence over the years, the situation is often reported as rapidly worsening and law and order problems are said to be hampering economic development. How is the PNG Government responding to the problem? Why is the country not succeeding in effectively addressing the many dimensions of violence? On the other hand, even though the Government imposed policies to control violence, peace seems to remain elusive. Is there an underlying problem?
4. Illustrate your answers using Galtung's Structural Violence model, and/or the Modernisation vs Peace paradigms.

As regards data collection, students were encouraged to use a number of sources including; their own experience, reference books/journals, Book of Readings, the daily papers, the news media and the 'peace corner' with cuttings on violence in PNG.

12.3.3.3 Group presentation

Presentations were made by each group and overall conclusions drawn at the end after all group presentations were completed. A range of emotions, including excitement, anger and frustration emerged when discussing the root causes of conflicts and in journal entries. From this exercise, students were able to see how the main issues of violence in PNG are interrelated. For example, structural violence gave rise to the Bougainville conflict which involves ecological and socio-psychological violence and has led to violations of human rights on the island. The general conclusion drawn was that the structure perpetuates violence and that it was necessary to overhaul the system. Students expressed resentment at a violent and morally and ethically corrupt structure which fails to provide an environment in which justice prevails.

Preparations for these group presentations was carried out in groups. The presentation involved general class discussion from which a blackboard summary was developed. A critical attitude concerning conventional wisdom developed and the students began to believe that more radical understandings were necessary as a preliminary to social change. The student journals frequently reported an understanding of the connectedness of issues.

12.3.3.4 Supporting methods

1. On tribal fighting, Dr. Muxe, a lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology Department at UPNG, who wrote his doctorate thesis on Whagi tribal warfare, was invited to be a guest speaker. His presentation emphasised the anthropological justification of tribal warfare. He pointed out that with the increasing use of modern weapons such as guns, there was every reason to move towards nonviolent means of resolving conflicts, for example, compensation.
2. On the Bougainville Conflict, two videos were viewed by students. One was on the early involvement of CRA on Bougainville, the other a more recent coverage of the armed conflict. A number of non-conventional conclusions resulted from viewing the videos including; that in the early days, CRA failed to negotiate well the deals with the landowners; that the mine was imposed on the locals by CRA and the Government of PNG; CRA and the Government; that despite

Bougainville being a matrilineal society, the women were hardly consulted regarding the mine; that royalties paid to landowners have so far been insignificant compared to the destruction of the environment; and that the PNG Government should resort to seeking the Melanesian way of negotiation because deployment of the PNGDF has only led to intensifying violence.

3. In dealing with the problem of criminal gangs, the plan was to invite a gang member to share his experience with the class, but this did not eventuate. Instead, students shared information on their own experiences and encounters with criminal gang members.

12.3.3.5 Assessment

The students' assignment focused on Topics One and Two. Students were asked to choose one of the main four examples (in addition, child abuse, unemployment and rural-urban migration were included) and to fulfil the following tasks:

- (1) define their chosen example
- (2) explain why this conflict is prevalent in PNG
- (3) examine the costs involved, including financial and human;
- (4) critically examine the root causes of their issue, in particular considering Galtung's Structural Violence theory;
- (5) explain its impact at the personal, grassroots local, community, national and global level
- (6) demonstrate how structures contribute to perpetuating the violence and suggest alternative nonviolent solutions for its resolution.

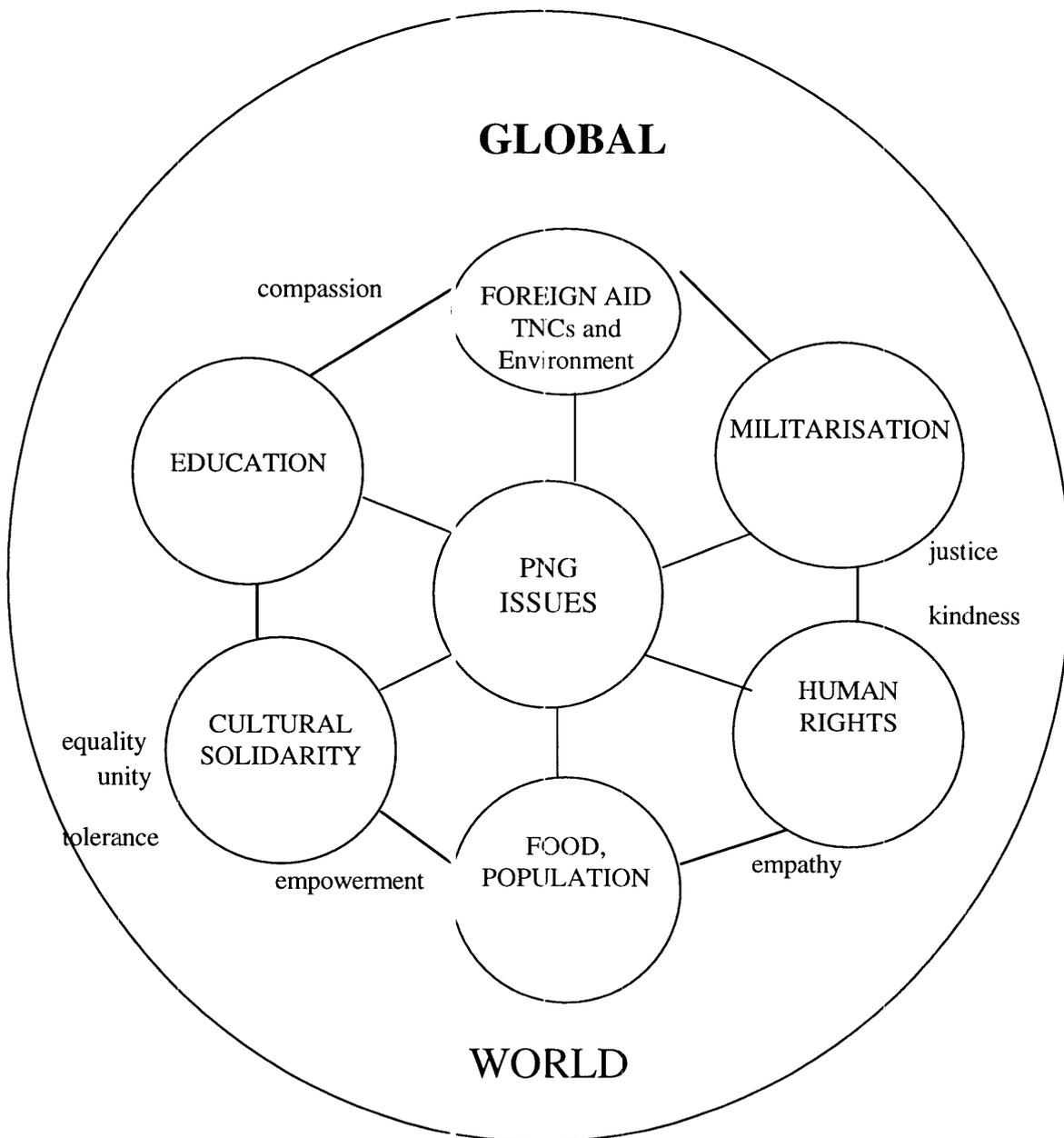
12.4 Topic Three: Issues of Peace and Development: A Global Analysis

From local level violence, the course proceeded to investigate the links between local and national level violence and global level violence. The modernisation and peace paradigms again helped in explaining Galtung's structural violence at this level. The particular topics covered were:

- Food, Population and Peace
- Foreign Aid and Peace
- TNCs, Environment and Peace
- Militarisation and Peace
- Human Rights and Peace
- Education and Peace
- Cultural Solidarity and Peace.

The cluster of issues discussed at the local, national and global level are expressed in Figure 12.2.

Figure 12.2 Global Issues of Peace and Development



12.4.1 Group discussion

The two hour period began with the lecturer explaining the basics of the Modernisation and Peace paradigms. The rest of the activity involved students forming into groups of seven. Each group selected any one of the seven above issues to research, and undertook three tasks:

- (1) Summarise the main viewpoints of the modernisation and peace paradigms.
- (2) Using the modernisation and dependency arguments, explain the origins of the chosen issue.
- (3) Identify examples within the PNG context which are linked to the global issue, and explain the linkage in detail.

Each group made class presentations, followed by a general class discussion and a summary was formulated based on what students shared on each issue.

12.4.2 Independent reading and study

The follow up in this section was for students to work on Assignment Two. Students were asked to describe the main features of the Modernisation Paradigm and Peace Paradigms. Students chose any one of the issues and critically analysed using the Modernisation and Peace paradigms. They were given a list of references, some of which were contained in their Book of Readings, and referred to the media and daily papers to add material on their selected issue.

12.5 Topic Four: Ways of Achieving Peace

In a world where conflict is inevitable, the easiest response is to resort to violence for an immediate result. Such a reaction often fails and leads to more conflicts. To try to move a culture of peace where violence and win-lose philosophy is common into one where win-win is emphasised is not an easy task. The course aims to conscientize and equip students so that they can opt for nonviolent strategies. As students become aware of the range of nonviolent options available and accept their role in peace building, they are more likely to begin to live and work in ways which will promote local, national and global peace.

With this aim in mind, students were introduced to various nonviolent approaches such as the practice of nonviolence (tactical & principled); traditional and western approaches to resolving conflicts; grassroots participation in development; personal peace; education for liberation, literacy and awareness and the role of nongovernment organisations especially in PNG. The following are a recollection of the type of activities students performed.

12.5.1 Small group work

In Topic Four, the strategy was for students to consider alternative ways of resolving conflicts. This work was carried out in small groups and later shared in an open forum. Their discussion began with a consideration of methods of conflict resolution with which they are already acquainted, although some did not realise this! They thought of examples of methods of resolving conflicts in traditional PNG cultures and contrast with the ways in which conflicts are resolved in contemporary PNG society.

A composite version of western conflict resolution models was presented, based on John Burton's theory of Conflict Resolution and Fisher and Ury's "Getting To Yes" and the Conflict Resolution Networks twelve step model (see Table 12.3). Two Problem Solving Models, the Egan Model on Problem Solving and the Hawaiian Ho'oponopono were also analysed. Students examined the use of these models to assess the extent to which these could be effective in helping resolve particular PNG conflicts.

12.5.2 Guest Speaker

A professional counsellor took a two hour session on the theme 'Self Awareness'. This session integrated well with topic 4, challenging students to look at themselves and their personal approaches to peace. Most students commented how the lecture motivated them to critically reassess themselves if they are to contribute to peace building. Time constraints prevented practice of such skills.

Table 12.1 Conflict Resolution Skills

(a)	Win/Win Approach A new look at conflict and co-operation, and the possibilities of mutual gain.
(b)	Creative Response Seeing conflicts as opportunities. Though conflicts are often seen as crises, they may also be regarded as an invitation for change.
(c)	Empathy Seeing the other person's point of view. Perhaps you have had similar experience.
(d)	Appropriate Assertiveness Knowing your needs and rights and how to state them clearly. It is important to be able to communicate and listen well.
(e)	Co-operative Power The difference between power over someone and power with someone else.
(f)	Managing Emotions Handling one's anger and frustrations
(g)	Willingness to Resolve Understanding the role that resentment plays in preventing negotiation
(h)	Mapping the Conflict Drawing up a map of the conflict which includes looking at the underlying needs, values, objectives and visions of all participants.
(i)	Development of Options Creating a smorgasbord of choices from which conflict participants can choose action more appropriate for both parties.
(j)	Negotiation Skills Creating suitable environments for working together toward resolution, synthesising differing interests; working toward new balances, agreements and contracts.
(k)	Third Party Mediation Understanding the special role of the mediator and the importance of neutrality.
(l)	Broadening Perspectives Recognising that your view is just one point of view and understanding the other's point of view as also valid and necessary as part of the whole.

Source: Cornelius et al - 1989

12.5.3 A case study in conflict resolution

Students analysed the case study, outlined in table 12.2, a typical example of conflicts resulting from a clash of Melanesian values and Western values. Students read the case study in groups, they discussed how the conflict could be resolved so that all parties could be happy with the outcome. The underlying needs of each party to the conflict was brought out and the suggested resolution tried to take account of these needs.

Table 1.2 Case Study

Being a girl in the family, she was expected to get married and bring them brideprice, but she suddenly falls pregnant. The whole family is not happy. Her boyfriend doesn't want to marry her, but he is willing to help maintain the child. The girl is not so concerned since she is a career woman and is more than able to take care of her son. In her family, there are three brothers who are not happy with her for several reasons; she has brought shame to the family for having a child without 'proper' marriage and bringing home the family brideprice which they so much value. As the years go by, her son is growing up and the father is taking more interest in him. The brothers can see that their only nephew is spending more time with his father than them. They are angry because his father has not fulfilled their traditional expectations by making some form of 'payment' for the birth of a son as practiced in most patriarchal cultures of the Highlands of PNG and for compensating the girl's family for bringing shame to the girl and her family for bearing a child while being single. On the other hand, regardless of how much their sister has done to support the brothers and their parents, she is just a woman in their eyes who has failed the family. There is also perhaps some jealousy that she is doing well in her job. Even her son's father is a wealthy man. In their frustration and anger they have refused to show any respect for their sister. The brothers even take out their anger on the parents and physically beat them up. In return, their sister has lost patience and is angry at the way she and her parents have been pushed around for so long by her brothers. She has shut them out of her life except for the fact that she still takes care of her parents. Aside from many unpleasant things her brothers have done to her, one of the things that has hurt her deeply and turned her away from her brothers is the constant beating that their parents get from her brothers.

The situation now, is that the sister has been banned from going to her village and if she did, she is most likely to get into serious trouble. The sister is deeply upset and hurt because she cannot go to a place that she identifies with and calls home. The parents are hurt that their children cannot get along as brothers and sisters. As of today, there is no communication between the brothers and the sister and that her son is caught in between. His father has stepped in and told him not to spend time with his uncles who have been rude to his mother and his grandparents.

12.5.4 Assignments

Students were given the option of examining conflict resolution and Problem Solving

Skills in essay assignment in which they were asked to do the following:

Choose a conflict situation in which you were personally involved and describe how the conflict was resolved. If the conflict was resolved, what contributed to its success?. If not students were to give an explanation. Then critically examine how they could have approached things differently in order to resolve the conflict. Students were asked to refer to the skills and methods of conflict resolution.

An alternative essay topic was based on a study of the theory of nonviolence, the practice of nonviolent action, the nature of political power and why people obey power. Historical examples were used to demonstrate what happens when people refuse their co-operation and embark on nonviolent campaigns. This involved tracing the development of Satyagraha in India and examining how Gandhi's philosophy and practice in the power of nonviolence led India to independence.

Students analysed the rationale behind nonviolent theories and their applicability to the PNG context. A question they had to research was: Are nonviolent tactics powerful against brutal and powerful leaders? In addition, students referred to examples of nonviolent planning in PNG and reported on their outcome. The three hour video 'Dangerous Life', on the nonviolent campaign against the Marcos regime in the Philippines was not shown as planned due to time constraints. Students were given a choice of two questions to answer.

1. Analyse a nonviolent campaign in one of the following countries: India, South Africa or the Philippines. How successful were the campaign efforts, what methods of nonviolent action were used? which strategic theory did they utilise?
2. Examine the nonviolent philosophy behind the practice of Satyagraha. Describe the practice of Satyagraha and consider its applicability in PNG.

12.6 Final assignment

1. The third assignment for the course was an attempt to get students to conceptualise what they had been introduced to in the course. Students were given three alternatives to choose from. The first option asked students to describe briefly tactical/pragmatic nonviolence and to relate it to the nonviolent protest applied by UPNG students in opposing the proposed user-pay for higher education. Their task involved describing the strategic plans of the protest march and to state the reasons why it was effective or not effective, then to compare and contrast the first and second attempts at protest and to explore their failures and successes. From their readings and understanding of tactical nonviolence,

students were encouraged to propose an alternative strategy and to state their reasons as to why they consider it to be a better alternative.

2. The second option required students to briefly describe principled/ideological nonviolence, and to describe Gandhi's practice of *Satyagraha*. Students were asked to comment as to whether the same can be adapted in PNG and to state their reasons. The assignment directed students to also link their discussion to the philosophy of Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader. Similarly, students were encouraged to include principles of liberation theology in their discussion.
3. The third option asked students to describe a major conflict in their family, school, campus, work, clan/tribe in which they were either directly or indirectly involved.

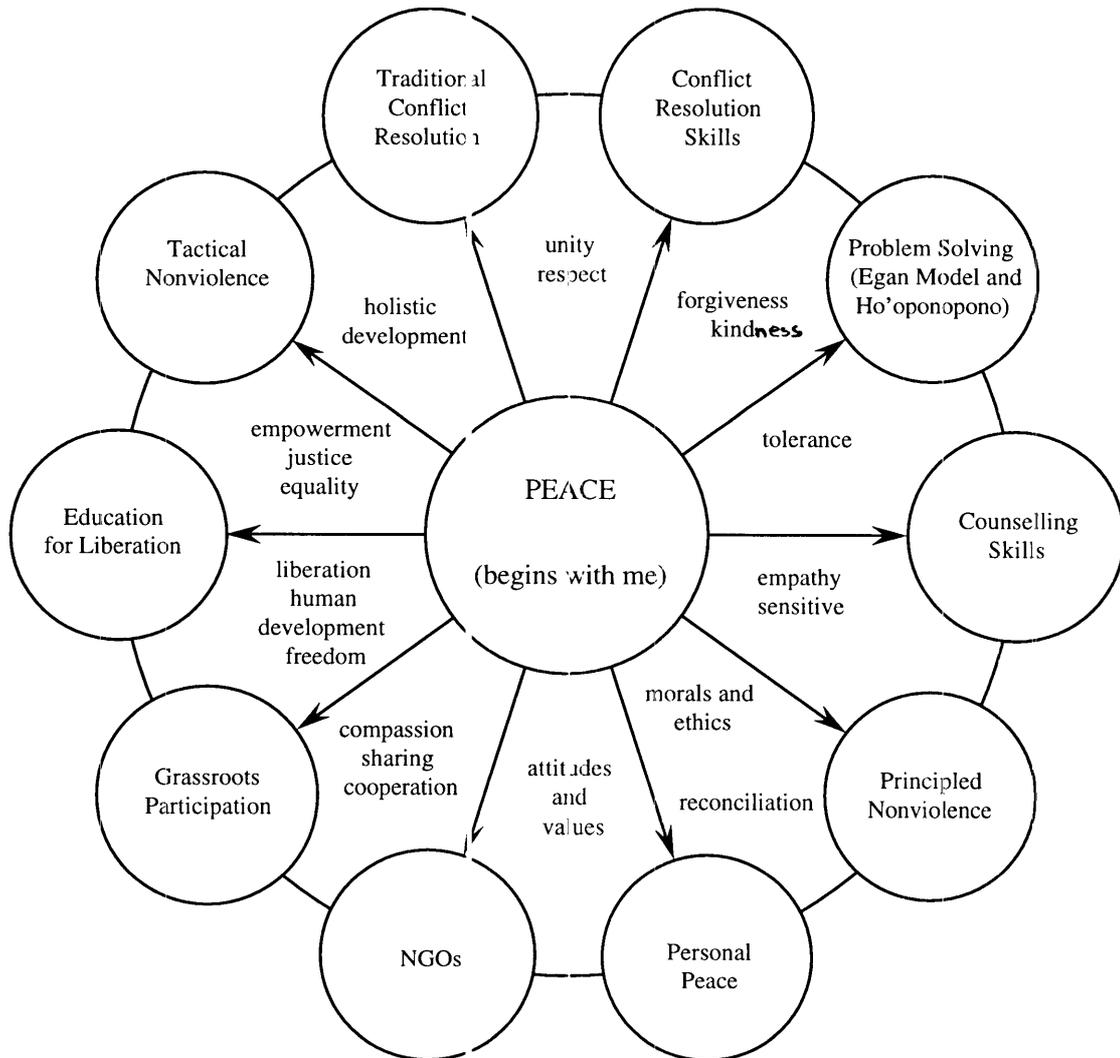
What attempts were made to resolve the conflict? Did they work? If they did, to describe how it was done that helped to resolve the conflict peacefully. If it didn't, students were to suggest alternative strategies and assess their chances of success.

4. The fourth option concerned the critical issues of the future of PNG. Students were asked to structure an alternative development model for PNG on the basis of the peace paradigm.

12.7 How Can I Work Towards a Peaceful and Just World?

Finally, students were challenged to think about their own commitment to promote peace. The theme 'think globally and act locally' was emphasised. Students were challenged to state what they could do to be a part of a change and make a difference for peace in PNG as well as globally. Topic Four had introduced students to the many nonviolent options of peace building so they could begin to make positive contributions as illustrated in Figure 12.3.

Figure 12.3: Exploring Nonviolent Ways of Peacebuilding



12.8 Limitations and constraints - a personal assessment

Teaching Peace Studies within the traditional environment where students are more familiar with a lecture method was a challenge. In such a set up, it was important to warn students in advance that teaching would centre on them and that the intention was to move away from a lecture format. Even then, conducting some formal lecture sessions in between was important for students in order to introduce and explain a new idea or concept. Most students were comfortable with the participatory approach to learning and found the experience quite useful and even exciting. However, there were a few who preferred more direction in tutorials and lectures and in being allocated specific

readings. These students resented the more reflexed teaching where learning evolved from classroom dialogue involving students and the teacher. Also, in this learning environment, the 'quiet' students felt left out in discussion which tended to be dominated by more assertive students. Some students expressed disappointment at not being able to link issues raised in class to the overall theme of the course. Often these students doubted their own knowledge as well as failing to read widely to help them in their learning. For many, it was hard to move from many years of being spoon-fed in their schooling. Overall, however, most students were accommodating of the more student-centred learning (see chapter 13).

On the other hand, the three hours per week divided into tutorials and lectures interrupted the flow of class discussions. What would have helped was to have been allocated a three block or two hour block or a one hour block for lectures and another two hour slot to allow more time for class participation and dialogue.

The UPNG library did not have all the journals required or any copies of the prescribed textbooks for students to borrow. The University Bookshop failed to meet the book orders at all. A lot of the materials were from the researcher which were photocopied and put on Special Reserve in the library together with the Book of Readings which helped students in their reading and assignment writing.

As the lecturer, I felt I was over ambitious in what I wanted to achieve. Some issues were skimmed through without detailed analysis. In addition, some students expressed disappointment at the lack of practical exercises in class such as doing assimilation games/role plays, class debates and planning mock nonviolent demonstrations and protests. There was potential for the course to have a much more significant impact by offering it over two semesters. These were some of the weaknesses pointed out by a number of students in their evaluation of the course. In particular, Topic Four was unjustly treated because it was given less than two weeks compared to the three weeks allocated to other topics. In Topic Four, being limited by time, other planned activities were not carried out, such as participating in community peace and development programmes especially around Port Moresby. For example, being involved in mediating conflict; working with NGOs during the weekends or helping communities clean up their

environment. On the other hand, perhaps these were ambitious plans requiring a non-academic structure; alternatively, an internship involving a mix of theoretical and practical course could be established.

Finally, I recommend the following prerequisites which made a significant difference towards the productive outcome of the course.

Firstly, it is essential to practice open dialogue through a vibrant group dynamic where students are actively engaged in the learning process. This opens students and allows them to be critical thinkers. It empowers them to feel that they are valued when they are given the opportunity to contribute to learning as much as the teacher. This approach where theory is linked to practice and reality not divorced from the students' life experiences, does help to build student confidence.

Secondly, it is important for the lecturer to be a role model and to be committed to the practice of peace and nonviolence. This will build trust, honesty and meaning in learning. Any violent action to the contrary can have a poor impact on overall learning. Like all human beings, however, one is bound to make mistakes. What matters is that if the teacher is committed to peace, he/she will have the conscience to recognise and resolve these contradictions to continue the search for nonviolent ways of achieving peace.

Thirdly, the teacher needs a personal commitment to peace, along with an intellectual understanding of peace and its teaching. These factors are central to effective Peace Studies teaching in order to make a difference to the hearts and the minds of students.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Evaluating the Impact of Peace Studies at UPNG

13.1 Introduction

Chapter 13 contains data collected from several sources - structured interviews (the questions are included as Appendix 8) administered at the end of the Peace Studies course; material drawn from the journals of 23 students; and from unstructured interviews conducted during class and in casual conversations with students, sometimes in social settings. The numbers are too small to draw up frequency distribution of responses, but the researcher is quite confident that those reported here are both typical and representative of the students concerned.

Section 13.2 reports on the data obtained from the Before and After questionnaire (shown as Appendix 7) administered to two groups of students. The experimental group were Peace Studies students and the control groups were students enrolled in Politics courses. The two groups were compared to determine whether there were any significant differences between them which might be attributed to the study of peace.

13.2 Prior understanding the peace

Respondents understood peace to be directly linked to four main spheres of influence;

- religion, mainly Christianity
- peace practiced “as a lifestyle” at the personal, interpersonal, family, clan, and community levels;
- law enforcement agencies
- peace obtained through resolution of conflicts by way of negotiation or mediation in traditional conflicts such as tribal warfare.

All respondents conceptualised peace as opposite of direct physical violence in the form of beatings, threats, verbal abuses, rape, stealing, armed robbery, killing and other actions of aggression and violence with the intention of harming another person. These are actions with which respondents have had direct contact and see as a major and growing national problem. Respondents did not generally relate peace to global peace: rather, peace meant cultivating harmonious relationships, avoiding conflicts and violence, freedom, good friendships, a friendly and peaceful environment, humble homesteads and a high level of trust, honesty and respect among individuals.

While some respondents had thought about the level of violence on the UPNG campus and what could be done to address it, almost none were aware that peace could be studied as an academic discipline. Moreover, respondents had almost no idea about what the course would cover (question 4) apart from their own perceptions of peace. Two respondents thought Peace Studies would cover issues of maintaining law and order in the community and solving conflicts in order to secure peace and social stability. A contributing factor to this lack of knowledge was, as many respondents highlighted, because it was a new course.

The Department Course Handbook did not have an entry which would have at least given students a brief overview of the course. A few respondents related it to another course, 'Crime and the Criminal Justice System', the aims of which are:

- (1) to introduce students to the genesis and evolution of criminology, as a means to revealing the universality and the complexity of crime, deviance and punishment.
- (2) to provide the students with an understanding of the genesis and character of the current law and order situation in PNG and the different policy responses (punitive, rehabilitative and preventative) in PNG society using a sociological, historical and cross-cultural approach.

13.3 Motivation for studying peace

The motives of students for taking the course were collected at both the start of the course (Question 2, Appendix 8) and the end (Question 2, Appendix 7). There was a close similarity between the two sets of responses for each individual. In this section, I have used the end questionnaire responses (i.e. respondents' memory of their motivations) because these were much better expressed than the earlier responses.

Question 7 (Appendix 8) asked students to assess the extent to which they were peaceful or violent. Almost all respondents regarded themselves as generally peaceful unless provoked. In PNG, violence is a culturally acceptable practice. A display of aggression through verbal abuse, anger, threats and physical fights is, according to most respondents, an accepted part of their lifestyle.

A dimension mentioned by most respondents was their earlier failure to see that peace is directly their responsibility. Their perception of peace was that it should be brought about by other people or organisations, mainly emphasising church groups and the government. Here are typical examples of respondents' views:

- "I thought peace was some other people's responsibility and not mine"
- "I never thought I could contribute towards peace"
- "...peace should be brought about with the intervention of security forces such as police, courts, laws, to solve problems as I have always seen it to be their responsibility" and
- "I understand churches to be the main agents of peace".

The motives for undertaking peace studies were in some respects typical of all university students subject choice motivation. One was to gain credit points. Another was the courses offered in the relevant semester. A few noted that course advising did influence their decision. However, the fact that the course was offered for the first time at UPNG and did not appear in the Department Handbook contributed to a lack of interest in enrolling in the course.

Whilst these were the most common remarks, a few respondents saw Peace Studies in a different way. Typical examples are as follows:

- “I wanted to learn skills to help me in resolving disputes in my own community”
- “I come from a tribal fighting area and saw the course as something that might help me search for peace”
- “In our area, we have had an increase in violence at many levels and so I thought it would be a good idea to take the course”
- “In PNG with increase in violence such as wife beating and the long Bougainville conflict, I thought perhaps the answer is in Peace Studies”

A soldier in the PNGDF, and clearly with the benefit of having done the course, stated:

I have been faced with violent situations especially as a soldier. I have served in the Bougainville conflict directly in the forefront of violence. I saw nowhere that the situation would be brought under control. Violence versus violence will never achieve peace. Like the saying of Martin Luther King, ‘darkness versus darkness will always bring about darkness’. So that all this time I stayed in the violent zone I saw that there was no change. Violence was worsening and not getting better so I decided that a violent situation cannot bring peace. So I felt that with this peace course is an opportunity to learn about the practice of peace and defeat violence with peace.

13.4 The Four Pedagogical Principles

13.4.1 Holistic Understanding

In responding to how their understanding of peace had changed as a result of the course (Question 10, Appendix 8), respondents conceptualised the Peace Studies course as being broad, multidisciplinary and linking various dimensions of learning which they found quite enriching. The breadth of the course was considered to be a major positive feature, compared to many other courses which were narrow in focus. Respondents emphasised that they found Peace Studies to be linked to almost all fields of academic learning. As the course unfolded, respondents were able to perceive more clearly how issues were linked across disciplines. As one respondent said, every subject has a violence component that

needs to be addressed to enhance balanced learning. He cited Economics as an example, where the pursuit of economic growth via exploiting resources via TNCs normally comes at a price in terms of environmental damage. On the other hand, Social Work respondents stressed that peace is directly about human development and how to deal with conflicts and violence with which people are confronted everyday.

Another positive aspect of the course was the balance perceived between theory and practice which had not been noted in other courses. Violence, according to most respondents, had only meant direct violence until they learnt about its other forms in Peace Studies. Another holistic aspect of Peace Studies which received emphasis was the importance of tackling the root causes of violence than its symptoms. Students believed that the Government should seek to address the underlying problems rather than wasting scarce resources on 'band aid' programmes which appear impressive but are ineffective.

Typical responses concerning the holistic nature of Peace Studies were as follows:

I have learnt a lot, but there was not enough time for us to go deeper into each topic. All the topics are so interesting. I have learnt so much that expanded my limited understanding of peace. Like unlearning that one has to go to war to have peace. Now these views must change because it doesn't normally bring peace, but escalates violence instead.

I wasn't really aware of what was going on in the country until we studied structural violence and cultural violence. Now I am in the position to actually see what is going on. Maybe not clearly, but I have a fair idea. Every time I see issues in the media, for instance income tax, I feel that we have been drained out by our politicians. Foreign aid is another example where aid merely goes to benefit the donor country. I realise it but how many of the illiterate grassroots understand?

13.4.2 Conscientization (Question 11 & 12, Appendix 8)

For many respondents, the contrasts between the modernisation and PEACE paradigms and the concept of structural violence were eye openers. They generated anger and challenged students to be more radical thinkers. One respondent had this to say:

Violence that especially annoyed me most is structural violence and ecological violence. It frightens me if you think further it destroys and kills. For example our marine resources. If large scale fishing continues using sophisticated fishing methods, we may have nothing left. We need to look into the future...Peace Studies makes us think more deeply and critically about issues. Also ways and means to address human needs than for greedy selfish motives...

The inconsistency between big military spending and limited human development expenditure struck most students. The millions of dollars devoted to building up could, they argued, be diverted to feed the millions of children suffering in the Third World from lack of food and curable diseases.

This emotional response - conscientization - was typically explained by learners as helping them to feel more for other human beings and things around them such as the environment. They saw this as the building of a sense of compassion, respect, tolerance, and trust that help improve relationships and contribute to a more peaceful society. A typical comment was as follows:

My understanding of peace and violence have changed...I am conditioned by my culture to believe that I will solve the problem by fighting and using violence. However, the course has made me to try and explore the problem more carefully and try to resolve it through nonviolent means.

A female respondent found the topic Violence Against Women particularly empowering saying:

As a woman I found the topic both interesting and challenging. Challenging because I wondered how I could change the structures in place which perpetuates violence so as to help women. To me, overall view I get is that, things are generally negative for women. But I was very happy to learn this in such a course as Peace Studies because it gives me a feeling to change the way things seem to look and paves the way to liberate my thinking.

13.4.3 Critical thinking and peace oriented values (Questions 6, 13 & 14, Appendix 8)

Learning for most respondents not only raised their awareness but motivated learners to reassess their own knowledge, values and attitudes regarding the practice of peace.

As the issues were analysed and discussed, respondents commented how they were moved to feel for the oppressed whose suffering is a direct cause of an unjust social, political and economic structure. They saw the need to contribute towards making a difference for justice and peace:

I am totally against the practice of physical violence which we accept in PNG as 'pait pas aim na behain painim gutpela sindaun' meaning resort to fighting than sort it out through peaceful means. We shouldn't let this system continue in our culture. I certainly will not pass on the tradition to my children. Violence should not be promoted in PNG as part of culture.

This respondent was particularly critical of TNCs which he argued are in PNG for purposes of exploitation and not development. He expressed disappointment at the PNG Government's policies being formulated to entertain what he sees as 'fortune seekers' in the country. TNCs are 'lions in sheep skin' whilst the PNG Government portrays them as 'helpers' and 'developers' to bring prosperity to its nation. An evaluation of the impact of TNCs would reveal high levels of exploitation at the national level, the provincial level, and the local level. For example, Enga Province where Porgera Gold Mine is located has seen very little of the fruits of mining since it begun in 1989.

13.4.4 Action (Questions 8 & 9, Appendix 8)

A holistic understanding of conflict and injustice, an increased motivation to do something to change society for good, and unwillingness to accept conservative understandings can lead individuals and groups to promote social change. Several questions asked respondents what they would now do in response to having studied the course.

Almost all respondents expressed that although they now saw the need to change their own values and attitudes towards peace, they were sceptical of its acceptance in a society like PNG where violence is seen as culturally ingrained. In addition, PNG is a diverse country where attitudes, values and beliefs differ. Given this and whether they thought of working as individuals or groups, the respondents expressed doubts about the acceptance of such a change in the wider PNG community:

I may make a change in a small way but, it wouldn't be easy against current violent practices. Our problem is that we have grown up with violence. This has become a cultural value deeply engrained in our society that needs to be addressed seriously first for peace to make any sense.

They saw that any change cannot be forced upon people. People have to unlearn what they have traditionally been taught to accept and believe in. In most PNG societies, nonviolence can be interpreted as a weak person's weapon and men in particular can be shamed, ridiculed and branded as 'a woman who is weak and cannot fight back physically'. Only through education did respondents see that people could become receptive to new ideas: if citizens were both aware of the injustices in society and at the same time educated about why and how to initiate nonviolent responses, they would be more likely to be receptive. Respondents had this to say:

As a group of Peace Studies students, we have learnt a lot to put into practice. But the problem is the society as a whole. People who are unaware would prefer to maintain the status quo unless conscientized. However, I can try to make changes in a little way by educating others about what I learnt such as supporting good NGO work.

The course has empowered me to be more critical and analytical and search of the underlying meaning when I am reading the daily paper for instance. This course has developed me personally to be more assertive and confident of myself. It opened up for me a feeling of openness, friendship and easy communication with other course mates. I was a reserved person but, after taking Peace Studies, the casual and relaxed learning environment and the nature of the subject content highly motivated me to develop holistically.

A respondent commented that the course had made him critically reassess his own actions and be moved from being easily aroused to violence to being more considerate and compassionate with other people. He felt his reputation has changed from a more violent non-caring person to one who cares more about other people. He describes himself this way:

I don't see any problems with practicing nonviolence. I am already doing counselling work with students. I will take part in non violent actions which I have done with previous student protests. I believe that violence will not solve any problems. It is only adding more fuel to the fire. I have even told students that there is no point in having cultural differences.

We should think as one nation and work together even though we are so diverse.

To counteract the violent culture, respondents expressed several actions. Some felt that they made some significant changes at the personal level from being violent to accepting principles of nonviolence. They valued the double challenge - to change within themselves and, at the same time, work for peace e.g. by helping to resolve conflicts peacefully, to discourage violence where possible and to make changes at the family level. A female respondent expressed how she wanted to make a change in her children by bringing them up practicing nonviolence. She expressed her interest in working with women's groups to build peace and justice at a community level.

One male respondent (a former soldier) made this remark:

Peace Studies course uplifted my morale. I see that there a lot of things I want to go out there and advocate. Such as the 'land reform' of the World Bank s Structural Adjustment Programme. I feel I want to go back to my village and even want to put up resistance.

Whoever wants to come and register my traditional land [a recent World Bank proposal] and even under the force of law and the usual police brutality, I will always stand there and be a negotiator.

The topic 'Violence Against Women' challenged most respondents, especially males. Consequently some of the male respondents claim to have changed their attitude towards women to value them more as equal partners. Here are some of their reactions:

As a man I was challenged, and I do hope also that my other male counterparts in the course were and are challenged too. It's a challenge that I have to treat women as equals, and to make it a reality in my life. The issue on 'Violence against women' taught me a lot of things that women do which I failed to realise and complement my wife. In fact this course has taught me to change my attitude towards my wife; that is to treat her as a friend and as a human being. All obstacles that obstruct women's advancement and participation of this nation will fall in line only when we can change our negative attitude.

While most respondents seem doubtful about the practice of peace and what direct impact it will have on mainstream, Peace Studies made a big impact on the PNGDF individual:

... undertaking the peace studies course has changed me. I used to be a violent man. I was taught to 'kill or be killed'. When I undertook this course my character, outlook and values have gradually changed to accommodating peace. I look back at all the violence I undertook, I am starting to hate myself for doing what I did. After Peace Studies I feel it is my responsibility to go out into the community and initiate peace...I will try and influence authorities in my field of soldiering. I will try and convince them that violence will not do anything better for the situation out in Bougainville. I will try and convince my other colleagues. I will become a strong advocate of peace to make an impact, especially when confronted with violence. I will try and intercept with peace. I am actually lucky to study this course because now I feel I am an activist. Maybe in the future, I will turn against the military forces in Bougainville to support the BRA elements.

13.5 Opinions about the course

In brief, students were very enthusiastic about the course. They spoke of the importance of a nonviolent approach to social problems and social change. They emphasised the importance of introducing Peace Studies at all educational institutional levels so as to help produce elites who will make changes for a better more peaceful society. Two responses give flavour of the general opinion:

I can honestly say that as a real PNG and a concerned citizen watching and worrying about the moral and attitude problems facing this beautiful nation this course is the real answer for the government and the people. ...I for one really believe that this course is the answer to PNG and it needs to be accepted as one of the subjects to be taught here as an accepted academic discipline.

I would like to say that the course was a real eye opener. I am aware more than ever of so many issues of violence, and its root causes and on how I could go about remedying this to bringing about peace....From the course I learnt that the violence predominant in PNG is created by man through the structures in place. After going through the units, seeing the causes of the violence and having discussed ways of achieving peace, I feel somewhat responsible that I must advocate peace. Peace needs to start with me. Generally, I would hope that this course, though being a trial, is given the blessing to be taught here at the university.

Students did not agree on all matters. Some were uncomfortable with negative views about the church, which they saw as having contributed very positively to PNG. Some male respondents initially resented the notion of equality of women, who they saw as occupying an inferior and subservient role. As the course progressed, these views changed: students became more comfortable with criticisms of the church and males became willing to accept females as equals.

Finally, the method of learning involving a high degree of student-teacher and student-student dialogue was perceived to have an impact on conscientization and value changes. A number of respondents commented that this had both enhanced their learning and allowed them to explore and develop their own feelings and values with regard to the individual topics.

13.6 Does Peace Studies really make a difference?

From these structured and unstructured interviews, and journal, it is clear that the respondents were convinced that Peace Studies had made important differences in the way they understand issues of conflict and injustice; in their motivations; in their willingness to reject conventional thinking, and (with some doubts) about their ability to act to change society for the better.

Are they right in their convictions? We now turn to examine two ways of validating these opinions - before/after comparisons of Peace Studies students and non-Peace Studies / Peace Studies students comparisons.

The most obvious way of discerning change is to make appropriate measurements over time. In this instance, learners are measured on various dimensions before undertaking the course and after its completion i.e. the before versus after method. The main limitation of this method is that the environment which affects students over this period includes influences other than the Peace studies course. How can we distinguish between changes (if any) which are the result of the course and which are the result of other influences, which would have occurred in the absence of the course? The usual way of tackling this problem is to employ a separate (control) group of people who are similar to the (experimental) group. As mentioned in the earlier, the experimental group were 23 second year UPNG students who chose to take the one semester Peace Studies course. The control group in the present study consisted of third and fourth year Politics students. Assuming that the two groups were initially similar and that they went through similar experiences over time other than the Peace Studies course, then any changes discernible in the Peace Studies students but not in the Politics students may be reasonably attributed to Peace Studies course.

Three hypotheses follow from the above reasoning:

1. Politics and Peace Studies students are initially similar in terms of their personal characteristics and responses.

2. Politics students are not significantly different at the end of the period.
3. Peace Studies students are significantly different at the end of the period (and are therefore different from Politics students at the end).

If each of these hypotheses is supported, then this is evidence of the impact of studying peace.

Table 13.1 presents data on some initial characteristics of the two groups.

The major difference is that over half the Peace Studies had had work experience and were a little older. This difference, it must be admitted, may cast doubt on the validity of the first hypothesis. Of more potential importance for the first hypothesis, however, is the fact that the Peace Studies students voluntarily chose to undertake the course. It may be, for example, that they were initially more conscientized and active in working for peace and justice than the Politics students and we examine this point shortly when we discuss responses to a series of twenty questions on conflict, violence and peace issues.

Table 13.1: Characteristics of Peace Studies and Politics students

		Politics (22)	Peace Studies (23)
Gender	Male	17	16
	Female	5	7
Age (mean)		25.8	29.0
Region	Highlands	11	7
	Momase	1	7
	Southern/Papua	3	4
	Islands	4	4
	Other	3	1
Previous work experience		1	13

The survey instrument consisted of questions relevant to each of the dimensions identified earlier - holistic understanding, conscientization, critical thinking and peace values and action. Respondents were asked, for example, to indicate their level of agreement (1 =

strongly agree to 4 = strongly disagree) to statements like ‘The government needs to use more force to deal with law and order problems, (critical thinking dimension), ‘I feel powerless to do anything for peace’ (values dimension) and ‘I would be willing to take part in a nonviolent protest if the issue was important enough’ (action dimension). The same questions were answered at the start and end of the course (see Appendix 7).

Results

Table 13.2: Mean scores on the three dimensions.

		Number of respondents	Values	Critical thinking	Action
Peace Studies	- before	23	2.48 (0.75)	2.89 (0.78)	3.10 (0.82)
	- after	22	2.91 (0.88)	3.21 (0.70)	3.24 (0.83)
Politics	- before	22	2.39 (0.51)	2.72 (0.52)	2.93 (0.70)
	- after	17	2.33 (0.44)	2.78 (0.54)	3.01 (0.73)

Notes: Figures in brackets are standard deviations.

Table 13.2 records the mean scores on each dimension for both Peace Studies and Politics students before and after exposure to the Peace studies course. For each of the relevant comparisons (i.e. Peace Studies students before and Politics students before, Peace Studies before and after and Politics before and after), the well-known difference of means test was applied to determine whether apparent differences (e.g. the increase in the mean score for Peace Studies students on the values dimension from 2.48 to 2.91) could reasonably be regarded as a real change. The resulting *t* values indicate the following:

1. There were no significant differences between Peace Studies and Politics students on the four dimensions before the start of the Peace Studies course (lines 1 and 3 of Table 13.2).
2. There were no significant differences between Politics student responses before and after (lines 3 and 4).

3. Peace Studies students had significantly higher scores on values and critical thinking (at the 5 per cent level) after their study. That is, Peace Studies students had become more positive, generous and optimistic and they had become less accepting of conventional wisdom. There were no significant differences as regards holistic understanding or the action dimensions.

The apparent impact of studying peace on the values and critical thinking dimensions is impressive, given the relatively short time available for the study of peace to 'do its work'. It will be recalled that the frequently non-significant results of previous studies of this type might be explained by a need for a considerable period of time (e.g. several years) to elapse after studying peace for its impact to become apparent (see Chapter 8). It may be that the extent of actual or perceived conflict and violence in PNG compared to the United States (where all of the previous studies occurred) and/or the novel and optimistic approach which peace studies offers to such issues in PNG explain why its impact is as strong as it is. An alternative explanation may be the participative way in which the course was presented. It may be taught that the gender and cultural background of the lecturer (s) may have facilitated or constrained student learning. In the researcher's opinion, the impact was more strongly influenced by the subject matter of the Peace Studies course, its capacity to personally confront students and the methods used to teach the course.

The experiment described here provides some confirmation of the strong opinions, expressed by students during structured and unstructured interviews, and in their journals, that studying peace makes a difference. Students become more optimistic that a more peaceful and just society is achievable; they recognised an increase in their ability and willingness to think critically; and they found the continual linking of issues to provide holistic understanding beyond a narrow disciplinary approach to be quite intriguing.