

Nonviolence, Peace, and Nonviolent Communication Towards a Holistic Framework for a Nonviolent World

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Humanity has been faced with violence of various gruesome forms such as the two world wars in the 20th century, the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas, the prolonged war between Russia and Ukraine, state-sponsored violence against its own people in the developing world, terroristic acts, gang fights, violent crimes, and other examples that result to death, destruction, and suffering. In this context, this paper examines the discourses on ethical principle of nonviolence and the application of the nonviolent communication with the goal of integrating these in peace communication. The study has a qualitative, inductive research design with the meta-analysis of research studies and discourses on the ethical principle of nonviolence and the effectiveness of nonviolent communication within the three spectra of peace, namely: inner peace, interpersonal peace, and outer peace (sociopolitical peace and peace with nature and the environment). The themes drawn from the research studies are agape love, compassion, ahimsa, application of Gandhian nonviolence in peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes, empathy, recognition of our own and the others' feelings and needs, conversion of peoples' hearts, changing oppressive social structures, and pacifist response to aggression. The study found the interconnection between inner peace and interpersonal peace, between interpersonal peace and outer peace, and between inner peace and outer peace. The study proposes a holistic framework integrating nonviolence and nonviolent communication principles in the three spectra of peace (inner, interpersonal, and outer) for teaching, research, and extension work.

Keywords: nonviolence, nonviolent communication, inner peace, interpersonal peace, sociopolitical peace, meta-analysis, peace communication

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Introduction

Human history has been marred by wars, ethnic genocides, violent conflicts and, in more recent times, terroristic attacks, mass shootings, gang riots, horrible extrajudicial killings perpetrated by the state and the military in developing countries, and violent crimes. Add to these is the violence done to animals through animal cruelty and to nature through wanton deforestation and pollution. All these call for a global ethic of nonviolence and the use of all means of communication for peace.

The world is beset by global problems that can be solved with the efforts of the entire humanity. These problems which threaten humanity's existence are those of the world war, food supply, ecological problem, climate change, global terrorism, etc. (Sirbu, 2019). In particular, Webel and Khaydari (2015: 167) cite the "ongoing existential anthropogenic threats of climate change and thermonuclear war" (167) as being the reasons why "a global ethic of nonviolence is a necessary precondition of our individual and collective survival." They however think that ethics without effective political action rings hollow, while political action without an ethics of compassion and forgiveness is blind. The survival of the human race depends on whether leaders of nations and people all over the world, especially those in positions of power, adopt the ethics of nonviolence and act in accordance with this principle.

In the global scenario, the violent conflict between Israel and Hamas and the aggressive war of Russia against Ukraine are threats to global peace and security. The tension in the South China Sea and China's desire to reunify Taiwan under its authority are potential causes for war. Violent conflicts and civil wars in Syria and African countries have contributed to the refugee and immigration crisis in Europe.

Walder (2017: 59) argues that "the violent and destructive power of dominant, systemic, military and other forms of control and injustices need to be transformed into more respectful relationships where fear, greed and despair can be transformed into compassion, hope and wholeness." Now is the time when the world needs to adopt individually and globally the ethic of nonviolence and the approach known as nonviolent communication. Nonviolence and nonviolent communication need to be integrated with peace communication and peace education. Preventing conflict and violence and transforming conflict necessitates peace communication approaches integrated with the ethic of nonviolence and the approach of nonviolent communication. The next section will give a brief background on the genesis and development of communicating for peace and nonviolent communication.

Peace Communication and Nonviolent Communication: The Need for Integration

While Communication for Development is a relatively well-developed and theorized area of inquiry, there is of yet no equivalent body of knowledge and enquiry of what could be termed 'Communication for Peace' (C4P) (Hoffmann, 2013). Warshel (2009) similarly writes that research into the use of communication as a mediation device between peoples engaged in political conflict, or what he refers as "peace communication", has lagged far behind the practice. The practice of peace communication typically targets populations who experience political conflict on the ground rather than their leaders who are actually negotiating peace in an effort to build peace, or provide the grassroots support necessary for the making of peace (Warshel, 2009: 2).

Communication for Peacebuilding “involves the use of a variety of communication tools to support the processes and activities involved in resolving violent conflict and establishing a sustainable peace” (Search for Common Ground, 2014: 9). Ellis and Warshel (2010: 135) review the literature in communication and peace education by dividing it into two traditions: 1) the interpersonal communication tradition, and 2) the mass communication tradition. The interpersonal communication tradition “includes descriptions of the situations in which face-to-face interaction in the form of dialogue and deliberation promote peace, reconciliation, and the identity changes associated with peace education.” This tradition takes particular forms of communication such as dialogue, invitational discourse, reconciliation, and cooperative argument that “help attenuate false polarization and make conflict resolution more attainable” (135). The mass communication tradition, on the other hand, is about the inventions of new media and technology that strive to overcome barriers associated with separation and distance between groups in conflict.

Warshel (2009: 4-5) explains that the management of various facets of political conflict “typically range from efforts to alter how individuals construct their group-level identity, to reducing intergroup prejudice, to fostering reconciliation and or mutual understanding among conflicting groups” and they may also include the following:

.....efforts to teach tolerance, induce compromise in intergroup political beliefs, encourage groups to view the narratives of their partners in conflict as legitimate, reduce aggressive and violent behaviors of individuals, improve individuals’ hope or optimism in favor of making peace, or foster new media technology use on the grounds that its increased use will build democracy or increase the economic efficiency of ethnonopolitical groups who are economically disadvantaged to, in turn, build peace.

To attain these ends, we need to integrate the ethical principle of nonviolence and nonviolent communication with the mode of scholarly inquiry and practice known as peace communication towards an integrative and holistic framework for a nonviolent world. Founded on the philosophical principle of nonviolence (more of this in the section titled “Theoretical and Philosophical Foundations of Nonviolent Communication”), Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is an approach to build honest and empathic relationships in which everyone can fulfil their needs (Rosenberg, 2015 as cited in Khuyen, 2019: 2). NVC believes that all human behaviors are to meet their underlying needs, and people only resort to violence because they think that is the only possibility to fulfil their needs (Rosenberg, 2015; Kashtan and Kashtan, n.d. as cited in Khuyen, 2019: 2). NVC involves the self, one’s communication with others, one’s communication with the larger community, and communication among people in communities and in the world.

Rooted in the Gandhian approach to nonviolence, Marshall Rosenberg’s nonviolent communication process is “founded on language and communication skills that strengthen our ability to remain human, even under trying conditions” (2015 as cited in Roy and Upadhyaya, 2021: 10). In nonviolent communication, we learn to express ourselves honestly devoid of moralistic judgements “while simultaneously paying others respectful and empathetic attention” and in any exchange, “we come to hear our own deeper needs and of those of others” (Rosenberg, 2015 as quoted in Roy and Upadhyaya, 2021:10).

The intention of NVC is to create the quality of connection with other people and oneself that allows compassionate giving, a giving that comes willingly from the heart. Nonviolent

communication, also known as compassionate communication, can give a soul to socio-political and economic notions embedded in peace theories. The ethical principle of nonviolence becomes the soul of peace communication strategies, and nonviolent communication can be integrated in peace communication sub-fields and strategies.

In view of the need for nonviolence and the nonviolence communication approach in the face of different forms of violence that threaten human life and the globe, this study seeks to find out how the philosophy of nonviolence and the nonviolent communication method can be integrated with peace communication towards a holistic framework for teaching, research, and actual practice of peacemaking and peacebuilding. Specifically, this research seeks to do the following: 1) to discuss the writings of peace and nonviolence scholars on the meaning and spectra of peace, the philosophy of nonviolence, and the nonviolent communication method or process; 2) to conduct a meta-analysis of studies on nonviolence and peace and the effectiveness of nonviolent communication categorized under inner peace, interpersonal peace, and outer peace; 3) to draw out new insights from the key findings and themes of studies in relation to nonviolence and nonviolent communication; and 4) to conceptualize an integrated peace and nonviolent communication framework that can be applied in teaching, training, and actual peacemaking.

A Meta-analysis of Related Studies on Nonviolence and Nonviolent Communication

This study has a qualitative, inductive research design with a meta-analysis of research studies done on the ethical principle of nonviolence and the use and effectiveness of nonviolent communication in increasing empathy and improving conflict resolution skills. The meta-analysis sought to find out the following: a) how the ethical principle of nonviolence and nonviolent communication can be applied in attaining inner peace, interpersonal peace, and outer peace; b) the themes drawn from the research studies on inner peace, interpersonal peace, and outer peace.

Meta-data analysis is done by formally analyzing and comparing primary data to develop a body of knowledge on a specific phenomenon (Paterson et al., 2011 as cited in Akojie et al., 2019: 120). Its purpose is to identify and synthesize key themes in primary studies (Paterson et al., 2011; Schreiber, 2012 as cited in Akojie, 2019: 120). By comparing the findings of primary research studies, common focus and common themes are identified (Akojie et al., 2019: 120).

The sample of related studies on nonviolent communication was obtained by a combination of availability and purposive sampling. Related studies on discourses about nonviolence and the application and effectiveness of nonviolent communication in increasing empathy and enhancing conflict resolution skills were collected and categorized under inner peace, interpersonal peace, and outer peace (sociopolitical peace and peace with nature and the environment).

In the meta-analysis, the findings of the related studies under each category (intrapersonal peace, interpersonal peace, and sociopolitical peace) were analyzed and compared with each other. The analysis was thematic, that is, themes from the findings were identified. By putting together the philosophical foundations, concepts and topics, and guided by the findings of the related studies and the themes from the meta-analysis, the researcher conceptualized an integrated peace and nonviolent communication framework that can be applied in teaching, training seminars, and working on the ground in peacebuilding activities for the promotion of

the ideology of nonviolence and a culture of peace in communities involving different sectors such as local government units, the military, the academe, civil society organizations, prison institutions, communities, the youth, and the society at large.

The Philosophical and Theoretical Foundations of Nonviolence and Nonviolent Communication

1. The Ethical Principle of Nonviolence

Nonviolent communication is founded on the ethical principle of nonviolence. The most profound philosophical or ethical writings on nonviolence are those written by the Russian writer Leo Tolstoy and the Indian pacifist Mahatma Gandhi. Tolstoy has drawn five simple, clear commandments from Christ's Sermon on the Mount, which are the basic ethical principles of nonviolence and peace (Johnson, 2022: 47-48). These are: 1) not making distinction between human beings; 2) loving one's enemies because hatred leads to violence while love leads to peace; 3) Not resisting evil with violence because violence leads to more violence while nonresistance leads to peace; 4) avoidance of adultery to obliterate abuse of women; and 5) not swearing allegiance to any human or spiritual power because swearing is a form of spiritual, political, and economic slavery which leads to violence.

The first is the ethics of humanity, or the basic principle of the dignity and rights of every human being and that all human beings are equal, having the same constitution of a physical body, heart, mind, and will. The second is the ethics of love, of agape love or unconditional love, which includes one's enemies. Hatred leads to violence while love leads to peace. The third is the ethics of nonviolence, of not resisting evil with violence. This is the most difficult to practice because it is human nature to defend one's self and to fight back against aggressors. There is wisdom involved in this ethics even if it seems to require a certain degree of saintliness. Resisting evil with violence will lead to more violence on both sides because violence leads to more violence. Whereas not resisting evil and doing good to the aggressors can make the aggressor feel ashamed of what he/she is doing and can lead the aggressor to stop being aggressive.

The fourth is the ethics of sexual purity, which can prevent sexual violence against women and children, and can prevent sexual immoralities in society. The fifth is non-allegiance to a certain power which causes fanaticism, which often leads to hatred, violence, and discrimination of other groups or castes.

Johnson (2022: 150) expounds what happens when violence is responded to with violence when he writes:

But it is first and foremost turning the other cheek in a very literal sense, even taking a double thrashing at the hands of the violent aggressor, that causes the violence to dissipate. A violent reaction to violence only leads to more and dangerous degrees of violence... Violence spreads rapidly and leads to widespread carnage and death, whereas turning the other cheek puts an end to the violence.

The ideas above have been proven true time and time again in the history of humanity as shown in the first two world wars and now very much seen in the Russia-Ukraine war which has become a war of attrition, "a conflict in which each side tried to wear the other down by

killing as many of its men as possible” (Boof, 2018). Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian and Russian soldiers have died, thousands were wounded, and the count goes on. As the war reached the 500-day mark on July 8, 2023, the United Nations said that more than 9,000 Ukrainian civilians, including 500 children, have been killed since Russia sought to invade Ukraine on February 24, 2022 (as cited in Agence France Presse, Al Jazeera, 2023). Not only human lives have been lost but also homes have been destroyed, cities have been heavily damaged, and millions of lives have been disrupted by the violence met by violence which leads to more carnage, destruction, and violence.

Johnson (2022: 50) writes that “both Tolstoy and Gandhi came to understand Jesus’s teaching to mean that violence is not an option in any circumstance at all” because “those who use the sword die by the sword”. To put it again: “Violence only leads to more violence. There is no good killing. Killing only leads to more and worse killing.” (Johnson, 2022: 50). Violence provokes violence by provoking further hatred and injustice (Webel & Khaydari, 2015).

Nonviolence is not *passive resistance* to an aggression, or to an initial action based on direct, structural, or cultural violence. Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., two of the most prominent twentieth century advocates and practitioners of nonviolence, believed nonviolence to be an active force that is “more powerful, ethical, and efficacious than violence” (Webel & Khaydari, 2015: 157).

Gandhi considered nonviolence and truth as the most active forces in the world because nonviolence is of the courageous and the strong and not merely “passive consent by the weak and cowardly to existing political power” (Webel & Khaydari, 2017: 157). *Satyagraha*, the most important and well-known Gandhian concept which means ‘soul-force’ or ‘soul-truth’ or simply the pursuit of truth, “does not imply violent actions towards one’s opponent, but instead suggests patience, compassion and the infliction of suffering on oneself” (Webel & Khaydari, 2015: 157). Gandhi believed it is important not to comply with laws that are unjust, but by doing so, one should not break the heads of the lawmakers and their security and police forces. If one chooses not to obey the laws, one should accept all the penalties coming as a result of acts of civil disobedience. The idea of suffering (or *tapasya*), which is central to all the concepts developed by Gandhi, means that “unless one is ready to suffer, his or her commitment to nonviolence is not strong or deep enough” (Webel & Khaydari, 2015: 157).

Closely related to Gandhi’s notion of *Satyagraha* is his idea of *Ahimsa*, or ‘doing no harm’, which is “nonviolent love requiring deep sympathy, kindness and absolute respect for all living creatures” and implies “the willingness of each individual to take responsibility for reforming the planet and, if necessary, to suffer in the process” (Webel & Khaydari, 2015: 157).

From the Western philosophical tradition, Immanuel Kant’s ideas on “liberal peace” contribute to the explication of the notion of nonviolence. He analyzed the preconditions for peace between nations as well as the global framework needed to institutionalize what he called “perpetual peace”. These are having a treaty of peace free from a secret reservation of the material for future peace, the gradual disappearance of standing armies because they threaten other states with the possibility of war, non-interference of one state in the constitution and government of another state, and the federation of independent states to create a pacified union of states which is different from a peace treaty in that it would try to end all wars forever, not just one war (Webel & Khaydari, 2015).

2. The Nonviolent Communication Approach and Process

Rosenberg (2015: 3) calls the approach to communication using the term nonviolence as Gandhi used it, with the essential premise that human beings have a “natural state of compassion”, as nonviolent communication, known in some other communities as compassionate communication. He explains that ‘While we may not consider the way we talk to be “violent,” words often lead to hurt and pain, whether for others or ourselves.’ He describes nonviolent communication as a “way of communicating that leads us to give from the heart.”

Rosenberg believes that it is human nature to enjoy giving and receiving in a compassionate manner, and he writes that he has been preoccupied most of his life with two questions: “What happens to disconnect us from our compassionate nature, leading us to behave violently and exploitatively? And conversely, what allows some people to stay connected to their compassionate nature under even the most trying circumstances?” (2). To bring out what is human and compassionate in us, Rosenberg conceptualized nonviolent communication, which is “founded on language and communication skills that strengthen our ability to remain human, even under trying conditions” (4). Rosenberg explains that all that has been integrated into NVC has been known for centuries, and its main intent is “to remind us about what we already know – about how we humans were meant to relate to one another – and to assist us in living in a way that concretely manifests this knowledge.”

Nonviolent communication is “giving from the heart”, in the words of Marshall Rosenberg (2015), as he writes: “I developed NVC as a way to train my attention – to shine the light of consciousness – on places that have the potential to yield what I am seeking. What I want in my life is compassion, a flow between myself and others based on a mutual giving from the heart” (5). To arrive at this flow between ourselves and others based on a “mutual giving from the heart”, Rosenberg encourages us to focus the light of consciousness on four areas, known as the four components of NVC (nonviolent communication). These are observations, feelings, needs, and requests. These apply to both us and others. Observations refer to what we and the others see, hear, remember, imagine, free from evaluations, criticism, moral judgments – which enrich or do not enrich our and the others’ lives. Feelings refer to how we and the others feel in relation to what we and the others have observed. Needs refer to what we and the others need or value (rather than a preference or a specific action) that causes our and the others’ feelings. Requests refer to the concrete actions we and others want taken. These observations, feelings, needs, and requests are sent back and forth endlessly between ourselves and others.

3. Peace theory

Weber (2007: 7) defines peace as “both a means of personal and collective ethical transformation and an aspiration to cleanse the planet of human-inflicted destruction.” Synthesizing different definitions of peace from psychological and political perspectives as well as from religious, Confucian, and Western perspectives, primarily from Johann Galtung’s definitions of peace, Wardle (2017: 63) defines peace as “a dynamic, complex and multifaceted process aimed at establishing balance and harmony that will bring tranquility and soundness of mind to facilitate management/transformation of conflict and enable desired development and growth.”

The key words in the definitions of peace above are personal and collective ethical transformation, a dynamic, complex, and multifaceted process, establishing balance and harmony, tranquility and soundness of mind, transformation of conflict, and enable desired

development and growth. Webel (2007: 8) argues that “genuine pacifism is transformative and activist, employing nonviolent means of social and personal change to resist oppression, war, and injustice and to promote personal and social moral integrity and radical, peaceful means of transforming conflicts and actors.”

Webel (2007: 10) writes that there are three spheres or spectra of peace, namely: inner peace, intersubjective peace, and outer peace. Inner peace means “psychological harmony and well-being” and is “characterized by low degrees of ‘inner conflict’ and malignant aggression (directed either against oneself, as in masochism, or against others, as in sadism), and by high ego functioning, successful sublimation and non-pathological object relations with significant (and even insignificant) others.”

The intersubjective zone mediates and straddles the topographies of inner and outer peace and is “the catalyst for environmental and interpersonal agents, energies and institutions that reinforce or subvert psychological equilibrium, or inner peace” (Webel, 2007: 11). It is an enormous challenge to live in peace with people who are hostile, aggressive, very competitive, and violent. And to live in peace is “almost inconceivable in desperately poor and war-torn cultures.”

Webel (2007) explains that the three zones of inner, outer and intersubjective peace are never static and always in interaction. To achieve these three spheres of peace requires “personal and collective ethical transformation”, which begins with achieving inner peace, because if individuals have inner peace, they can radiate this inner peace in their interactions with other people. With inner peace and intersubjective peace, people can “facilitate management/transformation of conflict and enable desired development and growth” (Wardle, 2017: 63).

Results and Discussion

1. Inner Peace

The key themes drawn from the five studies on inner peace are state of harmony with oneself and with the whole world, inner transformation, interconnection between inner peace and global harmony, developing humility and sincerity/nobility of character, seeking truth and spirituality, cultivating love from within and expressing this love/ethos of concern for others/external compassion, and self-compassion. Self-compassion is elaborated as reduction of self-directed aggression, effective and constructive emotional coping, and avoidance of internal violence of spirits. Seeking truth and having fundamental spirituality is manifested partly in thinking constructively and quiet watchfulness to connect with the divine/sublime in nature.

Barati and Fahami (2021) in their study entitled “Inner Peace and its Significance Factor and Stability in the Pure Life” call inner peace as “peace of mind” and defined it as “a state of harmony with oneself and the whole world” (16). Barati and Fahami, both Islamic theologians, assert that God is the source of peace and mental peace lies in the remembrance of God. Heaven in Qur’an is suffused by peace. Peace on earth, or world peace, “is the concept of an ideal state of happiness, freedom, and peace within and among all people and nations on Planet earth” (18). To achieve peace on earth, “nonviolence is one motivation for people and nations to willingly cooperate, either voluntarily or by virtue of a system of governance that has this objective” (18). They stress that “those who want to be peace makers and peace keepers should be able first to make peace within themselves and with themselves then they are able to be activists in the field of peace” (13).

Likewise, the interconnection between inner peace and global harmony is the primary theme of Stephen Jacobs' article entitled "Inner Peace and Global Harmony: Individual Wellbeing and Global Solutions in the Art of Living" (2014) where he asserts that the practices taught by the Art of Living (AOL), a Hindu derived transnational meditation movement, "will have a transformative effect on the individual practitioner, which inevitably has a positive impact on the world at large – inner peace will bring about global harmony" (875). This thread of thought is also found in Singh and Finnemore's article (2014) entitled "Restoring Inner Peace in a Science Dominated Society" where the authors observe that "a disconnect between ourselves and the sublime/spiritual/divine in nature is depriving us of true peace and delightful living" (45). Singh and Finnemore (2016) cited Flagg and Finnemore (2014: 42, 55–57, 76, 114, 133, 469) who explained "that the way to restore inner peace based on universal brother-and-sisterhood among all humankind is by awakening or heightening the fundamental spiritual awareness of individuals and so of organizations and society" (43).

In the "The Dynamics of Intrapersonal Conflict Resolution," Silverman (2020) reviewed Kingian nonviolence (from Martin Luther King inspired by Gandhi's nonviolence), "which encourages beginning from within to find common ground, in order to build agape, a beloved community" (21). The Kingian nonviolence learning program "involves avoiding internal violence of our spirits and cultivating love from within in order to generate messages within ourselves that create internal compassion, which in turn, will help lead us to be kinder to the people around us and the people we have yet to meet" (21).

The themes of reduction of self-directed aggression, effective and constructive emotional coping, peaceful conflict resolution in adolescents – which can fall under internal and external compassion – come out from the findings of the study by Nafise and Ghazal (2018) entitled "Nonviolent Communication and Its Impact on Suicidal Ideations and Coping with Stress Styles". The findings of this study showed that training adolescent girls from vulnerable social class with Nonviolent Communication (NVC) resulted in the reduction of self-directed aggression and thus of suicidal ideation and beliefs.

2. Interpersonal Peace

a. Educational Setting

The themes of the five studies on nonviolence and nonviolent communication training in education settings are nonviolence as an essential component in the teaching of peace, love or agape, empathy, compassion, expressing sympathy for one's opponents, recognition of our own and others' universal needs, belief in the possibility of human transformation, connection across difference, non-judgmental expression of thoughts and feelings, talking about emotions without judgement, and use of positive language.

Morrison (2014: 6)) in her article entitled "Peace Learning and Its Relationship to the Teaching of Nonviolence" affirmed that the concept of nonviolence is an essential component in the teaching of peace. She argues that "education can awaken young people's hearts to the suffering and misery that exists in the world and imbue a sense of compassionate efficacy to work toward changing structures that oppress and impoverish." At the roots of nonviolence is the possibility of human transformation not just at the personal level but also at the societal level. Nonviolence, being rooted in love or agape, "promotes empathy and helps students become compassionate toward the suffering of others at a personal level, not just through study" (6).

The themes drawn from Terepyschchy and Khomenko's article entitled "Development of Methodology for Applying Nonviolent Conflict Resolution in Academic Environment" (2019) are empathy, expressing sympathy for one's opponents, education as a means of developing a culture of peace and nonviolence, non-judgmental expression of thoughts, and recognition of others' needs. Terepyschchy and Khomenko recommend the method of nonviolent communication authored by Marshall Rosenberg in developing a method of nonviolent conflict resolution in the academic environment. He describes the method as "about changing the usual strategy of thinking and behavior toward empathy, expressing sympathy for one's opponents" (100).

Hooper's "An exploratory study: Nonviolent communication strategies for secondary teachers using a Quality Learning Circle approach" (2015) yields the following NVC-inspired themes: stating observable behaviors, establishing empathy, providing choice (use of requests instead of demands and co-creating solutions with students), and more positive interpersonal relationships manifested in empathetic and egalitarian teacher-student communication that enabled teachers to foster attitudes that involved "power with, rather than power over," their students (Moran, 2014 as cited in Hooper, 2015: 123).

In the elementary school level, Suzic, Maric, and Malesevic's (2018) examined the effects of Nonviolent Communication training on elementary school children. The children were trained on the proper way to respond to violent communication by first encouraging them to develop awareness of their own inner experience. They were then asked to perform role plays with examples of violent and nonviolent communication, with an aim to learn how to properly react to violent communication.

In the college level, Koopman and Seliga (2021) found that NVC can be useful for difficult conversations in any college classroom particularly for deepening students' understanding of nonviolent action. Two important NVC principles – appealing to emotions and pointing to unmet needs – were established as key aspects of nonviolent action.

b. Community Setting

The themes of the four research studies on the application of nonviolence and nonviolent communication in different community settings are improved self-compassion, self-acceptance, compassion, empathy for others, collaboration with others, ability to make negotiable requests instead of demands, will to resolve conflicts and ability to communicate until both parties were satisfied, fulfillment of one's own needs and the others' needs, and healing as a community.

Nosek and Duran (2017) found out that, after a four-week training on NVC, Latino youth and children increased their empathy as they learned to understand the feelings and needs of others. They learned to make observations in lieu of judgments as a basic NVC technique that helps open oneself up to the experience of others.

After an eight-week training on NVC, 30 parolees reported a significant increase in empathy levels and majority felt that empathetic communication skills were applicable to their interpersonal relationships in all arenas of their lives (Marlow et al., 2017). Most of the parolees expressed an interest in continued NVC training and believed that it was relevant to their recovery and reintegration efforts.

Alshurgy (2018) in his study entitled "Nonviolent communication and theatre of the oppressed: a case study with Syrian refugee women from the Kareemat Centre in Turkey" found out that the "theatre techniques used in the training were useful in helping participants connect with their feelings and needs, and the feelings and needs of others, thus facilitating the NVC process" (174).

Khuyen's study (2019) entitled "The role of Nonviolent Communication in addressing power: How practicing Nonviolent Communication affects power expression in the workplace relationships" revealed that the participants properly applied NVC principles as they empathized with themselves, with others and practiced honest expression for both sides. Practitioners mentioned observing their feelings and honestly expressing their met/unmet needs. They then suggested strategies to fulfil the needs of both sides. Khuyen (2019) concludes that "this conversation approach helped stakeholders to limit hurting communication and focus on good intention and solution" (82).

3. Outer Peace

a. Socio-political Peace

The themes of the six articles on sociopolitical peace are:

- 1) basic respect for all forms of life/ahimsa/agape love
- 2) conversion of people's hearts and minds
- 3) transformation of violent and destructive systemic military forms of control and injustices
- 4) mutual goodwill between people
- 5) Gandhian nonviolence applied to peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding functions, change in the social structure,
- 6) removing the causes of violence and war/disarmament
- 7) providing people their needs; peace, justice, and wellbeing to all humankind,
- 8) building empathetic connections and engagement between the conflicting parties

Wardle (2017) in her article entitled "Peace and Nonviolent Conflict Transformation as a Way of Life: Focusing on Gulalai Ismail of Pakistan as a Case Study" stresses that "global involvement of people everywhere is required to transform the violent and destructive power of systemic, military, and other forms of control and injustices to the gentle but firm power of more respecting, open and trusting relationships " (Juma, 2009 as cited in Wardle, 2017: 87) and to achieve this, conversion of hearts is necessary with the application of agape love and ahimsa.

Similar to Wardle (2017), Ozcelic (2020) highlights the necessity of conversion of people's hearts, change in people's lives, change in the social structure, mutual goodwill between people, and the application of Gandhian nonviolence to peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding functions. Ozcelic's main argument is that there can be a new model for peacekeeping activities that can be carried out by private as well as public bodies and that it can be done within the framework of Gandhian nonviolence. He cites Vinoba Bhave, Gandhi's spiritual heir, who claimed that he aimed to bring about a threefold revolution: "First, he wanted to change people's hearts, second, to bring about a change in their lives, and third, to change the social structure" (86). Bhave asserts that "the causes of the war had to be removed by bringing about mutual goodwill between people through a spiritual revolution that would ultimately make the coercive apparatus of the state redundant" (as cited in Ozcelik, 2020: 87).

Acheson's (2022) article entitled "End War, Build Peace" is a critical reflection and an argumentation on ending the war between Russia and Ukraine and opposing all wars. Its themes are opposing war everywhere/unlearning the necessity of violence, reducing military budgets, dismantling weapons/disarmament/abolition of nuclear weapons and all structures of state violence, and driving forward the changes we need to bring peace, justice, and wellbeing to all humankind.

Clements' article (2022) entitled "Peace by peaceful means: Responding to aggression creatively and nonviolently" stresses the role and challenges facing pacifists or nonviolent activists in Ukraine to alleviate the suffering of the Ukrainian people, to work out if there is any place for nonviolent resistance in foiling the invasion and military occupation, to initiate or reinstate stable ceasefire negotiations and eventually a long-term peace settlement, and to expose the futility of big power rivalry between Russia and US and the US and China by rediscovering twentieth-century principles of cooperative security.

The last two research articles on sociopolitical peace (Ikpe, 2011 and Obuyi, 2021) are proposals for the applications of the nonviolent communication model in resolving conflicts in two countries in Africa – Nigeria and Ethiopia. Ikpe (2011) in his research article entitled "Utilizing Nonviolent Communication for Conflict Resolution in the Post-Amnesty Era of the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria" writes that the three core processes of nonviolent communication – self-empathy, empathy for another, and various forms of honest self-expression – should be applied by both the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) and the Niger Deltans, to resolve the conflict peacefully. Obuyi (2021) in "Enhancing Capacities in Nonviolent Communication to Change Perceptions and Addressing Root, Proximate and Tertiary Causes of Ethiopia's Tigray Crisis" posits that Mahatma Gandhi's five basic pillars of nonviolence – respect, understanding, acceptance, appreciation, and compassion – should be adopted in addressing the situation in Ethiopia, and that these pillars of nonviolence would be better accompanied by interweaving the key elements of Nonviolent Communication for constructive transformation of the conflict

b. Peace with Nature and the Environment

The themes of the two studies on peace with nature and the environment are empathetic communication, non-usage of moralistic judgments or threatening arguments, usage of positive language, usage of observation, feelings, needs and requests, tolerant attitudes and compassionate behavior toward wildlife, improved human relationships to promote collaboration, reduction in the desire to harm, disturb, or hunt animals, increase in understanding the wildlife's needs, improved communication and listening skills, and compassionate behavior toward others.

Kansky and Maassarani (2021) in "Teaching nonviolent communication to increase empathy between people and toward wildlife to promote human-wildlife coexistence" found out – from the weekly reflexive feedback in an 11-week training of local communities in the Zambesi region of Namibia – that "increased tolerance was expressed with narratives expressing a reduction in the desire to harm, disturb, or hunt animals and an increase in understanding their needs, to care for them and a willingness to share the landscape with them". They also found out that "improved human relationships were expressed through narratives demonstrating skills in preventing verbal and physical conflicts, improved communication and listening skills, and demonstration of compassionate behavior toward others" (10).

Till (2021) in "Conceptualizing Nonviolent Environmental Communication: Examining NVEC features in an Environmental Social Change Campaign" synthesized the features, elements, and principles of NVC to define the proposed characteristics of nonviolent environmental communication, which are the following: non-usage of threatening arguments; usage of egoistic and ecological appeals; usage of observation, feelings, needs and requests; a reflection of communicating in an empathetic and/or honest way; non-usage of moralistic judgments, making comparisons and/or denial of responsibility; and usage of positive language (24).

The Interconnections Between and Among Inner Peace, Interpersonal Peace, and Outer Peace

This paper delved into discourses and studies on nonviolence with regard to inner peace, interpersonal peace, and outer peace, and examined the effectiveness of the nonviolent communication approach in attaining peace in its three spectra. The studies on inner peace resonate with the following value-laden themes: cultivating love from within and expressing this love/ethos of concern for others, seeking truth and spirituality, self-compassion/reduction of self-directed aggression/avoidance of internal violence of spirits, compassion for others, inner transformation, and state of harmony with oneself and the whole world. Nonviolent communication training resulted in effective and constructive emotional coping and reduction of self-directed aggression among adolescent girls in an underprivileged setting. Moreover, the theoretical studies on inner peace stress that inner peace is interconnected with the external environment as shown in the studies of Barati and Fahami (2021), Jacobs (2014), Singh and Finnemore (2016), and Silverman (2020).

The studies on interpersonal peace resonate with nonviolence and nonviolent communication themes such as love or agape, empathy (self-empathy and empathy for others), compassion (self-compassion and compassion for others), respect, recognition and expression of our own needs and the needs of others, honest and non-judgmental expression of thoughts and feelings, belief in the possibility of human transformation, establishing human connection even across differences, use of positive language, ability to make negotiable requests instead of demands, making a positive change in family and the environment, and healing of being together in community.

The six articles on sociopolitical peace resonate with themes that show that there is an interconnection between inner peace and outer peace, inner peace and interpersonal peace, interpersonal peace and outer peace. To attain outer peace, we begin by cultivating love or agape within us, having basic respect for all forms of life, undergoing conversion of our minds and hearts and change in our lives, and cultivating ahimsa, doing no harm to ourselves and other people. We then work for interpersonal peace with the application of these themes/principles: use of appropriate words and language/avoidance of moralistic judgments; building empathetic connections and engagement between conflicting parties; self-empathy and empathy for another; honest self-expression devoid of hostile language, violence, and threat; and peaceful resolution of conflict. We should strive to do the following: build transformative and loving relationships that are more respecting, open, and trusting; foster mutual goodwill between people; and adopt Gandhi's five pillars of nonviolence: respect, understanding, acceptance, appreciation, and compassion.

This study has shown that inner peace, interpersonal peace, and outer peace are interconnected spectra. We begin by developing self-compassion and self-empathy while at the same time showing empathy and compassion for others. We cultivate love or agape within ourselves, agape being the desire for the welfare of others and having no intention to harm them. We show respect and establish human connection across differences. We recognize and express our own needs and the others' needs. We make a positive change in family and the environment and we heal together in community. Nonviolent communication application and training resulted to greater self-compassion and compassion for others, empathy for ourselves and for others, respect, human connection, honest expression without judgments of our observations, feelings and recognition of the others' feelings and needs, and learning to make a positive change within ourselves, our families, and the external environment.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The integration of the philosophy of nonviolence and the nonviolent communication principle and method in the three spectra of peace highlights the values of agape love, compassion, ahimsa, unlearning violence, application of Gandhian nonviolence in peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes, empathy, recognition of our and the others' feelings and needs, conversion of peoples' hearts, change in people's lives, changing oppressive social structures, providing for peoples' needs, and compassionate behavior towards wildlife and the environment. Nonviolence begins with cultivating love from within, adopting the philosophy of ahimsa or doing no harm, developing empathy and compassion for ourselves and those we interact with (inner peace), and proceeds to building empathic relationships with others by recognizing their feelings and needs, avoiding moralistic judgements or criticisms, and being empathetic with them (interpersonal peace). From empathetic relationships, we then strive to unlearn violence, advocate for reduced military spending, disarmament, abolition of nuclear weapons, and nonviolent pacifist responses to aggression (sociopolitical peace). We work to provide for peoples' needs and drive the change we want to see in society towards peace, mutual goodwill between people, fulfillment of peoples' basic and higher needs, and compassionate, nonviolent behavior towards animals and the environment. All individuals, particularly those with political authority and power, need to adopt the ethic of nonviolence and the nonviolent communication approach to maintain harmony in the planet and for people to thrive in a world where peace and love reign,

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