CHILDREN'S ENGAGEMENT IN PEACE EDUCATION: A SCOPING REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE



A thesis submitted to the Department of Education, University of Oxford,

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science in Education (Research Design & Methodology)

September 28, 2026

Candidate Number: 1107506

Word count: 19,921

Word count [with appendices]: 29,928

ABSTRACT

Background: Peace education is an emergent field in which children are positioned among its foremost beneficiaries, yet how they are engaged in the knowledge production of peace has received little scholarly attention. This scoping review sets three objectives to better understand: (*i*) how children are engaged in peace education literature; (*ii*) what the literature claims about children's epistemic agency; and (*iii*) how it attends to difference among them.

Methods: Searches were conducted in four databases in accordance with the PRISMA-ScR guidelines, setting up six eligibility criteria developed in accordance with the Population, Concept, Context (PCC) framework. 65 studies addressing children and peace within formal education, published in English between 1936 and June 2026, were included. Each study was inductively coded for a deductive assessment along a three-axis framework of children's engagement, epistemic agency and difference.

Results: The 65 studies span 25 countries. Engagement concentrated at the lower levels. 44 studies engaged children as absent or instrumental, while co-investigating was rare and recent, identified in 12 studies. 44 advocated or acknowledged children's epistemic agency, of which 24 were among those which had the lowest two levels of engagement, most of them theoretical. This discloses a potential divergence between what the field claims and what it enacts. Children's engagement in the literature increased over time across all three axes, although advocacy for epistemic agency rose unevenly.

Conclusion: The findings underscore that peace education literature increasingly affirms children as epistemic agents, but continues, for the most part, to produce its knowledge without them. Rather than a shortcoming of the field, this review suggests that a critical examination of the conditions under which knowledge about peace education is produced is necessary.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT *2*
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS *5*
LIST OF TABLES & FIGURES *6*
INTRODUCTION *7*
RATIONALE **7**
OBJECTIVES **7**
STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS **8**
CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND *9*
1.1 THE IMPETUS FOR THE REVIEW **9**
1.2 POSITIONING THE REVIEW **10**
1.3 WHAT IS PEACE EDUCATION? **12**
1.3.1 PEACE EDUCATION LITERATURE 12
1.3.2 DEFINING PEACE EDUCATION 13
1.4 CRITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN PEACE EDUCATION **14**
1.5 CHILDREN AS KNOWLEDGE PRODUCERS **15**
1.6 CONSTRUCTING AN ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK **17**
1.6.1 JAMES & PROUT 18
1.6.2 FREIRE 18
1.6.3 FRICKER 19
1.6.4 THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK'S THREE AXES 20
CHAPTER 2: METHODS *23*
2.1 WHY A SCOPING REVIEW? **23**
2.2 SEARCH STRATEGY & DATABASE SELECTION **25**
2.2.1 INITIAL SEARCH 25
2.2.2 THIS REVIEW'S SEARCH 25
2.3 SEARCH TERMS **26**
2.4 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA **27**
2.5 DATA EXTRACTION & CHARTING **30**
2.5.1 DATA ITEMS CHARTED 30
2.6 DATA ANALYSIS **32**
2.6.1 STEP ONE: INDUCTIVE QUALITATIVE CODING 32
2.6.2 STEP TWO: WHOLE-STUDY ASSESSMENT 33
2.7 THE FRAMEWORK FOR STUDY-LEVEL ASSESSMENT **34**
2.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK **39**
2.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS **40**
CHAPTER 3: RESULTS *42*

3.1 SELECTION OF SOURCES 42
3.1.1 IDENTIFICATION 42
3.1.2 SCREENING 42
3.1.3 INCLUSION 43
3.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDIES 45
3.2.1 POPULATION 45
3.2.2 CONCEPT 47
3.2.3 CONTEXT 48
3.3 RESULTS OF THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK 51
3.3.1 AXIS ONE: CHILDREN'S ENGAGEMENT 52
3.3.2 AXIS TWO: CHILDREN'S EPISTEMIC AGENCY 54
3.3.3 AXIS THREE: CHILDREN'S DIFFERENCE 55
3.3.4 TRIANGULATING THE THREE AXES 56
CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION 60
4.1 SUMMARY OF MAIN RESULTS 60
4.1.1 QUALITY OF THE CORPUS 60
4.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE SCOPING REVIEW PROCESS 61
4.2.1 THE CONSTRAINTS OF A SINGLE REVIEWER 61
4.2.2 THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA 62
4.2.3 THE CONSTRUCTED FRAMEWORK 64
4.3 CHILDREN'S ENGAGEMENT & THE NEOLIBERAL ACADEMY 65
4.3.1 CHILDREN'S EPISTEMIC AGENCY IN THE NEOLIBERAL ACADEMY 66
4.3.2 AN OVERREPRESENTATION OF "WESTERN" KNOWLEDGES 67
CONCLUSION 69
IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH & POLICY 70
REFERENCES 72
GENERAL REFERENCES 72
INCLUDED STUDIES 84
APPENDICES 92
APPENDIX A 92
APPENDIX B 96
APPENDIX C 99
APPENDIX D 108
PART A: DESCRIPTIVE CODES (INDUCTIVE) 108
PART B: FRAMEWORK AXES (THEORY-DRIVEN) 114

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BERA	British Educational Research Association
ERIC	Education Resources Information Center
GCPE	The Hague Appeal for Peace's Global Campaign for Peace Education
HIPP	Help Increase the Peace Program
IDESR	International Database for Education Systematic Reviews
IGO	Intergovernmental organisation
IPRA	International Peace Research Association
IRB	Institutional review board
JBI	The JBI Scoping Reviews Methodology Group
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OSF	Open Science Framework
PCC	Population, Concept, Context
PE	Peace education
PEC	Peace Education Commission
PRISMA-ScR	Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews
TSPP	Teaching Students to be Peacemakers Programme
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
US	United States of America

LIST OF TABLES & FIGURES

TABLE 1 *SEARCH TERMS (PCC), JUSTIFICATIONS & SEARCH STRINGS*

TABLE 2 *OVERVIEW OF THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA*

TABLE 3 *EXTRACTION TABLE BY CHARACTERISTICS & THE PCC FRAMEWORK*

TABLE 4 *ASSESSING LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT*

TABLE 5 *THE THREE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT*

TABLE 6 *ASSESSING STANCES ON EPISTEMIC AGENCY*

TABLE 7 *ASSESSING STANCES ON DIFFERENCE*

TABLE A1 *PRISMA-SCR CHECKLIST*

TABLE B1 *PREVIOUS REVIEWS EXPLORING PEACE EDUCATION IN EVIDENCE SYNTHESES*

TABLE C1 *CHARTING OF INCLUDED STUDIES BY CHARACTERISTICS & THE PCC FRAMEWORK*

TABLE D1 *DESCRIPTIVE CODES*

TABLE D2 *THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK COMPRISING THE THREE AXES*

TABLE D3 *THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK'S THREE AXES APPLIED TO ALL INCLUDED STUDIES*

FIGURE 1 *PRISMA-SCR FLOW DIAGRAM OF THE SCOPING PROCESS*

FIGURE 2 *DISTRIBUTION OF STUDIES BY EDUCATIONAL STAGE & AGE*

FIGURE 3 *DISTRIBUTION OF STUDIES BY REGION & CONFLICT CONTEXT*

FIGURE 4 *DISTRIBUTION OF STUDIES ACROSS THE THREE AXES OVER TIME*

INTRODUCTION

Peace education is an interdisciplinary field, relevant within educational research and practice. It is primarily concerned with equipping children and young people with skills to prevent conflict and enhance peace in wider society, enacted across everyday contexts of formal, informal and non-formal education (e.g., Fountain, 1999, p. 1). A substantial body of knowledge about peace education has consolidated over the last decades, prominently within international organisations like the United Nations (UN) and, more recently, also within policymaking, such as in the Council of Europe (Council of Europe, 2026). Across these settings, children are considered the primary recipients of peace education. They are seen as those who stand to inherit and inhabit the futures which the education aspires to build. This thesis asks how children are engaged in peace education literature, a question that informed my choice to conduct a scoping review.

RATIONALE

The question which concerns the review sits at the intersection of three fields. The first is peace education as the concept under scrutiny, but which has to date been subject to little systematic synthesis. The second is childhood studies, whose critical and participatory developments have advanced considerably the understanding of children as knowledgeable and their inclusion in knowledge production. The third is knowledge production, and, in particular, how knowledge about peace education is produced and published in the neoliberal academy. It remains a critical endeavour to ensure that peace education is informed by children, yet it is under-examined how the field so far engages with children. No previous reviews exploring children's engagement in knowledge production about peace education have been identified, signifying a gap to which this review contributes.

OBJECTIVES

The review is guided by an overarching research question:

> How are children engaged in peace education literature?

The question is framed in terms of three key elements, following the advised Population, Concept, Context (PCC) framework (Munn et al., 2022). The population is children, defined as persons under the age of 18 (United Nations, 1989, art. 1). The concept under scrutiny is peace education. Although peace education is enacted beyond formal educational settings, this review narrows its context to examine only formal education, a delimitation justified in Chapter 2. A single, broad research question is thus retained deliberately to scope the fragmented nature of the field (Munn et al., 2018, p. 4). A narrower question, specifying a particular geography or peace education programme, would foreclose the comprehensive scope which the review seeks. The review pursues three objectives, namely to understand: (*i*) how children are engaged in the literature; (*ii*) how it addresses children's epistemic agency; and (*iii*) how it attends to difference among them.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The thesis comprises four chapters following this Introduction in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) guidelines (Tricco et al., 2018). Chapter 1 (Background) positions the review in relation to the three fields on which it draws: peace education, childhood studies and knowledge production in the neoliberal academy. It defines the review's central concepts and constructs a framework through which children's engagement is assessed throughout. Chapter 2 (Methods) details the review's design, including the approach applied to data analysis and the assessment framework. Chapter 3 (Results) reports the characteristics of the included studies and presents the findings of the assessment framework. Chapter 4 (Discussion) considers the review's limitations and discusses its findings in light of the background literature, focusing on children's engagement in knowledge production in the neoliberal academy. The Conclusion brings the four chapters together through a reflection on the review's implications for future research and policy.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

This chapter is a review of the literature. It sets up the theoretical background for the assessment framework and key debates, revisited throughout the thesis. Because the thesis presents a scoping review and poses a broad research question to respond to three objectives, I situate the review in relation to three fields: peace education, childhood studies and knowledge production in the neoliberal academy. The background is more extensive than the PRISMA-ScR guidelines prescribe (Tricco et al., 2018) because the review advanced throughout the thesis draws on more than one academic field. First, I clarify the impetus for the review, grounded in my positionality. Second, I delineate why I position the review within the fields, outlining knowledge production as a field constituted in the neoliberal academy. Third, I foreground the review's focus on knowledge production by discussing what peace education is in formal education, including its critical developments. Fourth, I bring peace education into conversation with childhood studies, sharpening the question of knowledge production in relation to children. Fifth, in drawing the background together, I construct a theoretical framework for assessing children's engagement in peace education literature.

1.1 THE IMPETUS FOR THE REVIEW

The motivation for the review arose from my previous research experiences in peace education, and from a concern with the absence of children's knowledges of peace across the research I encountered and conducted. Between 2022 and 2024, I was a student researcher within an interdisciplinary research project about peacebuilding, examining young people's experiences of inner and outer peace in formal education in Argentina, Denmark and the United Kingdom (UK). A limitation of my project was that it gathered data only from young people over 18, and so, I examined only those no longer in school. This prompted my concern which underlies this review: although children are positioned among the foremost beneficiaries of peace education, they appear mostly as absent from the knowledge produced and published about it.

That absence is not simply an oversight to be corrected by well-intentioned researchers (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008, p. 501; Bodén, 2021, p. 11; Hackett et al., 2025, p. 814).

While academic procedures, such as ethical approval and institutional review boards (IRB), serve necessary safeguarding functions, they also determine whether and which children are admitted into research processes. By extension, IRBs and other institutional procedures in the neoliberal academy influence academic discourses, including those of peace education (Bodén, 2021, p. 11; Tuhiwai Smith, 2021, p. 32; Hajir & Kester, 2020, p. 515). My undergraduate degree in International Relations has informed my critical concerns with the neoliberal academy as an institution through which discourses of peace consolidate (Cortright, 2008; Islam, 2013; An-Na'im, 2021). Anchored in feminist and decolonial critiques (e.g., Grosfoguel, 2013; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; Tuhiwai Smith, 2021), I follow that the often western(ised) and Eurocentric ways of producing knowledge risk imposing a 'normalcy of peace' (Ogunnusi, 2020, p. 12), which is not congruent with social justice, and which bears tremendously on peace education (Kester & Cremin, 2017; Hajir & Kester, 2020).

The design of this review, thus, cannot be separated from my prior research experiences and interests. Indeed, as Davis (2005, as cited in Ogunnusi, 2020, p. 12) holds, peace education is an inherently political and unfinished practice, to which I seek to contribute with this review.

1.2 POSITIONING THE REVIEW

Peace education is an interdisciplinary field, predominantly theorised from within the broad remit of social sciences. Throughout this thesis, peace education, childhood studies and knowledge production in the neoliberal academy are referred to as fields. As Bizzell (1992) argues, academic disciplines are distinguished from academic fields, partly by how they structure and validate knowledge, such that disciplines entail distinctive ways of knowing (pp. 10-12). Peace education and childhood studies draw ontologically, epistemologically, axiologically and methodologically across the social sciences, with no paradigmatic ways of knowing in themselves (James & Prout, 1997; Brantmeier et al., 2024). They are made up of various onto-epistemologies across the spectrum, ranging from positivist to interpretivist (Brantmeier et al., 2024; Cremin, 2015; Elliott, 2022; James & Prout, 1997).

To define the field of knowledge production in the neoliberal academy requires further explanation. Knowledge production is the epistemological processes through which one comes to know, live and be in the world (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 9). Succinctly summarised, it refers to how the academy is a neoliberal institution which shapes research conventions and incentives of how knowledge is produced, and whose knowledge is recognised as valid (Grosfoguel, 2013; Patel, 2015; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Its neoliberal character lies in the organisation of research around competition for publications, citations and funding, in which knowledge becomes a product to be authored and owned (Quijano, 2000; Santos, 2012). In the neoliberal academy, as Grosfoguel (2013) asserts, knowledge production is based on a sexist and racist epistemic foundation, solidified through European colonialism and capitalism in the sixteenth century (p. 73), upholding an order in which dominant-dominated epistemic subjectivities determine what counts as knowledge (p. 76). Knowledge production is, in this sense, a process laden with questions of social and structural power (Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 76; Tuhiwai Smith, 2021, p. 28).

The feminist epistemologist, Fricker (2007), unpacks the question of social power in relation to its structural and agential operations. While Fricker (2007) affirms Foucault's (1982) notion that power can operate purely structurally, she focuses on the agential operations of power, which nonetheless remain a structural phenomenon, 'for power is always dependent on practical co-ordination with other social agents' (Fricker, 2007, p. 11). When considered in relation to knowledge production in the neoliberal academy, however, a tension arises. Knowledge production in the neoliberal academy is exercised by particular social agents, including researchers, but these are confined also by the conventions of purely structural power relations of the academy (Santos, 2012; Grosfoguel, 2013). Arguably, the distinction between structural and agential power operations cannot be so neatly defined, implying that we should not only ask 'who or what is controlling whom, and why' (Fricker, 2007, p. 14), but also be ready to scrutinise the very structures under which the who and what is controlled (Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 73; Patel, 2015, p. 30).

This review situates itself in relation to the three fields, recognising that peace education and childhood studies, when considered as academic fields (Bizzell, 1992, p.

9), are in part also constituted through the processes of knowledge production in the neoliberal academy. These are the concepts to which the chapter now turns.

1.3 WHAT IS PEACE EDUCATION?

1.3.1 PEACE EDUCATION LITERATURE

Peace education has emerged out of the broader umbrella of Peace Research and Peace and Conflict Studies. Since the early 19th century, European and American historians and intellectuals have published ideas in opposition to war and injustice (e.g., Beales, 1931; van den Dungen & Wittner, 2003), which laid the foundation for peace scholarship in the western academy. Social campaigns and activist movements emphasised that social action and education were key to subverting conditions of poverty and inequality that led to war (Ogunnusi, 2020, p. 19). Other early movements included the First Pan African Congress in France (1919) with W.E.B. Du Bois and Mahatma Gandhi's pacifist movements as part of the Indian independence (1920s–1930s). These early foundations of peace movements and scholarship laid a tradition in which peace education is invoked as a response to war and violence, captured in the assertion attributed to Gandhi that 'if true peace is desired, it should start with children' (as cited in Zelyurt & Ince, 2018, p. 1519).

Peace education was officially recognised in 1974, credited to the campaigns of Betty Reardon and Elise Boulding through the Peace Education Commission (PEC) of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA). As an academic field, peace education has been represented since 2004 through the *Journal of Peace Education*, sponsored by IPRA (see further Brantmeier et al., 2024). The significance of peace education is institutionalised in a variety of intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) such as the UN since the late 1990s (Fountain, 1999, p. 1). Peace education is advocated by various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that disseminate peace education through global and national networks, such as The Hague Appeal for Peace's Global Campaign for Peace Education (GCPE) and the Peace Education Network in the UK, as well as university alliances such as EUPeace (2022).

In July 2026, the Council of Europe adopted its first 'Recommendation on Peace education by, with and for young people' (Council of Europe, 2026), calling on member states to implement peace education by considering children and young people's efforts for peace. This underlines the timeliness of this review, which specifically sets out to examine how children inform the knowledge produced and published in peace education literature. The field travels across political and institutional sites that exceed its published literature, which nonetheless remains the object of study in this review.

1.3.2 DEFINING PEACE EDUCATION

A widely used definition of peace education is that of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF):

> the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behaviour change that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level. (Fountain, 1999, p. 1).

In this definition, peace education is foundational to peace more broadly. The focus on skills needed to resolve conflict peacefully and create 'conditions conducive to peace' (Fountain, 1999, p. 1) underlies the agentic practice of peace education, in which conflict is understood as part of the human condition. The definition asserts a central claim of the field, namely that the field, by and large, locates children as recipients and beneficiaries of peace education as they stand as those who inherit and inhabit the futures that education aspires to build (e.g., Graham, 1936; Quisumbing, 2000; Johnson & Johnson, 2004; Zelyurt & Ince, 2018).

Extending from the definition of UNICEF (Fountain, 1999), Ogunnusi (2020) articulates that any conception of peace is 'incomplete without context' (p. 42). Similarly, scholars tend to define peace education in relation to the contexts in which it is enacted (e.g., Epstein, 2006). Salomon (2002) distinguishes between three kinds of peace education according to contexts of intractable conflict, ethnic and religious tensions, and thirdly, where peace already prevails (p. 3). The contextual differences in how peace education is enacted are crucial to this review, which examines across

various geographical, religious and conflict settings, underlining that a contextual definition of peace education is appropriate, but difficult to assert.

Although peace education often occurs in informal and non-formal education (e.g., Salomon, 2002, p. 4; Harris, 2002, p. 25), this review concerns how peace education is present in formal education. Defined by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2012), formal education is structured, intentional learning provided by recognised educational institutions, such as schools, colleges and universities, typically following an organised curriculum. Peace education is seldom incorporated into national curricula yet remains adjacent in its orientation with topics like Citizenship Education and Human Rights Education (Edwards et al., 2020; Witenstein et al., 2025; see also Bedir & Arslan, 2013). These adjacent fields share peace education's orientation towards rights, social cohesion and non-violence, and peace education is often found as a component within them rather than under its own name (Edwards et al., 2020). This matters methodologically as peace education, in formal education, is likely to be more widespread than the literature about it suggests, a limitation to which Section 4.2.2 returns.

1.4 CRITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN PEACE EDUCATION

Peace is itself a complex term, which, much like peace education, is difficult to define. Galtung (1964, 1969) distinguished between positive and negative peace. The latter refers to the absence of direct violence, and the former to the presence of conditions necessary for peace at individual, social and structural levels (Galtung, 1969, 1996). Galtung's (1969) definition of positive peace remains one of the field's principal concepts. It is central to this review, as it enables an enquiry that conceives structures of violence, such as ageism, sexism, patriarchy, colonialism and capitalism, as inherent barriers to fostering peace in education. Galtung's definition of positive peace has been challenged by scholars due to its consistent positioning of peace through a deficit lens wherein positive peace remains considered as the absence of barriers to peace (Kester & Cremin, 2017; Jenkins, 2022; see also Zembylas & Bekerman, 2013). It has, moreover, been contested for its ingrained westernised conception of the term peace, a

critique sharpened by calls to decolonise peace education (Hajir & Kester, 2020; Hajir, 2024).

These critical interventions have progressed the field into what is labelled critical peace education. Scholars (Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Bajaj, 2015; Kester & Cremin, 2017; Hajir, 2024) draw on feminist and decolonial perspectives, insisting that social justice and dismantling systems of oppression are among the key aims of critical peace education. Critical peace education follows a Freirean pedagogy (see also Freire, 1988). It denies any single definition of children, seeing that intersecting social structures oppress and privilege unevenly across markers of age, class, dis/ability, gender, ethnicity, race, religion, to name a few (Hajir, 2024, p. 435). As with Freire (1970), the concern lies primarily with those who are oppressed, seeing that those children, as all others, are to gain a critical awareness of the oppressive conditions under which they live. The aim is to equip them with the skills to resist their own oppressive structures (Freire, 1970, p. 33). This development in peace education informs the review at present. It ties back to the raised concern with knowledge production. If society is infused with oppressive structural inequities, then peace education and knowledge production must be brought into a sharp view. As Hajir and Kester (2020) argue, critical peace education is not only a subject taught to children (p. 520). Rather, it is a site in which knowledge about peace is produced (Hajir & Kester, 2020, p. 520).

1.5 CHILDREN AS KNOWLEDGE PRODUCERS

When the concern is with whose knowledge shapes that of peace, childhood studies brings attention to the particular position of children. James and Prout (1997) reconceptualised children not as incomplete adults, nor as passive objects of socialisation, but as actors whose accounts carry validity in their own right (p. 26), and as experts in their own lives (Andrén & Nelson, 2024, p. 3). This reconception matters for peace education. It reframes children from recipients of knowledge about peace into potential producers of it. Ontologically, James and Prout (1997) position the study of childhood as a social and relational field, and children must be conceived through their relational position (and positioning) within institutions and families. This brings the concept of childhood to the forefront, as layered within the agential and structural

power operations through which the former is constructed (James & Prout, 1997, p. 31; Fricker, 2007, p. 14). Brought into conversation with feminism, a parallel is drawn with Hardman's (1973) work on how both women and children make up groups that have been muted, silenced or othered (Hardman, 1973, p. 85; Prout & James, 1997, p. 25). This illuminates the point at which, as Spyrou (2017) notes, childhood studies can be brought into productive dialogue with other fields (p. 435). Particularly, childhood studies lends peace education a richer account of children as knowers; peace education, in turn, offers childhood studies a domain in which children's knowing bears on questions of peace in society.

That dialogue, however, requires caution. The first caution concerns the ethics of engagement itself, and it unsettles any assumption that including children is a straightforwardly good act. Hackett et al. (2025) warn that the pursuit of 'better' (p. 811) engagement, through more innovative methods or more skilled researcher rapport, carries a hidden logic. Every child celebrated for their engagement, passion, creativity or competency, they argue, 'leaves in their shadow a 'lesser' child, one who presumably did not fulfil the evaluative criteria routinely employed by researchers quite so convincingly' (Hackett et al., 2025, p. 812). This is a crucial warning for a review that scopes how children are engaged, because it cautions against reading engagement as an unqualified good and against the production of a 'Good Research Child' (Hackett et al., 2025). This grounds an insistence invoked throughout the review. In its framework, a higher level of child engagement cannot simply be equated with a better study.

This caution directs that children's engagement cannot be treated as a neutral act (James & Prout, 1997, p. 27). Berents (2015; 2020) demonstrates how children are frequently apprehended through a deficit lens, cast as victims to be protected or as threats to be contained, both of which deny them standing as agential knowers of their own peace (see also Beier, 2015). Adultism, understood as the oppression experienced by children at the hands of adults and adult-tailored systems (Liou & Literat, 2020, p. 4665), operates as a structuring condition that precedes any given study, positioning children as those to be protected, taught and spoken for long before they are positioned as knowers (James & Prout, 1997; Burroughs & Tollefsen, 2016; Bodén, 2021). To assert

children within the production of knowledge about peace therefore requires acknowledging the discourses and structures through which children and peace are constructed in the first place. Against this background, I develop an assessment framework to scope how children are engaged in peace education literature.

1.6 CONSTRUCTING AN ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Due to the specific question raised about children as engaged knowers, it follows that a specific framework is constructed, rather than, for example, drawing on existing models of children's participation. Among the most established are Hart's (1992) 'ladder of participation,' adapted from Arnstein (1969), and Lundy's (2007) model of space, voice, audience and influence. Both were devised to evaluate children's involvement in decision-making, chiefly in policy and institutional settings, and they ask how children can influence decisions that affect them. Although they are insightful for that purpose, they are not built to ask the epistemic question that this review raises. Lundy's (2007) own insistence that 'voice' is not enough points in this direction: being listened to is not the same as being credited (Andrén & Nelson, 2024, p. 4). The participatory turn these models suggest has, moreover, been critiqued for equating participation with empowerment, while adults retain authorship of what is produced (Pinter & Zandian, 2015; Brown, 2022). It is plausible that a study might occupy a high position on Hart's participation ladder by consulting children extensively, while attributing all the knowledge produced to an adult author; and theoretical literature, which rarely involves child participation, falls outside these models entirely. The framework developed here therefore draws on James and Prout (1997), Freire (1970) and Fricker (2007) to scope how children are engaged in the literature.

It consists of three axes to assess children's engagement. This requires a definition of the term engaged, as it serves to scope the ways children appear in the literature. The term carries an agentic note as the Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford University Press, n.d.) records 'to cause to be held fast; to involve, entangle.' As noted above, the term also risks celebrating the engaged child at the expense of a 'lesser' one (Hackett et al., 2025, p. 814). The term, moreover, risks implying that children are engaged by someone other than themselves, positioning the act of engaging outside children's own sphere. It

is this prepositional structure that Bodén (2021) makes central, showing that enquiry involving children is consistently described as conducted '*on*, *to*, *with*, *for*, and *by* children' (p. 1), and that these prepositions are conventionally arranged into a scale of ethics from research '*on* children is at one end of the scale (the 'bad' end) and research *by* children is on the other (the 'good' end)' (Bodén, 2021, p. 5). Bodén (2021) intervenes by troubling that scale, arguing that it is not necessarily more ethical for research to be done *by* children than *on* them (p. 6). This review equally takes up a spectrum as a descriptive guide to children's position as knowledge producers, while retaining the caution against reading this positioning as ordered into a moral hierarchy of what constitutes good and bad research.

1.6.1 JAMES & PROUT

The fundamental element of the framework comes from James and Prout (1997), whose reconception of the child as a social actor establishes its baseline for what it means to treat children's accounts as knowledge and as valid in their own right. For the framework, this distinguishes a study that treats children's accounts as the object of knowledge, existing in order to learn what children know, from one that treats children merely as a source of data for an adult-authored theory or a programme's evaluation. This conception is, however, not without critique. Its insistence on the competent, agentic child has itself become something of an orthodoxy. Spyrou (2017) calls for decentring the child, since treating agency and voice as properties children possess obscures the relations through which they are produced (p. 434). Gallacher and Gallagher (2008) similarly caution that participatory methods risk presuming the very empowerment they set out to achieve. For the framework, this means that level 3 cannot be read as the discovery of an authentic child voice. It records only that a study treats children's accounts as its object of knowledge.

1.6.2 FREIRE

The second element comes from Freire (1970), whose distinction between banking and problem-posing education (pp. 33-34) contributes to the framework's understanding of what deep engagement entails. In the banking model, education is an act of depositing: the teacher deposits knowledge into the student, who is positioned as an empty

receptacle, a passive object to be filled rather than a subject who knows (Freire, 1970, p. 34). Against this, Freire (1970) sets a problem-posing, dialogic education in which learners are co-investigators of their own reality, generating the questions that structure enquiry (p. 36). This distinction is relevant to peace education, which, as Section 1.4 established, draws on Freirean pedagogy (Freire, 1988) through its critical enactment (Hajir & Kester, 2020, p. 518), in which theory and praxis must complement one another (hooks, 1994, p. 56). For the framework, Freire (1970) informs the upper levels of how engagement is understood, as the difference between a study in which children merely supply knowledge to an enquiry framed by adults, and one in which children shape what is investigated, becoming, in Freire's (1970) terms, investigators of their own reality rather than recipients of knowledge deposited into them (p. 36).

Freire's pedagogy is, too, adopted with caution. It was developed with adult learners, and it presumes an educator who initiates the problem-posing, leaving the asymmetry between adult and child largely untheorised (Liou & Literat, 2020, p. 4664). hooks (1994), while embracing Freire, critiques the sexist language and blind spots of his work, showing that a pedagogy of liberation can reproduce the hierarchies it opposes. For the framework, this means that co-investigation (level 4) is not taken as proof of emancipation. This level marks that children shape the enquiry, not that the power has shifted to them.

1.6.3 FRICKER

The final and decisive element comes from Fricker (2007), whose account of epistemic injustice supplies the framework's analytical lens and the concept that binds the other two together. Fricker (2007; 2017) defines epistemic injustice as a wrong done to someone specifically in their capacity as a knower and distinguishes testimonial from hermeneutical injustice (Fricker, 2017, p. 55), of which the former concerns this review. Testimonial injustice occurs when prejudice causes a hearer to give a speaker's word less credibility than it deserves; the speaker is heard but discounted (Fricker, 2007, p. 27). Fricker's crucial insight, and the one on which this review turns, is that testimony can be used without being credited. A speaker may be heard, quoted, even measured, while the knowledge produced from their testimony is attributed elsewhere. Applied to

children, this distinguishes sharply between the mere presence of children's words in a study and their standing as knowers within it. This is testimonial injustice operating not through open dismissal but through a subtler dismissal of accreditation (Fricker, 2007, p. 20), and it is this injustice that the framework is designed to assess.

Fricker's account cannot be adopted uncritically. First, Fricker (2007) locates the remedy for testimonial injustice primarily in the virtue of the individual listener (p. 28). Yet the absences this review maps are, arguably, produced as much by the conventions of authorship and peer review in the neoliberal academy as by the prejudice of any single researcher (Section 4.3). Second, Burroughs and Tollefsen (2016) extend Fricker's concept to children, arguing that children as a class receive less credibility than they deserve. Applying the concept to children, however, raises the question of where developmental judgement ends and prejudice begins. The framework therefore does not ask whether children are believed, but whether their knowledge is credited where it is used. Third, inclusion is not in itself just. As Dunne and Kotsonis (2022) caution, drawing on the experiences of marginalised knowers for a study's own ends risks epistemic exploitation. A higher level of engagement thus marks a different epistemic position, not a necessarily more just study.

1.6.4 THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK'S THREE AXES

The framework's three axes are tabulated in Section 2.7, but their theoretical underpinnings are described in what follows.

AXIS ONE: CHILDREN'S ENGAGEMENT

Read together, the three theorists yield a graduated account of epistemic position that the framework seeks to scope. Fricker (2007) contributes with the pivotal distinction between using and crediting children's testimony; James and Prout (1997) conceptualise the threshold at which children's accounts become the object of knowledge; and Freire (1970) supports the further threshold at which children shape the enquiry itself. This constitutes the first axis, engagement, which is a spectrum that spans from the absence of any child perspective (level 1), through the instrumental use

of children's words in the service of adult knowledge (level 2), to the constitutive treatment of children's accounts as the finding (level 3), to their co-investigation of the enquiry (level 4). The three sit, moreover, in some tension. James and Prout locate knowledge in the child as social actor, Freire in a collective of co-investigators, and Fricker in the relation between speaker and listener. The axis does not reconcile them into a single theory; it uses each as a threshold, and the levels record the movement between them.

AXIS TWO: CHILDREN'S EPISTEMIC AGENCY

The second axis narrows the review's concern to a specific and, for its purposes, decisive term. The question is not children's agency in general, understood as their capacity to act (Coulter, 2020, p. 1508), but their *epistemic agency*: their standing and capacity to act as knowers whose knowledge about peace is produced, recognised and counted as knowledge. Understood in this way, epistemic agency is inseparable from epistemic power. It is not simply a capacity a child possesses, but a standing granted or withheld by the structures that determine whose knowledge is admitted (Fricker, 2007, 2017; Grosfoguel, 2013). Within critical peace education, this is precisely the concern Hajir and Kester (2020) raise when they ask how, and by whom, peace is envisioned. It is a relation of power, ranging from the degrees to which the structures of knowledge production admit children as knowers of peace or hold them at its margins.

AXIS THREE: DIFFERENCE

The third axis, difference, follows from the critical developments set out in Section 1.4. If intersecting social structures position children unevenly across markers such as age, class, dis/ability, gender, ethnicity, race and religion, the question of how children are engaged cannot be separated from the question of which children are engaged. Childhood studies cautions against treating children as a single, homogeneous category (James & Prout, 1997), and Hackett et al. (2025) show how the celebrated, engaged child can leave a less legible child in its shadow. The framework therefore also records whether a study names difference among children, and whether it treats that difference as consequential to how children come to know, so that engagement and epistemic agency can be read alongside the question of whose knowledge is accredited.

CHAPTER 2: METHODS

This chapter sets out the review's design, which proceeds in three stages. First, a scoping review, following the PRISMA-ScR checklist (Tricco et al., 2018), identifies and charts peace education literature that engages children (Sections 2.1–2.5). Second, each included study is analysed in two steps: inductive descriptive coding, followed by a theory-led assessment of the whole study along three axes (Sections 2.6–2.7). Each axis answers one objective: engagement answers objective (*i*), epistemic agency objective (*ii*) and difference objective (*iii*). Third, the three axes are triangulated across time and context to present an answer to the research question (Chapter 3).

2.1 WHY A SCOPING REVIEW?

I have chosen to conduct a scoping review to map how children are engaged in peace education literature. Scoping reviews are part of what has been labelled the 'Big Picture Review Family' (Campbell et al., 2023, p. 1), and they are distinct from traditional literature reviews and systematic reviews on key characteristics, including their defined aims, research question(s) and reporting guidelines. Although scoping reviews are considered a rigorous method to map literature with methodological origins in the social sciences (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005), recent guidelines have been updated and authorised within medical research institutes like The JBI Scoping Reviews Methodology Group (JBI) (Levac et al., 2010; Peters et al., 2020; Campbell et al., 2023). I follow the most recently updated definition by JBI of a scoping review:

> It is a type of evidence synthesis that aims to systematically identify and map the breadth of evidence available on a particular topic, field, concept, or issue, often irrespective of source (i.e., primary research, reviews, non-empirical evidence) within or across particular contexts. Scoping reviews can clarify key concepts/definitions in the literature and identify key characteristics or factors related to a concept, including those related to methodological research (Munn et al., 2022, p. 950)

A scoping review is a descriptive method, which unfolds in set stages that precede data extraction and analysis. These comprise: Identification, Screening and Inclusion (Munn et al., 2018, p. 4). It is necessary to clarify why this descriptive approach was preferred over a more interpretive form of synthesis (Zawacki-Richter, 2020, p. 4), as the review's critical orientation, background and constructed assessment framework might ignite

otherwise. A critical synthesis would generate new theory inductively from the included studies, treating synthesis itself as the site of theory-building (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006, p. 9). This review does not proceed in that way, for two reasons. First, its purpose is to map how children are engaged across a fragmented field, establishing the extent and character of existing engagement, which is precisely the descriptive task the scoping review is designed for (Munn et al., 2022, p. 950). Second, the review does not derive its analytical framework from the corpus; it brings a framework developed from theory (Chapter 1) and applies it to the literature, asking how children are engaged across the field. A critical synthesis would collapse this distinction between the framework and the evidence, as, for example, pursued in Arystanbek et al.'s (2026) critical interpretive synthesis of peace education (p. 3). The review is therefore critical in its background and framework, but descriptive in its method. It applies a critical lens to map the field, rather than generating theory from it.

Scoping reviews utilise the Population, Concept, Context (PCC) framework, which has formed the initial basis for the research design. The PCC framework is developed to build clear research questions and set eligibility criteria for screening and selecting studies, with relevance to target indicators around the population, concept and contexts examined (Munn et al., 2018, p. 5). As peace education is a widely dispersed and under-mapped field, the PCC framework aided clear search terms to capture the available evidence. This review is conducted in accordance with the PRISMA-ScR checklist, which details all items which must be included (this is filled out and included as Appendix A). JBI's guidance states that to be conducted systematically, a scoping review necessitates a registered a priori protocol (Munn et al., 2022, p. 951). Accordingly, an a priori protocol was developed and revised, consisting of the three pre-set review objectives, research question and inclusion/exclusion criteria. This protocol was discussed with my supervisor before the process of searching was initiated in May 2026. Although it is advised that such a protocol is registered with, for example, the International Database for Education Systematic Reviews (IDESR), this is not a formal requirement of the scoping process (Bond, 2024).

2.2 SEARCH STRATEGY & DATABASE SELECTION

2.2.1 INITIAL SEARCH

An initial search was carried out to identify previous reviews or review protocols that explore peace education in evidence synthesis. In April 2026, no protocols were identified through a title search of 'peace education' in the databases IDESR and Open Science Framework (OSF). This search for previous reviews was carried out in the same four databases used for the review, described below. A total of ten previous reviews (including meta-analyses and bibliometric reviews) were identified, with only four of those naming 'peace education' in the title (Türk, 2018; Purwanto et al., 2023; Arató & Bodnár, 2024; Arystanbek et al., 2026). While this search is not a formal requirement of conducting a scoping review, it is advised by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) (e.g., Bond, 2024). It substantiated the choice of this present review, evidencing the fragmented and heavily under-mapped field of peace education (Arystanbek et al., 2026, p. 3). These prior reviews are summarised in Table B1 in Appendix B.

2.2.2 THIS REVIEW'S SEARCH

The search strategy for this review was carried out in the same four databases: EBSCO, Web of Science, Scopus and ProQuest. These databases were selected due to their comprehensiveness and quality in indexing peer-reviewed literature across disciplines, with EBSCO hosting the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), which focuses specifically on education. It must be noted that three of these four databases were founded in the United States (US), and Scopus is of European origin. This alludes to a deeper examination of the Anglocentric and Eurocentric domination of available academic databases (Bedenlier et al., 2025). Following US federal spending cuts in 2025 (Exec. Order No. 14222, 2025), ERIC expected to reduce its actively catalogued sources by approximately 45% (Drexel University Libraries, 2025). The four databases were then decided upon to be as exhaustive as possible (Munn et al., 2018; Tricco et al., 2018; Bond, 2024).

2.3 SEARCH TERMS

The search terms are developed in accordance with the PCC framework (Munn et al., 2022, p. 951). Table 1 shows the search terms and a brief justification of these, including the 24 search strings, combining the terms with the Boolean operator 'AND'. The search terms were contained within a title search, to ensure that the retrieved literature was substantively concerned with peace education and children (Section 4.2.2). As advised by Munn et al. (2022), an exhaustive and thorough search is necessary, and the restriction of title search and the terms listed below were manageable within the time constraints of the review. The terms were derived from those used in previous reviews of peace education (Section 2.2.1) and agreed in consultation with my supervisor. All 24 searches were carried out identically across the four selected databases, meaning that a total of 96 searches sufficed to retrieve the literature for review.

TABLE 1

SEARCH TERMS (PCC), JUSTIFICATIONS & SEARCH STRINGS

	Terms in title (TI)	**Justification of terms**
Population	"child*","youth", "young pe*" , "pupil*" , "student*", "learner"	To capture the varied vocabulary for children across the literature. Particularly, "youth" and "young pe*" capture older children. "pupil*", "student*", and "learner*" reflect terms used in different formal education systems
Concept	"peace*"	The "*" retrieves an expansion of the single term, such as peacebuilding, peacekeeping, etc.
Context	"educ*" , "school*" , "class*" , "teach*"	To delimit the focus on formal educational settings: education, school, class(rooms) and teaching settings. No education phase was specified beyond formal education.
Search strings	**1.** TI("peace*") AND TI(educ*) AND TI(child*) **2.** TI("peace*") AND TI(school*) AND TI(child*) **3.** TI("peace*") AND TI(class*) AND TI(child*) **4.** TI("peace*") AND TI(teach*) AND TI(child*) **5.** TI("peace*") AND TI(educ*) AND TI(young pe*)	

6.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(school*) AND TI(young pe*)
7.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(class*) AND TI(young pe*)
8.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(teach*) AND TI(young pe*)
9.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(educ*) AND TI(youth)
10.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(school*) AND TI(youth)
11.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(class*) AND TI(youth)
12.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(teach*) AND TI(youth)
13.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(educ*) AND TI(student*)
14.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(school*) AND TI(student*)
15.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(class*) AND TI(student*)
16.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(teach*) AND TI(student*)
17.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(educ*) AND TI(pupil*)
18.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(school*) AND TI(pupil*)
19.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(class*) AND TI(pupil*)
20.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(teach*) AND TI(pupil*)
21.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(educ*) AND TI(learner*)
22.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(school*) AND TI(learner*)
23.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(class*) AND TI(learner*)
24.	TI(“peace*”) AND TI(teach*) AND TI(learner*)

2.4 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The review has set up six eligibility criteria in accordance with the PCC framework to identify peace education literature where children are mentioned in the title. Given the difficulty in defining broad concepts of peace (Ogunnusi, 2020, p. 40), contexts as formal education (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012), and populations as children (e.g., Berents, 2020), brief justifications behind the eligibility criteria are provided below. An overview is first presented in Table 2. By adopting an iterative approach to developing the criteria, these were refined as the background literature was reviewed and other reviews exploring peace education were read. Following the formal guidance (Munn et al., 2018; 2022), these were finalised for the a priori protocol, and guided the entire scoping process, without any iterations when the screening and inclusion process commenced. Formal education was contained through the four context search terms (Table 1) and verified during screening and full-text review, where studies with no reference to formal education were excluded.

TABLE 2

OVERVIEW OF THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

	Inclusion	Exclusion
1.	Must contain empirical data and/or theoretical discussions of peace education and children.	Does not include empirical data and/or theoretical discussions of peace education and children.
2.	Must focus on children, defined as persons under 18. Included literature may address people over 18, yet its focus must pertain to children.	If only including data and/or discussions of people over eighteen.
3.	Must focus on peace education and be identifiable through the search terms.	If the title does not contain "peace" and "education", or any of the proxy search terms.
4.	Must include data collection and/or theorise in the context of formal education. Included literature may address informal and non-formal education, provided it also addresses formal education.	Does not include data collection and/or theorise in the context of formal education.
5.	Must be published before June 2026.	If published after June 2026.
6.	Must be published in English and/or Danish.	If not published in English and/or Danish.

1. Publication type: Empirical studies were included if they were peer-reviewed. All study types were included (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, participatory). Theoretical literature was included, provided it met the subsequent five criteria. Book chapters have been included, given they met the following five criteria, although they might not have been peer-reviewed to the same standard as empirical studies published in peer-reviewed journals. This was decided to be as exhaustive as possible (Munn et al., 2018, p. 5). Grey literature, though important, was not included due to time constraints.

2. Population: Literature was included if it engaged with children, defined as persons under 18 (United Nations, 1989, art. 1). Engaged is defined in detail in Section 1.6, but to justify whether the population criterion is met, all literature that contained either of the six search terms pertinent to children was included. Where children's age could not

be identified in title/abstract screening, the full text was reviewed. Theoretical literature was considered to have met the criterion on a par with empirical literature.

3. Concept: Literature was included if it addressed peace education. The single search term was definitive for how this eligibility criterion was considered met. Included literature had to contain the term "peace" in its title. An exhaustive search with "peace*" was undertaken to also capture literature which was, for example, titled "peacebuilding," "peace-making" and "peacekeeping," as it may be of relevance to the review. To contain the focus, the term "peace*" was held constant throughout all searches.

4. Context: Literature was included if it focused on formal education. Because the context was not specified further with respect to, for example, geography and/or educational system, it was difficult to define formal education beyond broad search terms. Terminology varies between geographical contexts (e.g., P-K12 in the US and KS1-5 in England). Although peace education also occurs in informal and non-formal educational contexts, this review focused solely on formal education. This decision is discussed in Chapter 1 but is further substantiated by the need to keep the volume of retrieved literature manageable within the review's time constraints.

5. Years considered: Literature published up until June 2026 was included in the review to be as exhaustive as possible.

6. Languages: Only studies written in English and Danish could be considered due to the reviewer's linguistic limitations. The searches were only carried out in English, and no Danish studies were identified. This language criterion has significantly limited the literature that was eligible for review, a discussion to which Chapter 4 returns.

2.5 DATA EXTRACTION & CHARTING

The online software platform Covidence has been used to manage the review process (Veritas Health Innovation, 2026). It supported the retrieval, screening and full-text review of references through manual classification ("yes", "maybe", "no") and does not use artificial intelligence. It also provided an online platform for my supervisor to follow the review process. It was used to upload all recorded references that emerged from the 24 search strings in the four databases. All full texts were then uploaded to Covidence for full-text review.

2.5.1 DATA ITEMS CHARTED

Basic information, defined as data items (Tricco et al., 2018), has been extracted in full-text review and charted in accordance with the PCC framework, year of publication, type of publication and, for empirical studies, the methodology. All items were recorded in Excel. The iterative process of the scoping review underlies why the charting column of context has been extended beyond the set eligibility criterion of educational context. Since the literature emerged in various geographical, religious and conflict settings, these were charted to add relevant insights about the contexts represented. The extracted data was then collated, tabulated and described narratively, as done in Chapter 3 (Campbell et al., 2024, p. 3). Table 3 delineates the charting columns, data items and a description.

TABLE 3

EXTRACTION TABLE BY CHARACTERISTICS & THE PCC FRAMEWORK

Charting columns	Data item	Description
Study	**Study**	Author(s) and year of publication, used to identify each study across the tables and appendices. Studies are listed alphabetically.
Study characteristics	**Type**	Whether the study is empirical (Emp.) or theoretical (Theor.), as the study presents itself.

Charting columns	Data item	Description
	Methodology	For empirical studies, the design and main data sources, condensed (e.g., quasi-experimental; pre/post surveys).
	N	Sample size as reported, with a brief breakdown where the study gives one (e.g., the number of children within a mixed sample).
Population	**Population**	The population(s) the study names, including any additional persons (e.g., parents, teachers, other stakeholders).
	Age / stage	The ages or educational stage of the children, where stated.
	Social markers	Markers of social difference the study names beyond age (e.g., class, dis/ability, gender, religion, race, refugee status).
Concept	**PE focus**	The orientation of peace education and, where the study names one, the specific programme, intervention, project or curriculum.
Context	**Educational**	How the study locates itself educationally, from specified grades to broader settings (e.g., early childhood education, schools).
	Geographical	The country or region in which the study is situated. Countries mentioned only as examples are marked “Exemplified”.
	Conflict	Whether the study situates itself in a context of conflict, recorded as the study states it (e.g., post-conflict, armed conflict, school violence). Contexts mentioned only as examples are marked “Exemplified”.

Charting columns	Data item	Description
	Religious	The religious context the study states, where applicable. Religions mentioned only as examples are marked “Exemplified”.

Note. The charting columns correspond to the full charting in Appendix C, grouped by the Population, Concept and Context (PCC) framework. Contexts marked “Exemplified” were charted but not counted in the results (Section 3.2.3). An em-dash (—) indicates that an item was not reported in the study or does not apply (e.g., methodology and N for theoretical studies).

2.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Each study that was included after full-text review was imported into NVivo (Version 15.4.0***).*** The data analysis was designed to operate at two levels. The first, descriptive layer charts each source against the PCC framework, as set out in Section 2.5. A second, more analytic layer applies the assessment framework constructed in Chapter 1 by evaluating each source along the three axes of children’s engagement, epistemic agency and difference. Although a code for each of the PCC categories was generated, these are, as Rapley (2011) notes, more accurately understood as labels. The charting formed the basis for the subsequent data analysis, which proceeded in two iterative steps: first the inductive coding; and second the theory-led assessment of each study. The justification for this approach is, as Campbell et al. (2023) suggest, that scoping reviews can be ‘more exploratory (…) not requiring an a priori set of codes in order to describe data’ (p. 3). The approach to data analysis can be more iterative, inductive and/or deductive, depending on ‘the academic background of the researcher’ (Campbell et al., 2023, p. 3).

2.6.1 STEP ONE: INDUCTIVE QUALITATIVE CODING

Creswell (2015) describes qualitative coding as the process through which text is taken apart to ‘see what they yield before putting the data back together in a meaningful way’ (p. 156). As Elliott (2018) further conceptualises, coding is a decision-making process, always for some purpose and never an end in itself (p. 2851). This cautions that researcher subjectivity inevitably bears on the coding conducted, as these codes were

generated by a single researcher. The approach applied in the first step is inductive, meaning that codes, and thus the codebook, emerged iteratively and inductively as studies were read. The primary objective of the review lies not in its coding (Munn et al., 2022, p. 951); rather, the coding provided the textual evidence for the whole-study assessment of engagement.

Qualitative coding is, as Elliott (2018) asserts, an interpretive decision made by the researcher (p. 2853), in which meaning is assigned to text. The rigour of qualitative coding lies in reliability of each coding decision made as explicit as possible (Willig, 2013). The inductive coding comprises 12 top-level codes, all of which are descriptive in nature, and emerged from reading the literature where passages were assigned a code for when they provided evidence of, for example, “Child agency,” “Child engagement,” “Child concept,” “Difference.” Hence, these emergent codes informed the analysis but did not determine the framework axes elaborated on below. The full codebook is provided in Table D1 in Appendix D.

2.6.2 STEP TWO: WHOLE-STUDY ASSESSMENT

In keeping with the scoping review methodology (Munn et al., 2022; Campbell et al., 2023), the assessment framework was provisionally constructed at the outset, anchored in theory, and was supported, challenged and refined as the literature was read (Miles et al., 2020; Saldaña, 2021). The three axes were developed from theory, as set out in Chapter 1, and the descriptive coding then tested that framework against the literature, prompting the revision of its categories where studies supported, challenged or extended them. The assessment is therefore best described as theory-led and refined abductively, moving iteratively between the theoretical concepts and what the descriptive coding surfaced (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). The descriptive codes did not map deterministically onto particular levels of the assessment framework. They instead provided the descriptive evidence for making the subsequent whole-study assessment in accordance with each axis.

For example, a descriptive code such as “Child concept” might be present in a study assigned to any of the four engagement levels, and across all three axes, because it is the reader’s assessment of what that description serves to do within the whole study

that determines the level assigned. This enabled an openness where the literature challenged the framework's categories, as laid out below in turn. Appendix D records, for each axis, the descriptive codes that informed the assessment of each level.

2.7 THE FRAMEWORK FOR STUDY-LEVEL ASSESSMENT

The assessment was carried out by identifying the highest level for which textual evidence was present in the study. Each reading scanned for the markers of the upper levels of children's engagement: whether a child perspective was included in its own right (level 3) or whether children informed the enquiry as co-investigators (level 4). I then assigned the highest level for which such evidence was found. Where none of these markers were present, the study was coded at the lowest level. This procedure resolves a difficulty inherent in coding for what is absent (Saldaña, 2021). Absence cannot be coded, because there is simply no text to code. It is instead identified reversely; by a systematic 'non-appearance' of any higher levels' markers across the whole study. A study is therefore assessed as "absent," not because a passage in that study declares that children are absent, but because the reading provided no accreditation to children's knowledge and thus left the code empty.

AXIS ONE: CHILDREN'S ENGAGEMENT

The first axis assesses children's engagement in the production of knowledge in peace education, along four levels described in Chapter 1. The ordering is one of epistemic presence, not of quality. Table 4 defines each level and states its theoretical warrant.

TABLE 4

ASSESSING LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

Level	Definition of the level	Theoretical warrant
1 – Absent	No child perspective is included in the study. Children are described, theorised or prescribed for, but never voiced in any capacity.	James & Prout (1997): the child is positioned as becoming and must be spoken for.

Level	Definition of the level	Theoretical warrant
		Freire (1970): children are positioned as passive recipients, through "banking" of knowledge. Fricker (2007): no epistemic testimony identified, so no possibility of credit.
2 – Instrumental	Children's accounts appear, but as an input to some other object of knowledge, such as a programme's effectiveness or a pre-existing theory. Children's perspectives are quoted or measured.	Fricker (2007): children's testimonies are used without being credited. The child speaks; yet the knowledge produced is not theirs.
3 – Constitutive	Children's accounts constitute the findings. The study exists to learn what children know about peace and reports it as knowledge in its own right.	James & Prout (1997): the child is positioned as a social actor whose account is valid in its own right. Fricker (2007): testimonial justice, partially achieved as the child's words count as knowledge.
4 – Co-investigating	Children shape the knowledge produced by informing the research topics, questions and terms. Children's knowledge is included in the published study on its own terms. Their framing is preserved; or their dissent from the researcher's analysis is recorded and left in its own right.	Freire (1970): co-investigation where children are investigators of their reality; they are not merely quoted, but rather, they shape the research. Fricker (2007): testimonial justice attained and the child is credited as a knower.

Note. Each level is coloured in a gradient that corresponds to the assessment axis presented in Figure 4 in Section 3.3, and Tables D2 and D3 in Appendix D.

The theoretical warrant, and subsequent assessment, is only as defensible as the distinction that separates the levels from one another. Therefore, each of the three distinctions (between the four levels) is anchored in a decisive question of how the study is assessed, thus justifying the distinctions drawn. The literature nonetheless

challenged the framework. Anderson and Nesterova's (2024) study is one example. The study deserved a higher level of engagement than other studies coded as level 4, considering how much the children were engaged throughout the research process in participatory action research. This presented a challenge to the assessment framework as studies assessed at level 4 often also exemplified level 3. The study extended the framework for a period to five levels, where the last was conceptualised as "co-producing". As other studies were read, though, the initial four levels remained intact. A fifth level turned out to be more of an aspirational category than one that could theoretically and empirically be distinguished in between. Table 5 summarises the three boundaries and the questions they resolved throughout the process of reading the full texts.

TABLE 5

THE THREE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

Boundary	Decisive question(s)	Resolves
1 → 2	Does any child utterance materially enter the text: a quote, a mark, a score, a drawing?	No → 1. Advocacy for children's knowledge is not an utterance. A theory piece full of advocacy for children's insight that engages no child is a 1 (with orientation: advocates).
2 → 3	Whose knowledge is the finding? Are children's accounts the object of knowledge, or an input to an adult object (a programme's efficacy, a theory, a pre-set framework)?	Input → 2. Object → 3. Children quoted to illustrate or evidence an adult argument are not credited. Although their knowledge is present, it remains subordinate.
3 → 4	Did children shape what was investigated, such as setting questions, nominating topics, or reframing the terms? Or, do they only contribute with "content" to an adult-set enquiry?	Content only → 3. Shaped the enquiry → 4. Children's knowledge used for the study's argument

Boundary	Decisive question(s)	Resolves
		rather than standing on its own remains a level 3.

Note. Each boundary is a question that is asked after reading each study.

A thought example illustrates how the boundaries operate in practice. A study reporting a peace education programme in which children complete a questionnaire, whose responses are aggregated to measure the programme's effectiveness, passes the first boundary, since children's responses materially enter the text, but not the second, since the object of knowledge is the programme rather than the children's own understanding of peace; it is assessed as a level 2. Had the same study existed in order to report what the children themselves understood peace to be, treating their accounts as the finding, it would cross the second boundary to level 3. Had the children additionally shaped the questions the study pursued, it would reach level 4. However, this was not a neat separation, as is common with 'messy' data (von Benzon & O'Sullivan, 2021), as studies of a wide variety of methods, qualitative, quantitative, participatory were confluent at the levels, and there was no clear pattern of how, for example, quantitative studies and qualitative studies distributed in levels of engagement.

AXIS TWO: CHILDREN'S EPISTEMIC AGENCY

The second axis codes what a study claims about children as knowers. Where the engagement axis records enactment, this axis records stance, so that the two can be read together and any difference between them made visible. A study may, for instance, advocate children's epistemic agency while engaging no child in the knowledge it produces, a divergence the framework is designed to surface. Assessing epistemic agency in full lies beyond secondary analysis; this axis therefore codes what the study itself declares. Anchored in Fricker (2007), it comprises three categories: whether a study (1) does not address, (2) acknowledges, or (3) advocates children's epistemic agency. Table 6 defines the three.

TABLE 6

ASSESSING STANCES ON EPISTEMIC AGENCY

Category	Definition
1 – Does not address	The study makes no claim about children as knowers. Children's epistemic position is not treated within the study.
2 – Acknowledges	The study considers children as knowledgeable, whose perspectives are worthy of study, but it makes no normative claim that their knowledge should count or that its exclusion is a wrong.
3 – Advocates	The study makes a normative claim that children's knowledge should count, that its exclusion is a wrong, or that children should have a role in producing knowledge about peace education. This stance requires explicit advocacy for children as epistemic subjects.

Note. Each level is coloured in a gradient that corresponds to the assessment axis presented in Figure 4 in Section 3.3, and Tables D2 and D3 in Appendix D.

AXIS THREE: DIFFERENCE

The third axis assesses how each study treats difference among children, addressing which children are engaged. As Chapter 1 set out, the category "children" is never a single, homogeneous group, and this axis asks whether and how a study names, states or analytically engages difference. Crucially it assesses the study's treatment of difference, not necessarily the identities of the children themselves. A study's silence on difference is therefore recorded as evidence for where the literature might subsume children under a single category. The axis comprises three categories, summarised and defined in Table 7.

TABLE 7

ASSESSING STANCES ON DIFFERENCE

Category	Definition
1 –	The study names no social marker of children beyond age. "Children" or "students" figure as a uniform category.

None	
2 – **Stated**	The study names difference (for example gender, ethnicity, class, displacement) but does not treat it as consequential to how children know or experience peace education. This includes difference that is reported, but then set aside, or modelled only as a predictor variable.
3 – **Analytically engaged**	The study analyses difference as shaping how children are positioned as knowers, bringing the named difference into the analysis as consequential to how particular children, from particular locations, come to know in peace education.

Note. Each level is coloured in a gradient that corresponds to the assessment axis presented in Figure 4 in Section 3.3, and Tables D2 and D3 in Appendix D.

Taken together, the three axes produce, for each study, a value on engagement, a value on epistemic agency and a value on difference. For each study follows a marker of "coder" confidence, and those decisions of medium and low confidence were revisited after a two-week interval to test consistency of how the assessment scheme was applied (Cope, 2021).

2.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Two features of the design of the assessment framework bear on the rigour of results presented. The first is that the framework was developed and applied by a single reviewer, which precludes a formal measure of inter-rater reliability (Munn et al., 2018). This limitation is discussed in greater detail in relation to the scoping process in Chapter 4. In relation to the assessment framework, the constraint was mitigated in several ways. Each assessment rests on an explicit decision rule, one checkable question per boundary, recorded also in the codebook (Appendix D), so that a judgement can be traced to a stated question and the empirical evidence which supports an answer to that question, rather than to my intuition. A coder-confidence rating (high, medium or low) was recorded for every axis, and low- and medium-confidence assignments were revisited after a two-week interval, following the practice of returning to coding decisions after time has passed (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The second feature is that the codebook was formalised before the assessment framework was finally

applied, sought to provide the textual evidence for each decision, thereby enhancing credibility (Lincoln et al., 2018; Suri, 2020). This is described above as the abductive part of the process, and neither can nor should be concealed. Indeed, a limitation of this is that the assessment framework and analysis mutually informed each other, as studies were read, analysed and assessed (Elliott, 2018). Nevertheless, the decision rules, the confidence ratings and the full codebook are offered as the review's account of its transparent process, not in place of the reliability measures a multiple-coder design would allow, but as the approach to which inherent researcher subjectivity has been sought to be reconciled with. A fuller discussion of the limitations of the scoping process is unpacked in Chapter 4, in accordance with the PRISMA-ScR guidelines (Tricco et al., 2018).

2.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As a review of published literature, this study involved no human participants and collected no data from or about individuals, and it therefore did not require approval from the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC). Exemption from formal review does not, however, exempt a review from ethical responsibility (Baker, 1999; Suri, 2020). The ethics of evidence synthesis remain under-theorised (Suri, 2008, 2020), yet the decisions that bound a review, such as its search terms, eligibility criteria and analytical categories, determine whose knowledge is represented and on what terms (Suri, 2020). Following BERA (2024), which frames ethics as the responsibilities of educational researchers, akin to what Catungal and Dowling (2021, p. 31) call accountability, and Patel's (2015) call for answerability, three concerns shaped this review.

The first is representation at second hand. The review assesses children only through adults' published accounts and risks reproducing the very dynamic it assesses (Fricker, 2007). Children's knowledge is therefore reported only as it is evident in the included studies, attributed to those studies, and not reinterpreted as findings of this review. The second is difference. Where studies left children's social positions unnamed, I did not infer them, since doing so would speak on behalf of children a study may already have silenced (Patel, 2015); the third axis accordingly records how studies treat difference,

not who the children are. The third concerns the evaluative weight of the framework itself. Mapping engagement risks constructing a ‘Good Research Child’ and, by extension, a good study (Hackett et al., 2025). The levels are therefore reported as epistemic positions rather than as a ranking of quality: studies at the lower levels, theoretical work among them, can contribute by identifying gaps and setting agendas, as this review, which engages no child directly, also seeks to do. These considerations do not resolve the tension between synthesising children’s knowledge and speaking for children. Instead, they remain visible throughout the entire research process, to which Section 4.3.2 returns.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the scoping review, and it is structured in accordance with how the analysis developed through an inductive coding of the included studies, informing the theory-led assessment, as detailed in Section 2.6. In this chapter, I first specify the process of selecting the included literature. Second, I present the corpus in accordance with the PCC framework and basic characteristics, as charted. Third, I triangulate the results of the assessment framework.

3.1 SELECTION OF SOURCES

The number of included studies was 65, published in the period from 1936 to 2026 (until June). 14 studies were published before 2001 (one in 1936, one in 1975 and 12 between 1990 and 2000). 11 studies were published between 2001 and 2010, 21 between 2011 and 2020, and 19 between 2021 and 2026. This suggests that the number of studies eligible for review, and, thus included, has increased over time, with an especially significant steepening since 2021. Figure 1 shows the PRISMA-ScR flow diagram of the scoping process (Tricco et al., 2018; Page et al., 2021). The diagram explicates numbers of exclusion at each stage, and reasons for exclusion at the stage of full-text review with reference to the eligibility criteria. The flow diagram labels the three stages of the scoping process.

3.1.1 IDENTIFICATION

921 studies were identified in the four databases. 398 studies were identified and removed as duplicates, 357 by Covidence and 41 manually. The significant number of almost 400 duplicates removed is due to the fact that 24 identical searches were carried out in the four databases. EBSCO, which hosts ERIC, was the database from which most studies were identified (n = 356).

3.1.2 SCREENING

523 studies were screened, of which 390 were excluded after two iterative rounds. The two rounds of screening were carried out with a two-week interval to ensure that all

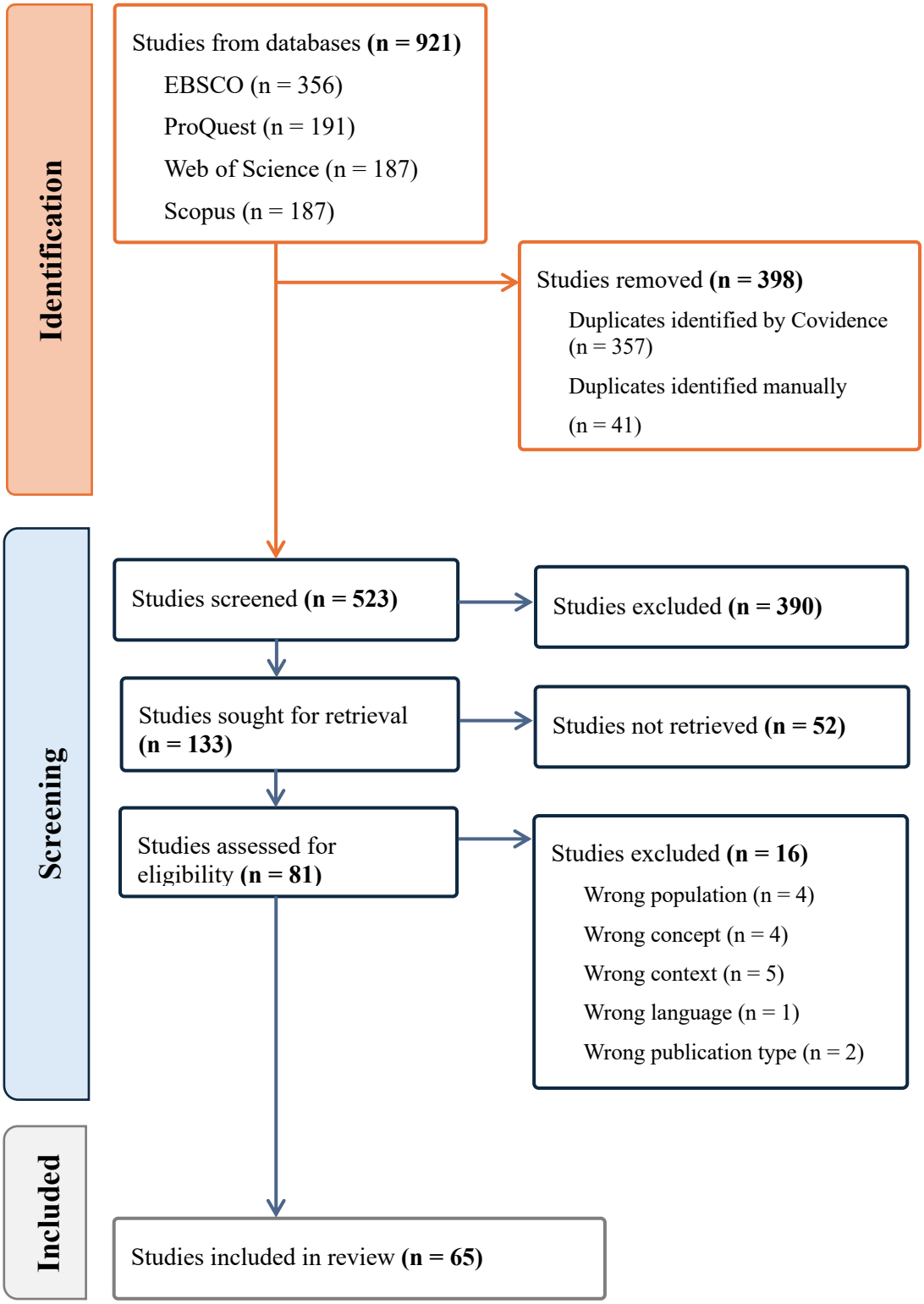
studies were screened equally, following the initial familiarisation with the evidence bases. In the first round, 54 studies were included and 102 were piled in the "maybe" option in Covidence. In the second round, the "maybe" studies were reviewed to clarify the eligibility criteria, without adapting them, in adherence to the a priori protocol. However, empirical studies that were solely lesson plans or curriculum for peace education were excluded as I could not verify their peer-reviewed status, as were empirical studies that only included teachers as participants. Another reason for exclusions was that a number of studies focused on children's perceptions of peace, with no reference to formal education. These were thus not considered eligible for review, but studies that focused on children's perceptions of peace within or in relation to formal education were included. From the "maybe" pile of 102 studies, 23 were excluded. This second round aided the iterative clarification of the eligibility criteria around the types of publication, population, concept and contexts included in the final review. It led to a total of 133 sources sought for retrieval of full texts, of which 81 were retrieved. 81 studies were brought forward to the stage of full-text review where 16 studies were excluded, following the clarified eligibility criteria.

3.1.3 INCLUSION

65 studies were included, of which 40 are empirical and 25 theoretical sources. These studies constitute 'the corpus' of data (Munn et al., 2018), a term which is used throughout the rest of the thesis to refer to the entirety of the included studies.

FIGURE 1

PRISMA-SCR FLOW DIAGRAM OF THE SCOPING PROCESS



Note. Created in Covidence and adapted from the PRISMA 2020 flow diagram (Page et al., 2021) and PRISMA-ScR checklist (Tricco et al., 2018).

3.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDIES

This section presents the characteristics of the studies as charted by study characteristics and the PCC framework, where each category is narratively presented in turn. The full charting of all 65 studies is provided in Appendix C (Table C1).

3.2.1 POPULATION

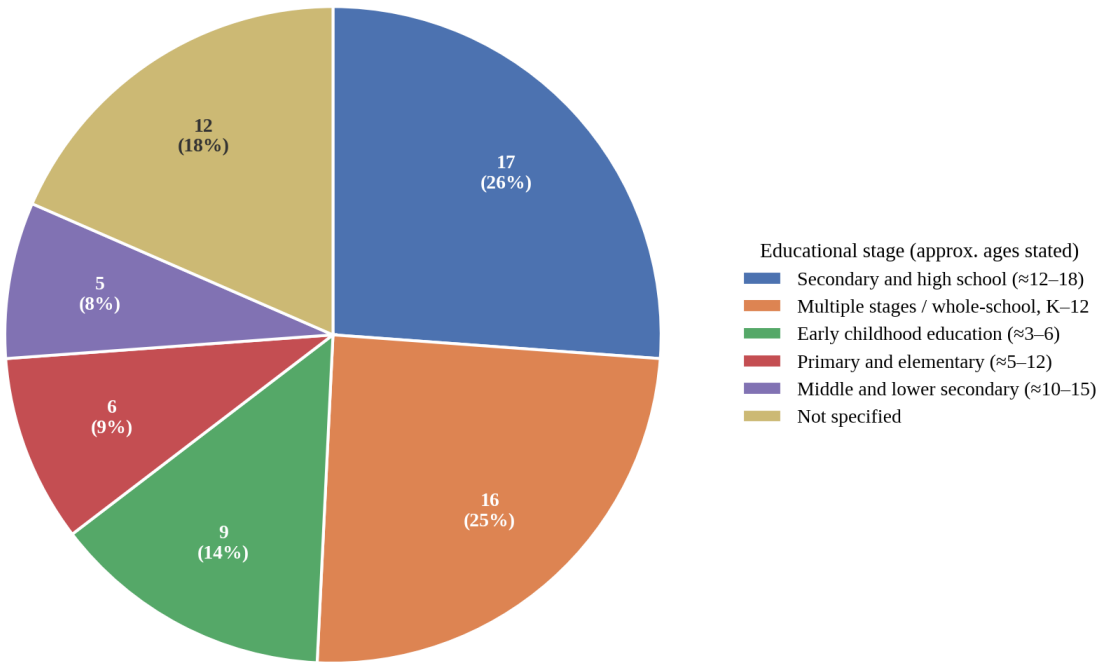
57 studies engaged solely with children, with the remaining eight also including teachers (n = 6), parents (n = 3), school principals (n = 1), community and religious leaders (n = 1) and/or researchers (n =1) in their stated population. These eight studies all had a primary focus on children, but, for instance, they also administered questionnaires to parents and teachers to support the information gathered on, with and by children. 6 studies did not specify the age of children, but they explicated an orientation towards 'peace and justice education for children' (McGivern, 1975) or described the case of 'Jewish and Muslim school students in Israel' (Yablon, 2014). These two studies (McGivern, 1975; Yablon, 2014) are theoretical. A similar absence of a defined age range is evident across the 25 theoretical studies, of which merely four studies specify age (Bekerman, 2005; Hettler & Johnston, 2009; Ma, 2014; Mitrayani & Peel, 2017). Six studies state that they address 'young children' (Hinitz & Stomfay-Stitz, 1998; Cellitti, 1998; Quisumbing, 2000; Walker et al., 2008; Molina-Fernández et al., 2024; Georgeson, 2025), while others refer to educational stages such as fifth graders (Al-Radaideh, 2019) or early childhood education (Pentini, 2024) without specifying age. Any neat characterisation of the ages is troubled further by the different geographical locations represented in the corpus. It cannot be inferred that, for example, the age of 11th graders is the same in Colombia (Bellino et al., 2026) as in Jammu and Kashmir (Ilyas, 2025), when no age beyond such an educational grade is specified. Consequently, an exact description of the ages of children included in the corpus cannot be represented.

Where an educational stage could be identified, secondary and high school children were the most frequently researched group in 17 studies, closely followed by 16 studies

spanning multiple educational stages, identified by the literature as whole-school approaches and K-12 programmes (Lantieri & Patti, 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 2001, 2004; Fitch & Marshall, 1999; Jones, 2007). Children characterised as being in early childhood education were evident in nine studies, followed by six studies identified in primary and elementary school, and middle and lower secondary were identified in five studies. One study (Mitrayani & Peel, 2017) considered people above the age of 18, but due to its case-study nature of two programmes (one of which included the age range from 15-18), it is included. The population represented in the corpus is diverse in ages and/or educational stages, but with an overrepresentation of children in secondary and high school, often defined as children above 12 years in the included empirical studies (e.g., Corboz et al., 2019; Bokhari & Ahmed, 2020; Gordillo, 2021; Shahab et al., 2022; Mena et al., 2022; Ramadhani et al., 2023; Ndwandwe, 2023; Kumar, 2024; Anderson & Nesterova, 2024; Bacher et al., 2024; Mangolo & Qomarrullah, 2025; Ilyas, 2025; Bellino et al., 2026).

FIGURE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDIES BY EDUCATIONAL STAGE & AGE



Note. N = 65. Each piece shows the number of studies and the percentage of the corpus at each educational stage; approximate age ranges in parentheses are derived from

studies' categorisations (the specific ages are, when possible, listed in Appendix C). "Multiple stages" denotes whole-school and K-12 approaches; "not specified" denotes studies that did not state an age or educational stage.

3.2.2 CONCEPT

Peace education is the key concept addressed in all studies. When a study itself labels a specific programme and/or intervention as peace education, the title of such is recorded. A specific peace education programme and/or intervention is named in 29 studies, corresponding to approximately 45 percent of the entire corpus. The majority of them appear only once, such as the 'Help Increase the Peace Program (HIPP)' (Morrison et al., 2011), 'Ravvish, a youth-led programme' (Bokhari & Ahmed, 2020), 'Pathways into Reconciliation' (Biton & Salomon, 2006), and two sport-based programmes for peace education (Gerstein et al., 2014; Mangolo & Qomarrullah, 2025). Among the studies which operationalise peace education through a specific programme and/or intervention, the 'Teaching Students to be Peacemakers Programme (TSPP)' is the most frequently identified (in six studies). This prominence warrants a note of caution however, as five of the six studies are authored by the programme's inventors, Johnson and Johnson (1995, 1996a, 1996b, 2001, 2004), such that its apparent dominance may reflect the sustained research efforts, partly supported through funding from the US Government (Johnson & Johnson, 1995; Fitch & Marshall, 1999). The overrepresentation of this programme signifies a wider trend in the corpus given TSPP's focus on conflict resolution.

Conflict resolution and peer mediation programmes constitute the most common orientation of peace education in the corpus. This orientation is identified in 11 studies, which suggests that where peace education is operationalised in formal education, it is most often done so through a focus on conflict resolution rather than through, for example, structural and/or justice-oriented approaches to positive peace. Only three studies are identified as specifically targeting positive peace through interventions labelled Pro-Black Curriculum (Braden et al., 2023) and Critical Peace Education (e.g., Duckworth et al., 2012; Duckworth et al., 2019).

3.2.3 CONTEXT

EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS

All 65 studies are situated within, or in direct relation to, formal educational settings, and Figure 2 (in Section 3.2.1) shows the distribution of studies across educational levels rather than any contrast between formal and non-formal provision. Mirroring the characteristics of population, secondary and high school settings are the most frequently represented (17 studies), followed by primary and elementary contexts (around 15), and early childhood, preschool or kindergarten settings (around 11); and, again, 16 studies span more than one level. Public schooling is explicitly named in eight studies and private schooling in two, though most studies do not specify with respect to such aspects of their setting. A smaller group of around six studies is situated in formal-and-informal settings, including exchange programmes (Bacher et al., 2024) and afterschool contexts (Mitrayani & Peel, 2017). Four studies (Wessells, 2005; Tomovska, 2010; Yablon, 2014; Corboz et al., 2019) were situated in formal education, but they addressed also community initiatives in contexts of conflict or post-conflict, focusing on, for example, the reintegration of child soldiers (Wessells, 2005). All studies situated in formal-and-informal educational settings did specify formal education and were therefore included.

The context criterion specified only the educational context. However, peace education is embedded in contexts, which, as discussed, exceed the educational setting in which it is enacted. Therefore, the geographical, religious and/or conflict contexts were charted as they emerged in the corpus.

GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXTS

The corpus represents 25 distinct countries or regions as geographical contexts, spanning five continents (Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America). The distribution is markedly uneven and dominated by Western countries, with the US accounting for the largest proportion of 22 studies, followed by seven studies in Turkey and five in Canada. Three studies (Johnson & Johnson, 1995; 1996a; 2001) cover both US and Canada, meaning that North America totals 24 studies. Israel and Palestine are represented in four studies, and Colombia in three. A further cluster of contexts appears twice each: Uganda, Pakistan and Indonesia. The remaining contexts are each

represented once: Afghanistan, Austria, Bangladesh, Cyprus, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico, the Middle East (as a wider region; Al-Radaideh, 2019), Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Oman, the Philippines, Scotland, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Ukraine. Three studies (Quisumbing, 2000; Pentini, 2024; Georgeson, 2025) exemplify through geographical contexts, as noted in the full charting (Appendix C). Four studies disclose no geographical context. Contexts of conflict are stated in a minority of North American studies (eight of 24) but in most studies set in every other region, including seven of nine in South and Southeast Asia and all four in Europe (Figure 3).

The concentration of studies in the US and Turkey means that a substantial proportion of the corpus reflects these two national contexts, a skew worth bearing in mind when considering the transferability of findings across time and space in which peace education is enacted.

RELIGIOUS CONTEXTS

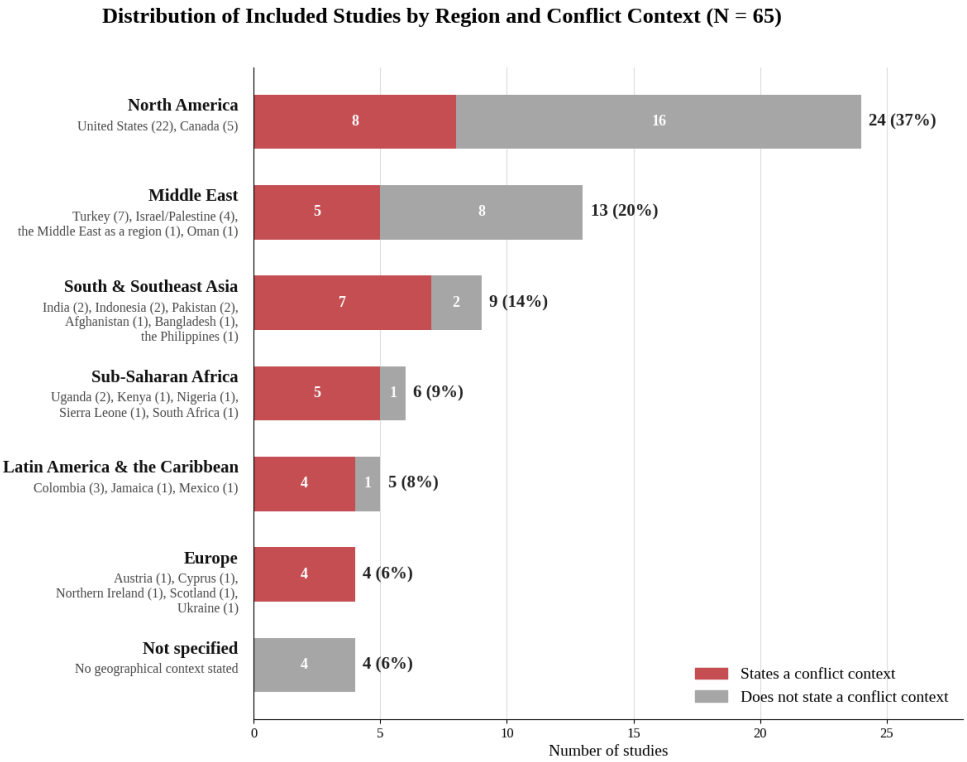
15 of the 65 studies state a religious context, of which Islam is the most frequently represented. It appears in ten studies, set in Afghanistan, Oman and Pakistan, and recurring in the wider Middle Eastern contexts with specific mention of Muslim-Jewish relations in Israel and Palestine (Bekerman, 2005; Biton & Salomon, 2006; Ma, 2014; Yablon, 2014). Christianity is evident through both Catholic and Protestant identities in Northern Ireland (Tomovska, 2010) and Roman Catholic schooling in Scotland (Anderson & Nesterova, 2024). Interfaith contexts appear where studies address relations across Jewish, Muslim and Christian communities, or when responding to anti-Muslim bullying in the US (Duckworth et al., 2012; Duckworth et al., 2019). One study (Ndwandwe, 2023) draws on Ubuntu as an African spiritual religion in the South African context. One study (Bickmore, 2019) refers to Hinduism in Bangladesh, although other religions prevalent in Asia, such as Buddhism and Confucianism, are not represented in the corpus. Religion is most often invoked when it maps onto lines of conflict or internal division, and it seldom appears as a mere demographic marker (Al Mushaqiri, 2019; Corboz et al., 2019; Shahab et al., 2022). This signifies that religion, as represented in the corpus, is often entangled with the contextual tensions which peace education seeks to address (Salomon, 2002).

CONTEXTS OF CONFLICT

33 studies are situated within a context of conflict, just over 50 percent of the corpus. Six studies describe themselves as post-conflict contexts, including Colombia (Gordillo, 2021; Mena et al., 2022; Bellino et al., 2026), Cyprus (Amca Toklu et al., 2024), Sierra Leone (Wessells, 2005) and Uganda (Kagaari et al., 2017). One study (Bellino et al., 2026) identifies its context as marked by colonial violence in Colombia, and another study (Kumar, 2024) defines its context as induced by structural violence based on religion, gender and caste in India (p. 327). School violence is a prevalent context of conflict identified across the corpus with seven studies stating such as their contexts, from geographies including Jamaica, Scotland, South Africa and the US. Due to the broad scope of years included, there are examples of studies, which locate themselves in active conflicts, including in the Cold War (Morris et al., 1990), in Ukraine (Bacher et al., 2024), Israel and Palestine (e.g., Bekerman, 2005) and in Jammu and Kashmir (Ilyas, 2025). Given the difficulty in defining and confining any context of conflict (Ma, 2014, p. 81), the representation must be read with a caution. The charting merely marks the contexts of conflict as stated by the studies themselves.

FIGURE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDIES BY REGION & CONFLICT CONTEXT



Note. N = 65. Bars show the number of studies stating a geographical context in each region, split by whether they also state a conflict context; the number of studies per country is given beneath each region. Studies naming countries in more than one region are counted in each (Bickmore, 2019; Rennebohm-Franz, 1996), so the region bars sum to 61 counts from 58 studies. Three studies that name countries only as examples (Pentini, 2024; Georgeson, 2025; Quisumbing, 2000) are not counted, and one conflict context that is only exemplified (Al-Radaideh, 2019) is counted as not stated. Percentages refer to the full corpus.

3.3 RESULTS OF THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

This section illuminates an answer to the review's research question by reporting on the results along the three axes of the framework: children's engagement, epistemic agency and difference. First, each axis is summarised in turn, with examples of the studies. Then, the three axes are synthesised, triangulating the results into an account of how, and which, children are engaged in peace education literature, with attention paid to how the distribution has shifted over the period the corpus spans, from 1936 to 2026. While the results derive from the theory-led assessment that followed the inductive coding, they are narrated descriptively (Tricco et al., 2018; Munn et al., 2022; Campbell et al., 2024). A more elaborative interpretation of the results, and their bearing on the review's contribution, is developed in Chapter 4.

3.3.1 AXIS ONE: CHILDREN'S ENGAGEMENT

The corpus is heavily concentrated at the lower end of the engagement axis. 44 of the 65 studies were assessed as absent (level 1, 23 studies) or instrumental (level 2, 21 studies) in how they engaged with children. At the level of absent, no child perspective enters the study; children are described, theorised or prescribed for. This level has been recorded with a high level of coding confidence across the corpus. Four studies are assessed with a medium to low confidence (Graham, 1936; Lantieri & Patti, 1995; Zelyurt & Ince, 2018; Al Mushaqiri, 2019). Graham's (1936) study includes a child perspective anecdotally through a case of selling toy guns to children (p. 51), determining my decision of assessing it as a level 1. Lantieri and Patti (1995) and Zelyurt and Ince (2018) engage children as research subjects whose perspectives are obtained through questionnaires administered to and filled out by parents and teachers.

At the instrumental level, children's accounts enter the study as an input to another object of study, such as an adult-produced theory or a programme's effectiveness. In 14 of the 21 studies assessed as level 2, the children's perspectives serve to evaluate a programme and/or intervention (as declared by the study itself). For example, Johnson and Johnson (1995) present an evaluation of the aforementioned TSPP, involving 1241 students across seven studies in the US and Canada. Students are engaged as research subjects whose knowledge and attainment are measured through written responses, interviews and video-taped role plays (Johnson & Johnson, 1995, p. 424). Bekerman's (2005) study is characteristic of many of the theoretical studies, which include children's insights to assert its arguments, noting that 'The child is not the father of man but is authored by her, at least at first, and thus adults are the ones needing to be educated for peace' (p. 241). Similar examples recur where children's responses are measured to assess the efficacy of an intervention, as in Okanlawon et al.'s (2017) study, which focuses on instructional games as 'relevant in grooming young ones to (…) enhancing peaceful coexistence in our society' (p. 99). In each of these studies assessed as level 2, children's perspectives are included, but not constitutive of the findings. 17 empirical studies are assessed as such, indicating that the field often collects data of

children's knowledge, but less often reports on how their knowledge has informed the knowledge production process.

The two upper levels are sparsely evident across the corpus. Nine studies were assessed as constitutive, level 3, in which children's accounts are themselves the object of knowledge. These studies were assessed accordingly as they reported what children know or perceive of peace education by engaging extensively with children's knowledge throughout the findings-sections. For example, Biton and Salomon (2006) aim to understand how the participation in a peace education program affects children's perceptions of peace, and in their results section, it is stated that, 'many Palestinians mentioned also the possibility of war as something they would do to attain peace, it was added as a sixth category' (p. 171). The entire findings-section in Ilyas's (2025) study is made up of the students' perspectives, which capture their hopes and aspirations amid recurring curfews and shutdowns (p. 177). These studies were evidence that the children's knowledge is the object of study, and although there were elements to which they informed the findings, they did not reach the level required of co-investigating.

12 studies reached the co-investigating level 4, in which children shaped what was investigated or their dissent was retained. Braden et al. (2023) share that, 'the children built from these discussions to create class books titled Black is Beautiful' (p. 360) and 'The students wrote letters to police officers asking them not to kill Black people' (p. 361). Shahab et al. (2022) exemplify the crossing of the boundary between levels 3 and 4, through reporting that 'They were also allowed to see the interview transcripts and suggest adjustments or clarifications to the views expressed during the interview' (p. 552), leading the entire study to the level of co-investigation in that the students' answers drove the discussions and recommendations offered (p. 558). In these studies, children informed the research questions, discussion and recommendations raised, and in other studies, the dissent of the children was preserved (Kagaari et al., 2017; Duckworth et al., 2019; Mena et al., 2022; Kumar, 2024), as when Duckworth et al. (2019) record students' shared account that teachers 'cuss at us and yell at us' (p. 241), informing that not every student 'opted to also participate in the research aspects' (p. 242).

3.3.2 AXIS TWO: CHILDREN'S EPISTEMIC AGENCY

The second axis records what each study claims about children as knowers. The corpus is more evenly divided, tilted slightly towards advocacy. 25 studies advocate children's epistemic agency, 19 acknowledge it and 21 do not address it at all. To advocate is to make a normative claim that children's knowledge counts in its own right, captured in phrases like 'youth voices and experiences as important and valuable sources of knowledge, understanding, and social action' (Anderson & Nesterova, 2024, p. 2), and 'allowed us to centre young people's expertise and interpretive agency' (Bellino et al., 2026, p. 309). To acknowledge is to treat children as holders of relevant knowledge without making a normative claim, often instrumentally to design a better curriculum or intervention. Studies that acknowledge children as knowledge holders are assessed, supported by evidence such as, 'engages the students to learn about their perspectives on what they learned by participating in the program' (Bokhari & Ahmed, 2020, p. 75) and 'learning needs to be student-centred with accommodation of their learning interests' (Carter & Pickett, 2014, p. 20). The crucial distinction between advocating and acknowledging is that the former must contain a normative claim of the knowledge produced by children and thus acknowledging that 'learning needs to be student-centred' (Carter & Pickett, 2014, p. 20), is not a normative claim about students' epistemic agency. Rather, it raises questions of what student-centred means, and how such is obtained. To not address is less complicated to assess. It means to make no claim about children as knowers, as in the many studies for which children are positioned as recipients of peace education, or as research subjects whose knowledge is recorded, measured and presented (e.g., Kabasakal et al., 2015; Binns-Thompson & Joong, 2018).

The most significant result on this axis emerges only when it is read together with the engagement axis. Of the 44 studies assessed at the two lowest engagement levels, 24 nonetheless advocate (nine studies) or acknowledge (15 studies) children's epistemic agency. A study may therefore argue that children's knowledge ought to count, while at the same time producing its own knowledge with no engagement of children. This divergence between what is claimed and what is enacted is a central observation of the review. It is carried largely by theoretical literature. 18 of these 24 studies are

theoretical, while six of the 20 empirical studies at the two lowest levels diverge. It is, in Fricker's (2007) terms, the mark of a testimony affirmed in principle yet suppressed in the actual production of knowledge.

3.3.3 *AXIS THREE: CHILDREN'S DIFFERENCE*

The third axis records how each study treats difference among children and so addresses which children are engaged. An equal number of studies states difference (26 studies) and analytically engages it (26 studies), while 13 studies do not differentiate between children beyond age. At the undifferentiated level, children are figured as a universal category; Yilmaz (2018) and Binns-Thompson and Joong (2018), for instance, treat their child participants as a homogeneous group. In assessing the perceptions of war and peace, Yilmaz (2018) merely reports difference in relation to the educational grade, 'research involves 68 students. 37 of these students study in 5th grade and 31 study in 4th grade' (p. 143), and 'The participants for this research were chosen using convenience sampling from four secondary schools' (Binns-Thompson & Joong, 2018, p. 137). A study was assessed as stating difference where it named a social difference, such as gender or ethnicity, but did not treat it as consequential to its findings. Thus, analytically engaging difference has been recorded only where the study itself moved beyond naming difference to considering how difference shaped how children know or experience peace education.

Four studies analytically engaged difference with a primary focus on gender (Bedir & Arslan, 2013; Bickmore, 2019; Corboz et al., 2019; Gordillo, 2021). The criticality of that engagement varied. In Bedir and Arslan's (2013) study, the analytic engagement rests on a simplistic premise, explaining the difference in results by 'the reason that girls are more sensitive than boys' (p. 51). A smaller group of studies engaged difference beyond the social markers, distinguishing children from one another by connecting difference to wider structures of power. This was most evident in studies situated outside a western geography, or in studies that described their findings in direct opposition to 'modernist' (Bekerman, 2005, p. 241) and 'western' (Kagaari et al., 2017, p. 10) views. For example, Kagaari et al. (2017), in Uganda, and Bekerman (2005), in Israel and Palestine, both link children's differing views to wider power structures,

asserting the aim ‘to learn that the local knowledges regarding peace do not mimic the voices and experiences of Western youth’ (Kagaari et al., 2017, p. 10).

A persistent limitation concerns the whole axis, mirroring the characteristics of population presented in Section 3.2.1. Across the corpus, the children who are engaged are seldom described in further detail, which makes it difficult to elaborate on the specific markers of difference represented. Where social difference is recorded, it spans a wide range, including gender, dis/ability, class, family background, ethnicity, race, religion and previous exposure to conflict or violence. Proximity to conflict recurred markedly. 33 studies situated in conflict settings reported children’s exposure to conflict as imperative to how they engaged with the research, and how the researchers engaged with them (e.g., Bellino et al., 2026), stressing the urgency of peace education in contexts of child soldiers (Wessells, 2005) and children’s roles in post-conflict recovery (Cunningham, 2011; Kagaari et al., 2017; Gordillo, 2021; Mena et al., 2022; Shahab et al., 2022; Bellino et al., 2026). Studies set in contexts of conflict, which engage the question of difference, often did so analytically through addressing issues of social and economic stratifications, containing the lives of the children with which the research engaged (Corboz et al., 2019; Duckworth et al., 2019; Bokhari & Ahmed, 2020; Mena et al., 2022; Shahab et al., 2022; Anderson & Nesterova, 2024; Bellino et al., 2026).

3.3.4 TRIANGULATING THE THREE AXES

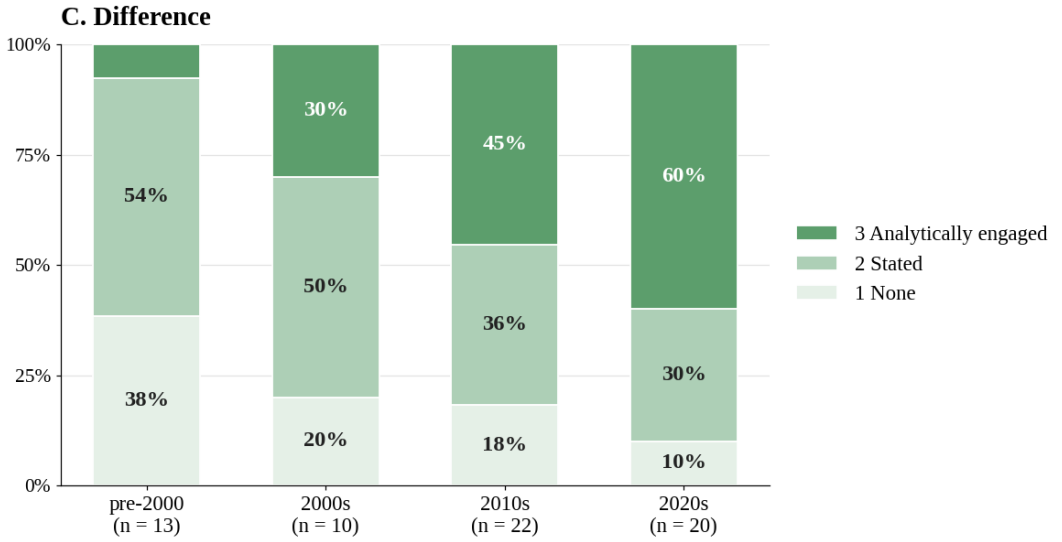
A triangulation of the three axes across time and space discloses an answer to the research question, which is more nuanced than any one of them provides alone. The clearest cross-cutting pattern is temporal: all three axes rise over the period the corpus spans, and they rise in tandem with one another, significantly in the most recent period. No study published before 2000 was assessed above level 2 for engagement; the share enacting a high level of engagement (level 3 or 4) then rises to a fifth of studies in the 2000s, over a third in the 2010s and more than half of those published since 2020. Analytically engaged differentiation follows a similar trajectory, from being almost entirely absent before 2000, to reaching three in five studies in the current decade. Advocacy for children’s epistemic agency increases less evenly, dipping in the 2010s before rising again in the 2020s. Notably, the 2000s rest on ten studies, so the peak in

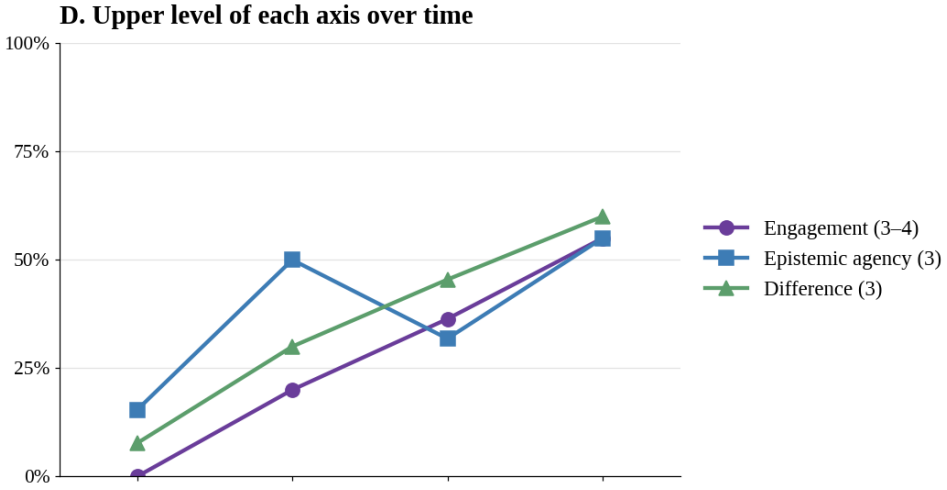
advocacy (5 of 10) and the 2010s dip should be read with caution. The field of peace education, on this evidence, has been shifting over the past two decades towards engaging children more highly, advocating more for children's epistemic agency and attending more carefully to which children it engages. Figure 4 shows these trajectories.

FIGURE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDIES ACROSS THE THREE AXES OVER TIME







	pre-2000 (n = 13)	2000s (n = 10)	2010s (n = 22)	2020s (n = 20)
Engagement (3–4)	0%	20%	36%	55%
Epistemic agency (3)	15%	50%	32%	55%
Difference (3)	8%	30%	45%	60%

Note. N = 65. Panel A to C show the proportion of studies assessed at each level of an axis, by period of publication (pre-2000, n = 13; 2000s, n = 10; 2010s, n = 22; 2020s, n = 20). The level ordering is descriptive of a study's epistemic position and is not a ranking of quality: a lower level does not denote a poorer study. Panel D shows the proportion at the upper level of each axis: engagement at level 3 or 4, advocacy of epistemic agency (level 3), and analytically engaged difference (level 3). Segments below 8 percent are not labelled.

Another pattern is evident when reading the axes against the contexts represented in the corpus. Ten of the 12 studies assessed at level 4 were situated in contexts of conflict, and these were more geographically dispersed than the corpus overall: six were situated in western contexts and six outside them, despite the wider concentration of studies in western geographies. Age also appears to matter. Of the 24 studies engaging children below the age of 12, or in educational stages below middle school, only four engaged children at levels 3 or 4 (Gokce, 2006; Tomovska, 2010; Kagaari et al., 2017; Braden et al., 2023), although 11 advocated children's epistemic agency. Religious context similarly intersects with difference: 12 of the 15 studies stating a religious context analytically engaged difference. The higher levels of engagement are therefore not distributed evenly across the corpus but appear more often concentrated among older children and studies situated in contexts where conflict, religion and social difference are made explicit.

Triangulated, the corpus presents a field that increasingly advocates children's standing as knowers and, more recently, has begun to engage with children as such. Still, peace education literature predominantly engages children at the lower levels of the spectrum, while affirming their epistemic agency in principle. This triangulated account suggests that how children are engaged in peace education literature varies not only over time but also across the contexts represented, begging for a deeper discussion of whose knowledge counts and on what terms, to which the thesis now turns.

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

In this final chapter, I first summarise the review's main results, reflecting also on the quality of the evidence base (Tricco et al., 2018). Second, I discuss the limitations of the scoping review process, including the assessment framework of children's engagement. Third, I discuss the review's results and contributions, suggesting that children's engagement in peace education is constrained and progressed, simultaneously, in knowledge production in the neoliberal academy. At the core of this argument lies an aspiration to 'start with children' (Gandhi, as cited in Zelyurt & Ince, 2018, p. 1519), while also reckoning that knowledge, including the one presented in this review, is produced and published under constraints, and with specific objectives that often lie elsewhere than with children. This review's contributions cannot be separated from the critical constraints under which it has been produced, calling for scrutiny of research ethics and methods with children beyond its scope. To more fully consider children's engagement in peace education, Fricker's (2007) epistemic questions of 'how and for whom' (p. 13) necessitate further examination in peace education research, as well as in practice, politics and policy across varied contexts.

4.1 SUMMARY OF MAIN RESULTS

The review set out three objectives to map how children are engaged in peace education literature. In brief, the results show that the field advocates children's epistemic agency more evidently than it enacts it. The level of engagement in which children are co-investigators is only seldom and recently identified. Since 2000, the field has moved towards higher levels of engagement, more evident advocacy for epistemic agency and has paid closer attention to difference. Before developing this discussion, however, I discuss the quality of the corpus assessed, and the limitations of the scoping review process.

4.1.1 QUALITY OF THE CORPUS

This brief discussion of the quality serves not as any form of appraisal of the included studies (Tricco et al., 2018; Munn et al., 2022). Yet the review's results are shaped by the quality in reporting across the corpus, which was markedly uneven. A number of

empirical studies did not describe how their child participants were sampled or what ethical procedures governed their involvement (e.g., Okanlawon et al., 2017; Usakli & Eren, 2024), and only a few reported in detail on the ethics of research conducted with children (e.g., Duckworth et al., 2019; Bellino et al., 2026). Qualitative studies were often small and situated (e.g., Duckworth et al., 2012; Jabor & Palmos, 2025), while quantitative studies reported larger samples, of which some gave sparse methodological detail (e.g., Biton & Salomon, 2006; Corboz et al., 2019). This unevenness is significant for what the review reasonably can claim (Munn et al., 2018; Peters et al., 2020).

Importantly, the included studies were not written to serve this review's objectives. Each study was designed to answer its own question, not to disclose the engagement of children, their epistemic agency nor the differences in between them. The review's results rest on the included studies, and where those studies do not report in detail about children's engagement, the assessment bears risks of overstating or understating its findings. The conditions under which studies are produced and published constrain what can be known from them, including from this present review.

4.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE SCOPING REVIEW PROCESS

The scoping review process is limited in several ways beyond quality of the included studies. It bears on rigour, and by the fact that the review has included various types of literature, meaning that the included studies adhere to different definitions and standards of rigour applied across the ontological, epistemological and methodological paradigms of research (Swann & Pratt, 2004, p. 5; Lincoln et al., 2018, p. 109; BERA, 2024, p. 9).

4.2.1 THE CONSTRAINTS OF A SINGLE REVIEWER

The scoping review process is limited by the condition that it was conducted by a single reviewer. The format of the thesis means that time, capacity and conditions for double and/or blind review have been impossible to satisfy. As Munn et al. (2018) recommend, a scoping review ought to be conducted as a review team of at leastrequires boviewers, especially if the review codes qualitative data through a coding framework as done in this thesis. It raises urgent questions of inter-rater reliability (which has not been

possible to ensure) and the overall validity of the results presented (Petticrew & Roberts, 2008, p. 57; Suri, 2020, p. 42). Inevitably, this limitation is difficult to redeem or redress in a satisfactory manner, although my supervisor has, to the best of their capacity, served as a partner for consultation and discussion of the research design, eligibility criteria and assessment framework.

4.2.2 THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The process has further been limited by the a priori defined eligibility criteria. The process of clarifying the criteria meant that the studies first recorded as "maybe" in Covidence (Section 3.1) were screened again to ensure that they were included and/or excluded on the same basis as all other studies. The limitation of this process can be described in accordance with the criteria themselves, particularly with respect to the PCC framework, publication types and languages.

PUBLICATION TYPES

The publication type criterion imposes an inherent limitation, in that the exclusion of specifically grey literature, taken for reasons of time constraints, removes many of those sources in which children's knowledge in peace education is likely to appear, such as reports, practitioner accounts and materials produced by children themselves (e.g., UNHCR, 2000; Gee et al., 2022). It is therefore conceivable that the co-investigating level of engagement, which the review finds to be rare and recent, is under-represented, not only in the field but in the review's own enquiry.

The varied publication types included further present a challenge of rigour, related to research integrity. It affirms the question of how this review meets standards of internal reliability and validity when synthesising across varying research paradigms (Petticrew & Roberts, 2008, p. 58; BERA, 2024, p. 26). It was an ethical challenge, present when designing the criterion, promoting an intersecting question of whether standards of rigour should determine what types of publications are represented in my review, and why? Without settling this question, the review made no explicit criterion related to rigour, which bears on the quality of the corpus assessed, and hence on the findings presented.

POPULATION

The population criterion informed the search through six proxy terms for children, and it was bounded at the age of 18 (United Nations, 1989, art. 1), but the use of proxy-terms means that the population was captured through terms subjectively selected by me. Although these were consulted with my supervisor and confluent with other reviews of peace education (e.g., Türk, 2018; Arató & Bodnár, 2024; Arystanbek et al., 2026; Corredor et al., 2026), the corpus is shaped by how the authors chose to label those they studied. This meant that terms such as "student," "youth," "young person/people" and "learner" often pertained to high schoolers or children in secondary school, which was the age and educational group most widely represented in the corpus. What counts as a child in this review is therefore partly an artefact, and the homogenising effect of the term "children," which the review problematises, is to some degree reproduced in the very means by which the population was captured (James & Prout, 1997, p. 46; Hackett et al., 2025, p. 811).

CONCEPT

The concept of peace was held constant across all searches through the term "peace*". While this ensured a consistent search and its truncation captured adjacent terms, such as "peacebuilding" and "peacekeeping," it necessarily bounded the review to literature that names peace explicitly in its title. A considerable body of literature relates to what could reasonably be regarded as peace education under other names, as examined by other reviews of conflict resolution (Hakvoort et al., 2022; Mas-Expósito et al., 2022), music education (Kilpi, 2026) and global citizenship education (Edwards et al., 2020; Witenstein et al., 2025). Such literature was, by design, excluded wherever it did not also entail "peace" in its title. This exclusion is consequential for the review's results, since it was observed that conflict resolution and peer mediation constitute the most common orientation of the interventions in the corpus. The true prevalence of that orientation is perhaps understated. What the review scopes, then, is not peace education to its fullest extent, but a proportion of it which explicitly names itself as such.

CONTEXT

Context, as confined to formal education, is limited in a comparable way to the concept. The criterion sits in a productive tension with the field's understanding of itself, noted, for example by Bekerman (2005) that '*the pretension* that schooling is responsible for inculcating the declared (though not necessarily acted upon) values (justice, peace, etc.) of society' (p. 240, emphasis added). As discussed, peace education is not confined to school contexts; rather, it unfolds across families, communities, faith settings and youth movements (e.g., Wessells, 2005; Liou & Literat, 2020; Ogunnusi, 2020). By confining the review to formal educational contexts, the corpus is oriented towards precisely those settings in which children's engagement is most likely to be structured by adults, and away from the informal and non-formal settings in which children's more agentic and self-directed peace efforts have often been documented (e.g., Bekerman, 2005; Berents, 2015; Mitrayani & Peel, 2017; Bokhari & Ahmed, 2020). This suggests that the low levels of engagement across the corpus are, in part, characteristic of the educational contexts included in the review, such that a review inclusive of more settings might have evidenced a different assessment of children's engagement across the literature.

LANGUAGES

The language criterion is consequential, since it restricted the inclusion of literature to that which is published in English and Danish. No Danish literature was identified, and the corpus consists only of literature published in English. This privileges not only an Anglophone evidence base, but it also compounds the western skew of included literature, which the review identifies as a finding (Bedenlier et al., 2025). Peace education literature produced in, for example, Arabic and Spanish was impossible to review, but several of the contexts pertinent to peace education are located precisely where languages beyond English are spoken. This criterion thus risks shaping the corpus as confluent with the Anglocentric and Eurocentric orientations, also evident in the databases selected for searching.

4.2.3 THE CONSTRUCTED FRAMEWORK

The review is further limited by the theoretically constructed assessment framework for children's engagement. The defensibility of the framework rests not only on the

categories themselves, but also on the boundaries that separate them, and it must be acknowledged that these boundaries involve interpretive decisions that another researcher might reasonably draw elsewhere. The framework is, therefore, only as consistent as the reader who applies it. It is also adult-authored, informed by adult theorists. Thus, in deciding whose knowledge counts at each level, it risks perpetuating the same power asymmetries, which it sets out to examine. Ethically, this presents a conjoined challenge of to whom the framework is answerable; indeed, it can at best only attempt to be answerable to children (Patel, 2015, p. 21).

A difficulty emerged when applying the framework to theoretical literature. Of the 25 theoretical papers, 24 could not be coded above level 2, and only one reached a level 4. This is a constraint of the framework, since theoretical papers rarely enact children's knowledge in ways required for reaching the upper levels. The framework therefore measures theoretical and empirical literature against thresholds that the former is unlikely to cross, thus challenging any direct comparison of engagement levels between the two types of publication. Section 4.3.1 returns to this, since it bears directly on the review's central finding. I now turn to bringing the review's results into conversation with its background.

4.3 CHILDREN'S ENGAGEMENT & THE NEOLIBERAL ACADEMY

Children's engagement in peace education, as scoped in this review, cannot be separated from the conditions under which knowledge is produced in the neoliberal academy. Two findings are pertinent and shall be discussed in light of how they evidence the conditions of knowledge production. First, the literature advocates children's epistemic agency more than it engages it. Second, the geographical skew suggests that critical attention must be paid to who produces knowledge in peace education. It would be reductive, and most likely incorrect, to explain these findings by any single cause.

For instance, IRBs serve to safeguard children and uphold the ethicality of research, especially also in contexts of conflict as represented in this review. Low engagement may thus in part reflect justified protection rather than exclusion, and, as

Bodén (2021) cautions, research by children is not necessarily more ethical than research on them. At the same time, institutionalised research ethics vary across time and space (Lincoln et al., 2018, p. 109), meaning that most of the studies presented adhere to different ethical procedures. The diversity of contexts also signifies that how childhood is constructed varies, shaping the varied ways of how children are engaged. And, pertinently, the neoliberal academy, within which knowledge about peace education is produced, has consolidated over the years through the marginalisation of knowledges, including those held by children (Santos, 2012; Grosfoguel, 2013; Patel, 2015; Hackett et al., 2025).

4.3.1 CHILDREN'S EPISTEMIC AGENCY IN THE NEOLIBERAL ACADEMY

The finding which reveals a divergence between children's engagement and advocacy for their epistemic agency highlights the considerable task it is to subvert longstanding structures of marginalisation. 44 of the 65 studies advocate or acknowledge children's epistemic agency, yet most produce their knowledge with children absent or instrumental. This divergence must, however, be read alongside the limitation set out in Section 4.2.3. 18 of the 24 studies that advocate or acknowledge children's epistemic agency while engaging them at the two lowest levels are theoretical, and theoretical literature rarely reaches the upper levels of the framework; among the 20 empirical studies at those levels, the divergence narrows to six. Read together with the rise in engagement since 2000, the result discloses a more complex picture than one of constraint alone. On the one hand, the neoliberal academy has, arguably, made room for children's knowledge. Co-investigation is rare but recent, coinciding with a participatory turn in childhood studies that has established children's right to be heard in matters affecting them (United Nations, 1989, art. 12; Hart, 1992; Lundy, 2007). On the other hand, the conditions under which knowledge is produced make it considerably easier to write about children's epistemic agency than to produce knowledge with children. Advocating children's epistemic agency in theory requires no ethical approval nor the challenges of obtaining consent in fieldwork. Conversely, engaging children as knowers in empirical research requires both. Children's knowledge is, as such, both progressed and constrained in the neoliberal academy, a tension to which the following argument attends.

A simplistic reading might overstate that a divergence shows a misalignment between what researchers envision in theory and pursue in practice. I resist reducing the result as such. The critiques offered by decolonial and feminist scholars reach beyond the capacity of a single researcher. The neoliberal academy is not a neutral site of enquiry; all knowledge is produced by someone, for someone and for some purpose (Patel, 2015; Tuhiwai Smith, 2021). Within the neoliberal academy, epistemic agency (and who holds it) is vested with interests, such as the pressing competitions for publications, citations and funding, which are, as all else, consolidated within a capitalist system in which knowledge is a product to be owned (Santos, 2012). Academic authorship is, by convention, adult authorship (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008; Wilkinson & Wilkinson, 2017; Hackett et al., 2025). Peer-reviewed research, as this review also examines, credits adults, while ethical procedures, in performing their protective function, also determine how and which children are engaged in research (Bodén, 2021; Handfield-Hill et al., 2023). A researcher may push, sincerely, for children's epistemic agency, and find themselves constrained within conditions which hold children as objects. This indicates why, and perhaps where, the aspiration to 'start with children' (Gandhi, as cited in Zelyurt & Ince, 2018, p. 1519) meets its limit in the neoliberal academy. To claim children's epistemic agency is not the same as answering to it, as Patel (2015) urges. This review uncovers that the former is far more common than the latter within peace education literature in the neoliberal academy.

4.3.2 AN OVERREPRESENTATION OF "WESTERN" KNOWLEDGES

The geographical skew of the corpus, although compounded by the language criterion, can be brought into conversation with the same argument articulated above. The analysed literature is dominated by studies, both located in and published from North America. Nevertheless, the studies assessed as highest in engagement level were disproportionately situated outside the west, relative to the corpus as a whole. A decolonial argument, offered by Mignolo and Walsh (2018), would render this as evidence of the global power structures in which modernity and modern knowledge come to dominate (pp. 10-11), here shown in the field of peace education. The picture is, however, more complex, as such a reading would risk overstating a direct connection

between western knowledge and the exclusion of children in knowledge production. No such statement can reasonably be made. Indeed, the review shows that many studies outside the west equally constrain children's engagement in peace education. Beier (2015) and Berents (2020) discuss the implications of western dominant knowledges in how children are engaged in peacebuilding in contexts of conflict, wherein they are often rendered as victims or as at risk, rather than as knowers, of their own conditions. An assertive counter emerged in the findings from Kagaari et al. (2017), steered by the child participants in Uganda who deliberately, in their words, pushed for a definition of peace which runs counter to that held in the west. I caution against any simplified geographical binary, as that in itself, risks seeing western knowledge only as an extension of the neoliberal academy, within which much knowledge that accredits children is also produced (e.g., Tomovska, 2010; Braden et al., 2023; Anderson & Nesterova, 2024).

This argument implicates the review. It was conducted in English, in databases of largely western provenance, by a researcher located in the west, suggesting that the review risks perpetuating the very epistemic ordering it critiques (see Gergan & Smith, 2021). For this reason, the review takes decolonial critiques seriously without positioning itself as a decolonising project, since decolonisation concerns the repatriation of Indigenous land and life rather than serving as a metaphor for critical enquiry (Tuck & Yang, 2012). The answerability, which the constructed assessment framework asks of each included study, applies to the review. It can only attempt to be answerable to children by carefully attending to how and which children are engaged. Through its methodology of a scoping review, it cannot include children as producers of the knowledge presented. This is a limitation that the review discloses more than it subverts, a discomfort to sit with rather than to resolve (Idahosa & Bradbury, 2020). It aligns with one of the review's central findings, namely that the field advocates children's epistemic agency more evidently than it engages it.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has presented a scoping review to examine the research question of how children are engaged in peace education literature. It has been situated in relation to three fields: peace education, childhood studies and knowledge production in the neoliberal academy. The first field has been the one under scrutiny, and childhood studies provided the lens through which such a question could pertain to children as knowledge producers. Knowledge production in the neoliberal academy has been discussed as the conditions under which much research is conducted. This has bolstered the recognition that the studies reviewed, and the review itself, are produced under conditions that must be considered beyond any simple answer to how children are engaged. Inevitably, the research question, and any answer to it, are both coupled with wider structures of power and knowledge production.

This review specified through the Population, Concept, Context (PCC) framework and further narrowed its focus through a novel framework for assessing children's engagement in the literature. While the former served to illuminate the characteristics of the included studies, the latter provided a possible answer to the research question and responded to the review's three objectives. It can be inferred that children engaged in peace education (in formal education) are more often in secondary and high school than in earlier primary and early childhood education. Peace education is often studied as a context-dependent and deeply situated practice within formal education, predominantly through a focus on conflict resolution and peer mediation. This aligns with the definition of peace education, held by UNICEF (Fountain, 1999), which is widely referenced across the field. The charted contexts also extend beyond the educational setting, to geography, religion and conflict, which must be considered alongside it.

The constructed assessment framework has shown two findings that have been discussed throughout: that children are seldom engaged in peace education literature, and when they are, this engagement is often instrumental, serving a purpose beyond the children's engagement itself; and, at the same time, that children's engagement as epistemic subjects is often acknowledged or advocated across the literature. Read

together with the rise in engagement since 2000, these findings suggest that children's knowledge is both progressed and constrained in the neoliberal academy.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH & POLICY

The first implication for research is that children can be, and increasingly are, engaged as epistemic agents. Arguably this applies across all three fields, as peace education is but one example of knowledge production in the neoliberal academy, and that its participatory methods which engage children are closely connected with developments in critical childhood studies. This implication extends a recommendation for future research, calling for sharper scrutiny of how and which children are engaged in the production of knowledge in peace education. The caution is, meanwhile, that knowledge production is coupled with interests that extend well beyond any single researcher, and often beyond the research institutions themselves.

The critical developments of peace education are increasingly steered towards a definition of positive peace, which underscores the necessary structural conditions for the presence of peace and social justice (Hajir & Kester, 2020). Picking up on this line of work, this present review suggests a future research direction which steps further into that question by paying attention to children (and who the children are), asking about not only what the conditions of structural violence are, but more firmly asserting a vision of what structural peace might look like in the very production of knowledge about peace education. How can the very process of producing knowledge become more inclusive, so that the ideas and ideals of peace education are informed by those who are, at first hand, positioned as its beneficiaries?

Finally, this review has implications for policy. Although any detailed focus on policy has exceeded the objective of this review, it is pertinent for not only efforts for building peace in education, but also as an instigator of support and funding for such aims. In the current political climate, marked by ongoing wars and genocides of which children, as much as adults, are at the frontline of the atrocities, policymaking around peace education has gained significant traction. As peace education is deeply contextual, any

recommendation of what it looks like is ‘incomplete without context’ (Ogunnusi, 2020, p. 42). To date, the knowledge base is much more consolidated by western knowledges and authors. Thus, a careful consideration for future policymaking lies not only within the serious question of how to engage children in peace education, but also a deeper scrutiny of how and for whom peace is envisioned and pursued in educational research and practice as informative to policy.

I return, finally, to where this review began: a concern that children, though positioned as the foremost beneficiaries of peace education, are largely absent from the knowledge produced about it. The review confirms that concern, yet it also records its limits. Children’s voices on peace are political, expressive and relational acts (Andrén & Nelson, 2024, p. 4), present in their everyday lives long before they are admitted into published research (Berents, 2015; Liou & Literat, 2020). The question this review leaves is therefore not only whether children are engaged in peace education literature, but also under what conditions. If peace education is to ‘start with children’ (Gandhi, as cited in Zelyurt & Ince, 2018, p. 1519), it must begin not by amplifying children’s voices alone, but by transforming the conditions of knowledge production that keep their silences intact.

REFERENCES

GENERAL REFERENCES

An-Na'im, A. A. (2021). *Decolonizing human rights*. Cambridge University Press.

Andrén, M., & Nelson, K. Z. (2024). Listening to Children: Theories and Ethics of Listening. *Research report on childhood and the study of children*, (2024:1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.3384/report-204274

Arató, F., & Bodnár, B. A. (2024). Narratives and common traits of peace education and the 'Teaching Students to be Peacemakers' programme: Rethinking the role of cooperative learning in peace education. *Intercultural Education, 35*(5), 539–557. https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2024.2405323

Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: Towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 8*(1), 19–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/1364557032000119616

Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 35*(4), 216–224. https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366908977225

Arystanbek, A., Bukutova, A., Toleu, G., Parmenter, L., Cremin, H., & Ospanbek, A. (2026). Implementing positive peace education in schools: A systematic literature review of global practices. *Educational Research Review, 50*, 100759. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2025.100759

Bajaj, M. (2015). 'Pedagogies of resistance' and critical peace education praxis. *Journal of Peace Education, 12(2), 154–166*. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2014.991914

Bajaj, M., & Brantmeier, E. (2011). The politics, praxis, and possibilities of critical peace education. *Journal of Peace Education, 8(3), 221–224. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2011.621356*

Baker, B. (1999). What is voice? Issues of identity and representation in the framing of reviews. *Review of Educational Research, 69*(4), 365–383. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543069004365

Beales, A. C. F. (1931). *The history of peace: A short account of the organised movements for international peace*. G. Bell & Sons.

Bedenlier, S., Buntins, K., Bond, M., Händel, M., & Marín, V. I. (2025). Evidence syntheses in educational technology research: What is not published in English is not visible? A tertiary mapping review. *Review of Education, 13*(1), e70022. https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.70022

Beier, J. M. (2015). Shifting the burden: Childhoods, resilience, subjecthood. *Critical Studies on Security, 3*(3), 237–252. https://doi.org/10.1080/21624887.2015.1114459

Berents, H. (2015). Children, violence, and social exclusion: Negotiation of everyday insecurity in a Colombian barrio. *Critical Studies on Security, 3*(1), 90–104. https://doi.org/10.1080/21624887.2015.1014703

Berents, H. (2020). Depicting childhood: A critical framework for engaging images of children in IR. In J. M. Beier (Ed.), *Discovering childhood in international relations* (pp. 41–63). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-46063-1_3

Bizzell, P. (1992). *Academic discourse and critical consciousness*. University of Pittsburgh Press.

Bodén, L. (2021). On, to, with, for, by: ethics and children in research. *Children's Geographies,* 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2021.1891405

Bond, M. (2024). *Quality of Evidence Synthesis Tool (QuEST)* (Version 1). Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14211692

Brantmeier, E. J., Keenan, K., Sims, Z., Grimes, J., & Grier, X. (2024). A historical content analysis study of the *Journal of Peace Education* from 2004 to 2023. *Journal of Peace Education*, *21*(3), 263–284. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2024.2422765

British Educational Research Association [BERA]. (2024). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (5th ed.). www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2024

Brown, N. (2022). Scope and continuum of participatory research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education, 45*(2), 200–211. https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2021.1902980

Burroughs, M. D., & Tollefsen, D. (2016). Learning to listen: Epistemic injustice and the child. *Episteme, 13*(3), 359–377. https://doi.org/10.1017/epi.2015.64

Campbell, F., Tricco, A. C., Munn, Z., Pollock, D., Saran, A., Sutton, A., White, H., & Khalil, H. (2023). Mapping reviews, scoping reviews, and evidence and gap maps (EGMs): The same but different—The "Big Picture" review family. *Systematic Reviews, 12*, Article 45. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13643-023-02178-5

Campbell, F., Wong, R., Llewellyen, J. L., Stoniute, A., Pearson, F., & Bond, M. (2024). PROTOCOL: Methods used in the development, production and updating of evidence and gap maps: A scoping review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews, 20*(2), e1402. https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1402

Catungal, J. P., & Dowling, R. (2021). Power, subjectivity, and ethics in qualitative research. In I. Hay & M. Cope (Eds.), Qualitative research methods in human geography (5th ed., pp. 18–38). Oxford University Press.

Cope, M. (2021). Organizing, coding, and analyzing qualitative data. In I. Hay & M. Cope (Eds.), Qualitative research methods in human geography (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Corredor, A., Salazar Montoya, E. O., Cardona-Acevedo, S., Valencia, J., Peña Ortega, B. F., Valencia-Arias, A., & Verde Flores, L. (2026). Design and evaluation of peace curricula in territories affected by armed violence: A systematic review. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research, 18*(2), 169–188. https://doi.org/10.1108/JACPR-02-2026-1111

Cortright, D. (2008). *Peace: A history of movements and ideas*. Cambridge University Press.

Coulter, B. (2020). Developing youth agency through place-based education: Challenges and opportunities. In A. Cutter-Mackenzie-Knowles, K. Malone, & E. Barratt Hacking (Eds.), Research handbook on childhoodnature (pp. 1501–1520). Springer.

Council of Europe. (2026). *Recommendation CM/Rec(2026)11 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on peace education by, with and for young people*. Council of Europe.

Cremin, H. (2015). Peace education research in the twenty-first century: Three concepts facing crisis or opportunity? *Journal of Peace Education, 13*, 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2015.1069736

Creswell, J. W. (2015). *30 essential skills for the qualitative researcher*. SAGE.

Dixon-Woods, M., Cavers, D., Agarwal, S., Annandale, E., Arthur, A., Harvey, J., Hsu, R., Katbamna, S., Olsen, R., Smith, L., Riley, R., & Sutton, A. J. (2006). Conducting a critical interpretive synthesis of the literature on access to healthcare by vulnerable groups. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 6*, Article 35. https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-6-35

Drexel University Libraries. (2025, April 14). *Upcoming changes to the ERIC database*. https://library.drexel.edu/news-and-events/news/2025/april/eric-database-updates

Dunne, G., & Kotsonis, A. (2022). Epistemic exploitation in education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 55*(3), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2022.2094249

Edwards, D. B., Jr., Sustarsic, M., Chiba, M., McCormick, M., Goo, M., & Perriton, S. (2020). Achieving and monitoring education for sustainable development and global citizenship: A systematic review of the literature. *Sustainability, 12*(4), 1383. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12041383

Elliott, V. (2018). Thinking about the Coding Process in Qualitative Data Analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 23(11), 2850-2861. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.3560

Elliott, V. (2022). *Foundations of Educational Research*. Bloomsbury Academic.

Epstein, E. (2006). Echoes from the periphery: Challenges to building a culture of peace through education in marginalized communities. In Y. Iram (Ed.), *Educating toward a culture of peace* (pp. 73–92). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

EUPeace. (2022, July 1). *EUPeace: European University for Peace, Justice and Inclusive Societies*. https://www.eupeace.eu/education/

Exec. Order No. 14222, 90 Fed. Reg. 11095 (2025). *Implementing the President's "Department of Government Efficiency" cost efficiency initiative.* https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2025-03527

Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5*(1), 80–92. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500107

Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. *Critical Inquiry, 8*(4), 777–795. https://doi.org/10.1086/448181

Fountain, S. (1999). *Peace education in UNICEF* (Working Paper Series, Education Section, Programme Division). UNICEF.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Continuum.

Freire, P. (1988). Acceptance speech for the UNESCO prize for peace education. In *UNESCO Prize for Peace Education* 1986 & 1987 (pp. 25–28). Paris: UNESCO.

Fricker, M. (2007). *Epistemic injustice: Power and the ethics of knowing*. Oxford University Press.

Fricker, M. (2017). Evolving concepts of epistemic injustice. In *The Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Injustice* (pp. 53–60). https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315212043

Gallacher, L.-A., & Gallagher, M. (2008). Methodological immaturity in childhood research? Thinking through 'participatory methods'. Childhood, 15(4), 499–516. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568208091672

Galtung, J. (1964). An editorial. *Journal of Peace Research, 1*(1), 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1177/002234336400100101

Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, Peace, and Peace Research. *Journal of Peace Research*, *6*(3), 167–191. http://www.jstor.org/stable/422690

Galtung, J. (1996). *Peace by peaceful means : peace and conflict, development and civilization* (1st ed.). International Peace Research Institute.

Gee, D., Brooks, E., & Cartwright, I. (2022). Peace at the heart: A relational approach to education in British schools. *Quakers in Britain*. https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/peace-at-the-heart

Gergan, M., & Smith, S. (2021). Reaching out: Cross-cultural research. In I. Hay & M. Cope (Eds.), Qualitative research methods in human geography (5th ed., pp. 40–59). Oxford University Press.

Grosfoguel, R. (2013). The Structure of Knowledge in Westernized Universities: epistemic racism/sexism and the four genocides/epistemicides of the long 16th century. *Human Architecture*, *11*(1), 73–90.

Hackett, A., Hall, M., Pahl, K., & Kraftl, P. (2025). Giving up the 'Good Research Child'. *Qualitative Research, 25*(4), 805–823. https://doi.org/10.1177/14687941241264490

Hajir, B. (2024). Between 'the paradox of liberalism' and 'the paradox of decoloniality': education for peacebuilding in conflict settings. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, *22*(3), 433–445. https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2022.2160971

Hajir, B., & Kester, K. (2020). Toward a Decolonial Praxis in Critical Peace Education: Postcolonial Insights and Pedagogic Possibilities. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, *39*(5), 515–532. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11217-020-09707-y

Hakvoort, I., Lindahl, J., & Lundström, A. (2022). Research from 1996 to 2019 on approaches to address conflicts in schools: A bibliometric review of publication activity and research topics. *Journal of Peace Education, 19*(2), 129–157. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2022.2104234

Handfield-Hill, S., Finn, M., Dudman, J., Ergler, C., Freeman, C., Hayes, T. A., Jarman, P., Leon, L., Lazaro, M. C., Latai-Niusulu, A., Oza, E., Robson, E., Rosen, R., Schaaf, M., Taua'a, S., Tanielu, H., & Walker, L. (2023). Expanding the scope of ethical research with and for children and young

people – six viewpoints on crisis, cross-cultural working and reciprocity. *Children's Geographies* https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2023.2259331

Hardman, C. (1973). Can there be an anthropology of children? *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford, 4*(2), 85–99.

Harris, I. M. (2002). Conceptual underpinnings of peace education. In G. Salomon & B. Nevo (Eds.), *Peace education: The concept, principles, and practices around the world* (pp. 15–25). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Hart, R. A. (1992). *Children's participation: From tokenism to citizenship* (Innocenti Essays No. 4). UNICEF International Child Development Centre. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/227219

hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom. Routledge.*

Idahosa, G. E., & Bradbury, V. (2020). Challenging the way we know the world: overcoming paralysis and utilising discomfort through critical reflexive thought. *Acta Academica, 52*(1), 31-53. http://dx.doi.org/10.18820/24150479/aa52i1/SP3

Islam, T. (2013). Peace and conflict studies: Evolution of an academic discipline. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh (Humanities), 58*(1), 129–155.

James, A., & Prout, A. (Eds.). (1997). *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: Contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Jenkins, T. (2022). Critical comprehensive peace education: Finding a pedagogical nexus for personal, structural, and cultural change. In A. A. Abdi & G. W. Misiaszek (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook on critical theories of education* (pp. 393–411). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-86343-2_22

Kester, K., & Cremin, H. (2017). Peace education and peace education research: Toward a concept of poststructural violence and second-order reflexivity. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 49(14), 1415–1427.* https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2017.1313715

Kilpi, J. (2026). On the interconnectedness of music and peacebuilding: A scoping review informing music education. *Research Studies in Music Education, 48*(1), 45–64. https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103X251363195

Levac, D., Colquhoun, H., & O'Brien, K. K. (2010). Scoping studies: Advancing the methodology. *Implementation Science, 5*, Article 69. https://doi.org/10.1186/1748-5908-5-69

Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2018). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed., pp. 108–150). SAGE.

Liou, A., & Literat, I. (2020). "We Need You to Listen to Us": Youth Activist Perspectives on Intergenerational Dynamics and Adult Solidarity in Youth Movements. *International Journal of Communication*, *14*, 4662–4682.

Lundy, L. (2007). 'Voice' is not enough: Conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. *British Educational Research Journal, 33*(6), 927–942. https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920701657033

Mas-Expósito, L., Krieger, V., Amador-Campos, J. A., Casañas, R., Albertí, M., & Lalucat-Jo, L. (2022). Implementation of whole school restorative approaches to promote positive youth development: Review of relevant literature and practice guidelines. *Education Sciences, 12*(3), 187. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12030187

Mignolo, W. D., & Walsh, C. (2018). *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*. Duke University Press.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2020). Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook (4th ed.). SAGE.

Munn, Z., Peters, M. D. J., Stern, C., Tufanaru, C., McArthur, A., & Aromataris, E. (2018). Systematic review or scoping review? Guidance for authors when choosing between a systematic or scoping review approach. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 18*, Article 143. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-018-0611-x

Munn, Z., Pollock, D., Khalil, H., Alexander, L., McInerney, P., Godfrey, C. M., Peters, M., & Tricco, A. C. (2022). What are scoping reviews? Providing a formal definition of scoping reviews as a type of evidence synthesis. *JBI Evidence Synthesis, 20*(4), 950–952. https://doi.org/10.11124/JBIES-21-00483

Ogunnusi, M. (2020). *Young People, Situated Learning, and Peace Praxis at the Margins of Everyday Life*. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.

Oxford University Press. (n.d.). Engage, v., III.11.b. In Oxford English dictionary. Retrieved June 6, 2026, from https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/7376446285

Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., Shamseer, L., Tetzlaff, J. M., Akl, E. A., Brennan, S. E., Chou, R., Glanville, J., Grimshaw, J. M., Hróbjartsson, A., Lalu, M. M., Li, T., Loder, E. W., Mayo-Wilson, E., McDonald, S., … Moher, D. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ, 372*, n71. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71

Patel, L. (2015). *Decolonizing educational research: From ownership to answerability*. Taylor & Francis Group.

Peters, M. D. J., Marnie, C., Tricco, A. C., Pollock, D., Munn, Z., Alexander, L., McInerney, P., Godfrey, C. M., & Khalil, H. (2020). Updated methodological guidance for the conduct of scoping reviews. *JBI Evidence Synthesis, 18*(10), 2119–2126. https://doi.org/10.11124/JBIES-20-00167

Petticrew, M., & Roberts, H. (2008). *Systematic reviews in the social sciences: A practical guide*. Blackwell Publishing.

Pinter, A., & Zandian, S. (2015). 'I thought it would be tiny little one phrase that we said, in a huge big pile of papers': Children's reflections on their involvement in participatory research. *Qualitative Research, 15*(2), 235–250. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112465637

Prout, A., & James, A. (1997). A new paradigm for the sociology of childhood? Provenance, promise and problems. In A. James & A. Prout (Eds.), *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: Contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood* (2nd ed., pp. 7–33). Routledge.

Purwanto, Y., Suprapto, Munaf, D. R., Albana, H., Marifataini, L., Siregar, I., & Sumarni. (2023). The peace education concept and practice at universities: A systematic review. *Cogent Education, 10*(2), 2260724. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2260724

Quijano, A. (2000). Coloniality of power and Eurocentrism in Latin America. *International Sociology, 15*(2), 215–232. https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580900015002005

Rapley, T. (2011). Some pragmatics of qualitative data analysis. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Issues of theory, method and practice* (3rd ed., pp. 273–290). SAGE.

Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (4th ed.). SAGE.

Salomon, G. (2002). The nature of peace education: Not all programs are equal. In G. Salomon & B. Nevo (Eds), *Peace education, the concept, principles, and practices around the world* (pp. 271–82). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Santos, B. de S. (2012). The university at a crossroads. Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge, 10(1), 7–17.

Spyrou, S. (2017). Time to decenter childhood? *Childhood, 24*(4), 433–437. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568217725936

Suri, H. (2008). Ethical considerations in synthesising research: Whose representations? *Qualitative Research Journal, 8*(1), 63–73. https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0801062

Suri, H. (2020). Ethical considerations of conducting systematic reviews in educational research. In O. Zawacki-Richter, M. Kerres, S. Bedenlier, M. Bond, & K. Buntins (Eds.), *Systematic reviews in educational research: Methodology, perspectives and application* (pp. 41–54). Springer VS. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-27602-7_3

Timmermans, S., & Tavory, I. (2012). Theory construction in qualitative research: From grounded theory to abductive analysis. *Sociological Theory, 30*(3), 167–186. https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275112457914

Tricco, A. C., Lillie, E., Zarin, W., O'Brien, K. K., Colquhoun, H., Levac, D., Moher, D., Peters, M. D. J., Horsley, T., Weeks, L., Hempel, S., Akl, E. A., Chang, C.,

McGowan, J., Stewart, L., Hartling, L., Aldcroft, A., Wilson, M. G., Garritty, C., … Straus, S. E. (2018). PRISMA extension for scoping reviews (PRISMA-ScR): Checklist and explanation. *Annals of Internal Medicine, 169*(7), 467–473. https://doi.org/10.7326/M18-0850

Swann, J., & Pratt, J. (Eds.). (2004). *Educational research in practice: Making sense of methodology*. Continuum.

Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 1(1), 1–42.

Tuhiwai Smith, L. (2021). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples* (3rd ed.). Zed Books. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350225282

Türk, F. (2018). Evaluation of the effects of conflict resolution, peace education and peer mediation: A meta-analysis study. *International Education Studies, 11*(1), 25–43. https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v11n1p25

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2012). *International standard classification of education: ISCED 2011*. UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the rights of the child*. Treaty Series, 1577, 3.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR]. (2000). Peace education programme [Teacher's pack]. UNHCR.

van den Dungen, P., & Wittner, L. S. (2003). Peace history: An introduction. *Journal of Peace Research, 40*(4), 363–375. https://doi.org/10.1177/00223433030404001

Veritas Health Innovation. (2026). *Covidence systematic review software* [Computer software]. https://www.covidence.org/

von Benzon, N., & O'Sullivan, K. (2021). Analysing 'messy' data. In N. von Benzon, M. Holton, C. Wilkinson, & S. Wilkinson (Eds.), Creative methods for human geographers. SAGE.

Wilkinson, C., & Wilkinson, S. (2017). Doing it write: Representation and responsibility in writing up participatory research involving young people. *Social Inclusion, 5*(3), 219–227. https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v5i3.957

Willig, C. (2013). Interpretation and analysis. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data analysis* (pp. 136–149). SAGE.

Witenstein, M. A., Baxter, A., Iyengar, R., Schaller, E. U., & Bah, S. (2025). A scoping study of education for sustainable development and global citizenship education in higher education. *Prospects, 55*(1–2), 165–183. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-025-09739-7

Zawacki-Richter, O., Kerres, M., Bedenlier, S., Bond, M., & Buntins, K. (Eds.). (2020). *Systematic reviews in educational research: Methodology, perspectives and application*. Springer VS. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-27602-7

Zembylas, M., & Bekerman, Z. (2013). Peace education in the present: Dismantling and reconstructing some fundamental theoretical premises. *Journal of Peace Education, 10(2), 197–214*. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2013.790253

INCLUDED STUDIES

Al Mushaqiri, M. R., Ishak, Z. B., & Ismail, W. M. (2019). Impact of the peace education program on the social behavior of pre-school children in the Sultanate of Oman. *Opción, 35*(Especial No. 21), 2899–2921.

Al-Radaideh, B. N. (2019). Teaching peace through art education curriculum: A proposed one-unit plan for fifth-grade students in Middle Eastern schools. *International Journal of Pedagogy & Curriculum, 26*(2), 45–57. https://doi.org/10.18848/2327-7963/CGP/v26i02/45-57

Amca Toklu, D., Acar, A., Akcil, U., & Dagli, G. (2024). Development and evaluation of peace-oriented education activity for preschool children within the scope of sustainable development. *Sustainability, 16*(19), Article 8472. https://doi.org/10.3390/su16198472

Anderson, S. K., & Nesterova, Y. (2024). Engaging young people in peace education research: Using an arts based approach to gain congruence through democratic methods. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 23*, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069241257944

Bacher, S., Bacher, M., Kraler, C., & Binytska, K. (2024). A Ukrainian student visit at an Austrian school in times of war: Implications for peace education. *The Modern Higher Education Review*, (9), 141–162. https://doi.org/10.28925/2617-5266/2024.99

Bedir, G., & Arslan, M. (2013). The secondary education students' perceptions regarding peace education and human rights. *Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies in the World, 3*(3), 44–55.

Bekerman, Z. (2005). Are there children to educate for peace in conflict-ridden areas? A critical essay on peace and coexistence education. *Intercultural Education, 16*(3), 235–245. https://doi.org/10.1080/14675980500211808

Bellino, M. J., Barber, C., Ortiz-Guerrero, M., Paulson, J., & Cruz Moreno, C. (2026). The right to truth: Students' proximity to conflict, classroom climate, and opportunities for teaching about conflict and peace in Bogotá, Colombia. *Comparative Education Review, 70*(2), 299–330. https://doi.org/10.1086/740392

Bickmore, K. (2019). Education for democratic peace-building amid gendered violence: Youth experience and schooling in Mexico, Bangladesh and Canada. In M. Drinkwater, F. Rizvi, & K. Edge (Eds.), *Transnational perspectives on democracy, citizenship, human rights and peace education* (pp. 261–284). Bloomsbury Academic.

Binns-Thompson, S., & Joong, Y. H. P. (2018). Integration of peace education in the mathematics curriculum: Impact on students' performance, peace knowledge, and conflict resolution skills. *Journal of Education & Development in the Caribbean, 17*(1), 127–160.

Biton, Y., & Salomon, G. (2006). Peace in the eyes of Israeli and Palestinian youths: Effects of collective narratives and peace education program. *Journal of Peace Research, 43*(2), 167–180. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343306061889

Bokhari, F., & Ahmed, Z. S. (2020). Challenges and opportunities for peace educators: Lessons from a youth-led effort in Pakistan. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly, 38*(1–2), 73–86. https://doi.org/10.1002/crq.21290

Braden, E., Long, S., Wynter-Hoyte, K., Boutte, G., Frazier, J., Mosso-Taylor, S., & Volk, D. (2023). Curricular violence and the education of Black children: Working toward positive peace through pro-Black practices. *International Journal of Early Childhood, 55*(3), 347–367. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13158-023-00379-6

Carter, C. C., & Pickett, L. (2014). Teaching for peace with youth literature. In C. C. Carter & L. Pickett, *Youth literature for peace education*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137359377

Cellitti, A. (1998). Teaching peace concepts to children. *Dimensions of Early Childhood, 26*, 20–22.

Corboz, J., Siddiq, W., Hemat, O., Chirwa, E. D., & Jewkes, R. (2019). What works to prevent violence against children in Afghanistan? Findings of an interrupted time series evaluation of a school-based peace education and community social norms change intervention in Afghanistan. *PLoS ONE, 14*(8), Article e0220614. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0220614

Cunningham, J. (2011). Schools and peacebuilding in Northern Uganda: Young people's perspectives. In J. Paulson (Ed.), *Education, conflict and development* (pp. 209–233). Oxford Studies in Comparative Education, 20(1). Symposium Books.

Damirchi, E. S., & Bilge, F. (2014). The effect of peace education program on the seven-grade students' conflict resolution and communication skills. *Eğitim ve Bilim, 39*(175), 309–318. https://doi.org/10.15390/EB.2014.3324

Duckworth, C. L., Allen, B., & Williams, T. T. (2012). What do students learn when we teach peace? A qualitative assessment of a theater peace program. *Journal of Peace Education, 9*(1), 81–99. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2012.664548

Duckworth, C. L., Albano, T., Munroe, D., & Garver, M. E. (2019). "Students can change a school": Understanding the role of youth leadership in building a school culture of peace. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly, 36*(3), 235–249. https://doi.org/10.1002/crq.21245

Fitch, T., & Marshall, J. L. (1999). *The Teaching Students to Be Peacemakers program: Program overview and review of the literature*. (ED436517). ERIC. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED436517

Freedman, S., & Chen, E. Y. J. (2023). Forgiveness education as a form of peace education with fifth-grade students: A pilot study with implications for educators. *Peace and Conflict, 29*(3), 235–246. https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000670

Georgeson, J. (2025). Who is at the centre? Rethinking child-centred pedagogy, identity and difference in early years settings: The case for peace education. In V. Bamsey, L. J. McNair, & N. Campbell (Eds.), *Anti-racism in early childhood education: Theory and practice* (pp. 103–120). Bloomsbury Academic. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350441064.ch-6

Gerstein, L. H., Blom, L. C., Sink, A., & Akpan, A. (2014). Implementing sport for peace principles with elementary school student leaders. *Revista de Cercetare și Intervenție Socială, 45*, 7–16.

Gokce, E. (2006). Peace education: Viewpoints of primary school students about peace. *International Journal of Humanities & Peace, 22*(1), 30–36.

Gordillo, C. (2021). Peacebuilding in Colombia: Teachers' and students' perspectives on the Lectures on Peace. *Peacebuilding, 9*(1), 40–56. https://doi.org/10.1080/21647259.2020.1800889

Graham, G. M. (1936). Can children be educated for peace? Editorial comment. *Childhood Education, 12*(1), 51. https://doi.org/10.1080/00094056.1936.10725036

Hettler, S., & Johnston, L. M. (2009). Living peace: An exploration of experiential peace education, conflict resolution and violence prevention programs for youth. *Journal of Peace Education, 6*(1), 101–118. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400200802658340

Hinitz, B. F., & Stomfay-Stitz, A. M. (1998). *Peace education in the early childhood/elementary education classroom: Setting the agenda for a humane world*. (ED436517). ERIC. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED436517

Ilyas, M. (2025). The impact of armed conflict on education and children in Jammu and Kashmir: Implications for peace education. *Journal of Peace Education, 22*(2), 165–185. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2024.2442549

Jabor, R. M., & Palmos, R. F. (2025). School is a zone of peace through the eyes of children. *Peace and Conflict, 31*(1), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000745

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1995). Teaching students to be peacemakers: Results of five years of research. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology, 1*(4), 417–438. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327949pac0104_8

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1996a). Teaching all students how to manage conflicts constructively: The Peacemakers program. *Journal of Negro Education, 65*(3), 322–335. https://doi.org/10.2307/2967347

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1996b). Peacemakers: Teaching students to resolve their own and schoolmates' conflicts. *Focus on Exceptional Children 28*(6), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.17161/fec.v28i6.6855

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2001). *Teaching students to be peacemakers: A meta-analysis*. (ED460178). ERIC. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED460178

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2004). Implementing the "Teaching Students to Be Peacemakers program." *Theory Into Practice, 43*(1), 68–79. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4301_9

Jones, T. S. (2007). "Teach your children well": Promising progress in conflict resolution education and peace education. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly, 25*(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1002/crq.191

Kabasakal, Z. T., Sağkal, A. S., & Türnüklü, A. (2015). Effects of peace education program on the violence tendencies and social problem solving skills of students. *Eğitim ve Bilim, 40*(182), 43–62. https://doi.org/10.15390/EB.2015.4704

Kagaari, J., Nakasiita, K., Ntare, E., Atuhaire, R., Baguwemu, A., Ojok, G., Okumu, A. S., Kaahwa, G., Byamugisha, G., Semakula, P., Namusoke, J., Mayengo, N., Dennis, B., & Thompson, C. E. (2017). Children's conceptions of peace in two Ugandan primary schools: Insights for peace curriculum. *Research in Comparative and International Education, 12*(1), 9–25. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745499917698299

Kumar, K. (2024). Critical peace education and critical hope: Co-researching with middle school students in India to imagine possibilities for social change. *Journal of Peace Education, 21*(3), 313–335. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2024.2371861

Lantieri, L., & Patti, J. (1995). Waging peace in our schools: Beginning with the children. *Phi Delta Kappan, 76*(5), 386–388.

Ma, R. (2014). Peace language for Abraham's children: A peace education curriculum for Middle Eastern youth based on the Christian Bible. In *Understanding peace cultures* (pp. 80–100). Information Age Publishing.

Mangolo, E. W., & Qomarrullah, R. (2025). Sport and peace: Physical education for Papuan student awareness. *International Journal of Human Movement and Sports Sciences, 13*(4), 987–995.

McGivern, M. A. (1975). Peace and justice education for children. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 4*(1), 47. https://doi.org/10.1080/15374417509532621

Mena, N., Chaves Contreras, L. Y., Díaz Cabal, A., Hernández Bocanegra, A., & Mosquera Ramírez, M. L. (2022). "Understanding peace as the solution for a country locked in war": High school student narratives about Colombia's peace agreement with the armed group FARC. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology, 28*(4), 449–460. https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000636

Mitrayani, D., & Peel, R. D. (2017). Youth participation and leadership: Moving together towards peace education and sustainable development. In S. Singh & N. D. Erbe (Eds.), *Creating a sustainable vision of nonviolence in schools and society* (pp. 200–221). IGI Global.

Molina-Fernández, E., Burgos-Jiménez, R., & Parejo, J.-L. (2024). Early childhood education facing the challenge of peace for an uncertain future. In D. Pérez-Jorge (Ed.), *The future of early childhood education* (pp. 95–110). Nova Science Publishers.

Morris, S. M., Hiebert, B., Schell, D. M., & Manley-Casimir, M. E. (1990). The effects of participation in a Canadian peace education project on student anxiety and sense of personal control. *Peace & Change, 15*(3), 292–311. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0130.1990.tb00552.x

Morrison, M. L., Austad, C. S., & Cota, K. (2011). Help increase the peace, a youth-focused program in peace education. *Journal of Peace Education, 8*(2), 177–191. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2011.589251

Ndwandwe, N. D. (2023). In search of lasting peace in schools: Learners' perceptions of peace education in Western Cape Province, South Africa. *African Perspectives of Research in Teaching & Learning, 7*(2), 233–246.

Okanlawon, A., Fakokunde, J., Yusuf, F., Abanikannda, M., & Oyelade, A. (2017). Attitudes towards instructional games on peace education among second year students in junior secondary schools in South-West Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Development Using Information and Communication Technology, 13*(3), 98–108.

Pentini, A. A. (2024). Children's rights ... and duties! In pedagogy and intercultural and peace education. *Intercultural Education, 35*(5), 558–569. https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2024.2385267

Quisumbing, L. R. (2000). Educating young children for a peaceful world. *Child Care Information Exchange, 134*, 6–10.

Ramadhani, S., Zainuddin, & Nasrun. (2023). Bullying instability towards the students' mentality in Indonesia: Is the peace education piloted the right solution? *Journal of Namibian Studies, 34*.

Rennebohm-Franz, K. (1996). Toward a critical social consciousness in children: Multicultural peace education in a first grade classroom. *Theory Into Practice, 35*, 264–270. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405849609543733

Shahab, S., Ullah, S., & Akhter, N. (2022). The role of education in post-conflict peace building: Learner perspectives from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. *Webology, 19*(2), 542–563.

Stomfay-Stitz, A. M. (1994). *Peace education for children: Historical perspectives*. [Paper presentation]. Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA, United States. ERIC. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED381464

Stomfay-Stitz, A. M., & Hinitz, B. F. (1995). *Integration/infusion of peace education into early childhood education programs*. [Roundtable presentation]. Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, United States. ERIC. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED390565

Tomovska, A. (2010). Contact as a tool for peace education? Reconsidering the contact hypothesis from the children's perspectives. *Journal of Peace Education, 7*(2), 121–138. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2010.498993

Usakli, H., & Eren, Z. (2024). Peace education activities suggestions for children with circle time practices. *International Journal on New Trends in Education & Their Implications, 15*(2), 187–198.

Walker, K., Myers-Bowman, K. S., & Myers-Walls, J. A. (2008). Supporting young children's efforts toward peacemaking: Recommendations for early childhood educators. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 35*(4), 377–382. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-007-0190-7

Wessells, M. (2005). Child soldiers, peace education, and postconflict reconstruction for peace. *Theory Into Practice, 44*(4), 363–369. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4404_10

Yablon, Y. (2014). Education towards peace leadership: The case of Jewish and Muslim school students in Israel. In M. T. Buchanan (Ed.), *Leadership and religious schools: International perspectives and challenges* (pp. 89–107). Bloomsbury Academic.

Yilmaz, F. (2018). Road to peace education: Peace and violence from the viewpoint of children. *International Education Studies, 11*(8), 141–152. https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v11n8p141

Zelyurt, H., & Ince, F. G. (2018). The impact of peaceful life skills oriented education program on social adaptation and skills of preschool children. *Universal Journal of Educational Research, 6*(7), 1519–1525. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2018.060712

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TABLE A1

PRISMA-ScR CHECKLIST

SECTION	ITEM	PRISMA-ScR CHECKLIST ITEM	REPORTED ON PAGE # / SECTION
TITLE			
Title	1	Identify the report as a scoping review.	1
ABSTRACT			
Structured summary	2	Provide a structured summary that includes (as applicable): background, objectives, eligibility criteria, sources of evidence, charting methods, results, and conclusions that relate to the review questions and objectives.	2
INTRODUCTION			
Rationale	3	Describe the rationale for the review in the context of what is already known. Explain why the review questions/objectives lend themselves to a scoping review approach.	7; Section 2.1
Objectives	4	Provide an explicit statement of the questions and objectives being addressed with reference to their key elements (e.g., population or participants, concepts, and context) or other relevant key elements used to conceptualize the review questions and/or objectives.	7
METHODS			
Protocol and registration	5	Indicate whether a review protocol exists; state if and where it can be accessed (e.g., a Web address); and if available, provide registration	Section 2.1 (a priori protocol; not registered)

SECTION	ITEM	PRISMA-ScR CHECKLIST ITEM	REPORTED ON PAGE # / SECTION
		information, including the registration number.	
Eligibility criteria	6	Specify characteristics of the sources of evidence used as eligibility criteria (e.g., years considered, language, and publication status), and provide a rationale.	Section 2.4; Table 2
Information sources	7	Describe all information sources in the search (e.g., databases with dates of coverage and contact with authors to identify additional sources), as well as the date the most recent search was executed.	Sections 2.2–2.2.2 (databases; initial search April 2026; review searches from May 2026)
Search	8	Present the full electronic search strategy for at least 1 database, including any limits used, such that it could be repeated.	Section 2.3; Table 1
Selection of sources of evidence	9	State the process for selecting sources of evidence (i.e., screening and eligibility) included in the scoping review.	Sections 2.4–2.5; 3.1
Data charting process	10	Describe the methods of charting data from the included sources of evidence (e.g., calibrated forms or forms that have been tested by the team before their use, and whether data charting was done independently or in duplicate) and any processes for obtaining and confirming data from investigators.	Sections 2.5–2.5.1; 2.8 (single reviewer)
Data items	11	List and define all variables for which data were sought and any assumptions and simplifications made.	Section 2.5.1; Table 3
Critical appraisal of individual sources of evidence	12	If done, provide a rationale for conducting a critical appraisal of included sources of evidence; describe the methods used and how this information was used in any data synthesis (if appropriate).	Not conducted (see Section 4.1.1)

SECTION	ITEM	PRISMA-ScR CHECKLIST ITEM	REPORTED ON PAGE # / SECTION
Synthesis of results	13	Describe the methods of handling and summarizing the data that were charted.	Sections 2.6–2.7; Tables 4–7
RESULTS			
Selection of sources of evidence	14	Give numbers of sources of evidence screened, assessed for eligibility, and included in the review, with reasons for exclusions at each stage, ideally using a flow diagram.	Section 3.1; Figure 1
Characteristics of sources of evidence	15	For each source of evidence, present characteristics for which data were charted and provide the citations.	Section 3.2; Figures 2–3; Appendix C (Table C1)
Critical appraisal within sources of evidence	16	If done, present data on critical appraisal of included sources of evidence (see item 12).	Not applicable
Results of individual sources of evidence	17	For each included source of evidence, present the relevant data that were charted that relate to the review questions and objectives.	Appendices C and D (Tables C1 and D3)
Synthesis of results	18	Summarize and/or present the charting results as they relate to the review questions and objectives.	Section 3.3; Figure 4
DISCUSSION			
Summary of evidence	19	Summarize the main results (including an overview of concepts, themes, and types of evidence available), link to the review questions and objectives, and consider the relevance to key groups.	Sections 4.1; 4.3
Limitations	20	Discuss the limitations of the scoping review process.	Sections 2.8; 4.2
Conclusions	21	Provide a general interpretation of the results with respect to the review questions and objectives, as well as potential implications and/or next steps.	Conclusion; Implications for Research & Policy

SECTION	ITEM	PRISMA-ScR CHECKLIST ITEM	REPORTED ON PAGE # / SECTION
FUNDING			
Funding	22	Describe sources of funding for the included sources of evidence, as well as sources of funding for the scoping review. Describe the role of the funders of the scoping review.	Not applicable (unfunded dissertation)

Note. Adapted from Tricco et al. (2018). PRISMA-ScR = Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews.

APPENDIX B

Ten reviews were identified through a preliminary search of the same four databases used for the review (EBSCO, Web of Science, Scopus and ProQuest), using a constrained search of “peace education” AND “review”. The reviews were identified across the searches. Ten of those were included to provide steer on previous evidence syntheses of peace education, as the only ones which were pertinent to the field of peace education.

TABLE B1

PREVIOUS REVIEWS EXPLORING PEACE EDUCATION IN EVIDENCE SYNTHESES

Author(s) (year)	Databases	Review type	Period	No. studies	Research question / focus area	Relevance to this review
Arató & Bodnár (2024)	Scopus; Taylor & Francis	Systematic literature review	2000-2024	26	How approaches to peace education (critical, postmodern, poststructuralist) can draw on cooperative learning in relevance to the ‘Teaching Students to be Peacemakers Programme’ (TSPP)	This study suggests that a broader understanding of the cooperative learning discourse can aid in dismantling personal, cultural and social violence structures. It reports sparsely on children’s engagement within this discourse.
Arystanbek et al. (2026)	Web of Science	Critical interpretive synthesis	1993-2024	50	How teachers, students and school communities enact Positive Peace Education (PPE) across curriculum, pedagogy and everyday school life	This study focuses on teacher and student agency in enacting PPE. It does not focus on knowledge production.

Author(s) (year)	Databases	Review type	Period	No. studies	Research question / focus area	Relevance to this review
Corredor et al. (2026)	NR	Systematic review	NR	40	Pedagogical approaches, curricular components and evaluation strategies for peace curricula in territories affected by armed violence.	This study presents students as learners for whom curricula are designed. It recommends to include teachers and community actors for understanding the barriers and challenges encountered during the implementation of peace curricula. It does not report on children's engagement.
Edwards et al. (2020)	NR	Systematic review	NR	56	Education for Sustainable Development (ESD); one subsection (4.1.3) evaluates peace education programmes within ESD.	Peace education is a minor subsection of this ESD review. Children's engagement is not examined.
Hakvoort et al. (2022)	NR	Bibliometric review	NR	1126	Publication trends, geographic spread and dominant topics in Anti-bullying and Conflict-resolution in Schools (ACS) research.	This study classifies peace and value education as one of thematic areas around which ACS research is published. It does not examine how children are engaged within this research.
Kilpi (2026)	JSTOR; ERIC; Web of Science	Scoping review	2013-2023	34	The interconnectedness of music and peacebuilding: geographic and temporal spread, research designs and musical practices.	Adjacent field, music and peacebuilding; focusing on both as catalysts for systems change and systems thinking. Children's engagement is not its focus area.
Mas-Expósito et al. (2022)	NR	Systematic review	NR	13	How Whole-School Restorative Approaches (WSRA) are implemented in schools, and which are effective for youth development.	Adjacent field, focusing on implementation- and effectiveness-of WSRA. Children's engagement is not its focus area.

Author(s) (year)	Databases	Review type	Period	No. studies	Research question / focus area	Relevance to this review
Purwanto et al. (2023)	NR	Systematic review	NR	10	How peace education is conceptualised and practised at universities.	This study examines peace education in higher education, not focusing on children's engagement.
Türk (2018)	ULAKBIM; Google Scholar	Meta-analysis	2004-2016	23	The effects of conflict resolution, peace education and peer mediation on students' conflict-resolution skills.	This study is a meta-analysis where children are measured as recipients of interventions, not engaged beyond this.
Witenstein et al. (2025)	NR	Scoping review	NR	149	How the Sustainable Development Goals are implemented in higher-education research; one category touches a culture of peace and non-violence.	Adjacent field, SDG- and higher-education-focused; peace education is a sub-category; children's engagement is not addressed.

Note. Ten prior evidence syntheses were identified. Each is classified by its focus area, and none of which examine children's engagement in the production of knowledge in peace education, underscoring the gap which this review addresses. NR indicates that the information was not reported in the review.

APPENDIX C

The full charting of the 65 included studies is presented below.

TABLE C1

CHARTING OF INCLUDED STUDIES BY CHARACTERISTICS & THE PCC FRAMEWORK

STUDY	STUDY CHARACTERISTICS			POPULATION			CONCEPT	CONTEXT			
Study	**Type**	**Methodology**	**N**	**Population**	**Age / stage**	**Social markers**	**PE focus**	**Educational**	**Geographical**	**Conflict**	**Religious**
Al Mushaqiri (2019)	Emp.	Quasi-experimental; pre/post surveys of parents and teachers	80	Preschool children	4–6	Gender, geography	PE: Peace Education Program (PEP)	Preschool	Oman	—	Islam
Al-Radaideh (2019)	Theor.	—	—	Children	Grade 5	Religion, ethnicity, culture	PE in art education	Schools	The Middle East	Exemplified: Palestinian children's exposure to violence	—
Amca Toklu et al. (2024)	Emp.	Action research with needs analysis	167 (18 children)	Children, teachers, parents, researchers	5	Age, gender, professional positions	PE, global citizenship, sustainable development	Preschool and public kindergarten	Cyprus	Post-conflict: bi-communal division since the war	—
Anderson & Nesterova (2024)	Emp.	Qualitative arts-based workshops	59	Children	12–18	Socio-economic and geographical background	PE	Secondary schools	Scotland, UK	School violence, intergroup conflict, segregation	One Roman Catholic school
Bacher et al. (2024)	Emp.	Content analysis of questionnaires	70	Students	13–16	Nationality (Ukrainian, Austrian)	PE, exchange education in wartime	Secondary school exchange programme	Ukraine, Austria	Armed conflict: Russia's war against Ukraine	—

STUDY	STUDY CHARACTERISTICS			POPULATION			CONCEPT	CONTEXT			
Study	**Type**	**Methodology**	**N**	**Population**	**Age / stage**	**Social markers**	**PE focus**	**Educational**	**Geographical**	**Conflict**	**Religious**
Bedir & Arslan (2013)	Emp.	Mixed methods; survey and questionnaires	347	Secondary students	Grades 9–11	Age, gender, parental education, siblings	PE and human rights education	Secondary school	Turkey	—	—
Bekerman (2005)	Theor.	—	—	Children	5–12	Religion, ethnicity, language (Jewish, Palestinian)	PE	Integrated bilingual schools	Israel	Intergroup conflict: Jewish–Palestinian relations	Jewish, non-Jewish
Bellino et al. (2026)	Emp.	Mixed methods; multilevel regression, observations, interviews	3,133	Students	Grades 9–11	Gender, class, race, ethnicity, proximity to conflict	PE, learning about conflict and peace	Public schools	Colombia	Post-conflict and colonial violence	—
Bickmore (2019)	Emp.	Qualitative focus-group conversations	172 students, 51 teachers	Students and teachers	10–15	Gender, abuse, class, ethnicity, intersections	PE, democratic peacebuilding	Publicly funded schools	Mexico, Bangladesh, Canada	—	Islam, Hinduism
Binns-Thompson & Joong (2018)	Emp.	Quasi-experimental; pre/post maths tests, interviews, surveys	120 (4 schools)	Students	Secondary	—	PE, conflict resolution and mathematics	Secondary schools, maths classes	Jamaica	Crime: rising criminal activity and murder rates	—
Biton & Salomon (2006)	Emp.	Quasi-experimental; questionnaires	564	High school students	15–16	Israeli-Jewish, Palestinian, gender	PE: Pathways into Reconciliation	Schools	Israel/Palestine	Armed conflict: intifada and its suppression	Jewish, Muslim
Bokhari & Ahmed (2020)	Emp.	Qualitative focus groups	36	Secondary students; youth-led organisation	12–16	Religion, class, exposure to religious diversity	PE: Ravvish, youth-led NGO intervention	Secondary school	Pakistan	Sectarian violence: attacks on religious minorities	Islam, Christianity
Braden et al. (2023)	Emp.	Decolonising methodologies; lesson plans, classroom data	600 students, 12 teachers	Children	5–9	Race	Pro-Black pedagogy as positive PE	Schools, curriculum, school structures	USA	—	—

STUDY	STUDY CHARACTERISTICS			POPULATION			CONCEPT	CONTEXT			
Study	**Type**	**Methodology**	**N**	**Population**	**Age / stage**	**Social markers**	**PE focus**	**Educational**	**Geographical**	**Conflict**	**Religious**
Carter & Pickett (2014)	Theor.	—	—	Youth	—	Dominated peoples, gender, other species	PE	Formal and informal education	—	—	—
Cellitti (1998)	Theor.	—	—	Children	Young children	—	PE	Early childhood education	USA	—	—
Corboz et al. (2019)	Emp.	Programme evaluation; baseline, midline, endline surveys	734 at endline (361 boys, 373 girls)	Students, teachers, parents, religious and community leaders	Secondary	Gender, urban/rural, ethnic and linguistic diversity	PE: Help the Afghan Children programme	Secondary school	Afghanistan	Armed conflict: four decades of war	Islam
Cunningham (2011)	Emp.	Qualitative; teacher interviews, student focus groups	186 (22 students)	Primary and secondary students	—	Gender, urban/rural, returnees, war-affected, orphaned, displaced, ethnicity	PE	Primary, secondary and special schools	Northern Uganda	Armed conflict: 20 years of war; post-conflict schooling	Christianity (mentioned briefly)
Damirchi & Bilge (2014)	Emp.	Quasi-experimental; pre/post test, control group	70	Students	Grade 7	—	PE: Peace Education Program (PEP)	Schools	Turkey	School violence	—
Duckworth et al. (2012)	Emp.	Qualitative interviews with theatre-project participants	10	Students	High school	Gender, sexuality, religion, ethnicity	PE, critical PE	High schools	USA	School violence: youth violence and bullying	Islam (anti-Muslim bullying)
Duckworth et al. (2019)	Emp.	Mixed methods; dialogue and survey	130 students, 8 teachers	Students	High school	Socio-economic, gender, racial/ethnic, faith backgrounds	PE, critical PE	High schools	USA	School violence: interfaith bullying, hate crimes	Interfaith; anti-Muslim bullying

STUDY	STUDY CHARACTERISTICS			POPULATION			CONCEPT	CONTEXT			
Study	**Type**	**Methodology**	**N**	**Population**	**Age / stage**	**Social markers**	**PE focus**	**Educational**	**Geographical**	**Conflict**	**Religious**
Fitch & Marshall (1999)	Theor.	—	—	Students	Grades 1–12	Exemplified: Caucasian Midwestern community	TSPP, peer mediation, conflict resolution	Schools	USA	School violence: youth homicide	—
Freedman & Chen (2023)	Emp.	Single-group pre/post test of a curriculum	30	Children	10–11	Low income, race, ethnicity	PE: forgiveness education curriculum	Grade 5	USA	—	—
Georgeson (2025)	Theor.	—	—	Children	Young children	Age, dis/ability, race, religion, ethnicity, conflict experience	PE	Early childhood education	Exemplified: UK, Kenya, Tanzania	—	—
Gerstein et al. (2014)	Emp.	Mixed methods; pre/post sportspersonship and conflict scales	28	Students	Grades 4–5	Race, sports participation	PE, conflict resolution: Sports for Peace	Schools	USA	School violence: violent incidents in public schools	—
Gokce (2006)	Emp.	Descriptive questionnaire study	168	Children	7–14	Race, class, gender	PE	Primary; one public, one private school	Turkey	—	—
Gordillo (2021)	Emp.	Mixed-method case study; questionnaires, interviews, documents	73 students	Students and teachers	15–18	Gender, exposure to conflict	Peacebuilding: Education for Peace; Lectures on Peace	Secondary school	Colombia	Post-conflict: decades of displacement and violence	—
Graham (1936)	Theor.	—	—	Children	—	—	PE	Formal education	USA	—	—
Hettler & Johnston (2009)	Theor.	Review of programmes	—	Teachers and students	13–18	At-risk youth, children affected by violence	Experiential PE programmes	Formal and informal education	USA	—	—

STUDY	STUDY CHARACTERISTICS			POPULATION			CONCEPT	CONTEXT			
Study	**Type**	**Methodology**	**N**	**Population**	**Age / stage**	**Social markers**	**PE focus**	**Educational**	**Geographical**	**Conflict**	**Religious**
Hinitz & Stomfay-Stitz (1998)	Theor.	—	—	Children	Young children	Community violence, minority status, cultural and linguistic diversity, inequity	PE	Schools	USA	—	—
Ilyas (2025)	Emp.	Mixed methods; literature review, interviews, questionnaires	115 (55 students)	Students	Grades 11–12	Economic background, exposure to conflict	PE	Schools	Jammu and Kashmir, India	Armed conflict: impact on education	—
Jabor & Palmos (2025)	Emp.	Qualitative focus groups	10	Pupils	Grade 6	—	PE: School is a Zone of Peace	Public school	Philippines	Armed conflict: children in armed groups	—
Johnson & Johnson (1995)	Emp.	Seven studies in six schools, some randomised	1,241 (7 studies)	Students	Grades 1–9	Urban and suburban schools	TSPP, peer mediation, conflict resolution	Schools	USA, Canada	School violence: frequent destructive conflicts	—
Johnson & Johnson (1996a)	Emp.	Evaluation of TSPP across 12 studies	1,721 (12 studies)	Students	Grades 1–12	Socio-economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds	TSPP, peer mediation, conflict resolution	Schools	USA, Canada	—	—
Johnson & Johnson (1996b)	Theor.	—	—	Students	K–12	Urban/suburban; socio-economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds	TSPP, peer mediation, conflict resolution	Schools	USA (other countries exemplified)	—	—
Johnson & Johnson (2001)	Emp.	Meta-analysis of TSPP studies	17 studies	Students	K–9	Gender, urban/suburban, culture, ethnicity, class, language	TSPP, peer mediation, conflict resolution	Schools	USA, Canada	—	—

STUDY	STUDY CHARACTERISTICS			POPULATION			CONCEPT	CONTEXT			
Study	**Type**	**Methodology**	**N**	**Population**	**Age / stage**	**Social markers**	**PE focus**	**Educational**	**Geographical**	**Conflict**	**Religious**
Johnson & Johnson (2004)	Theor.	—	—	Students	K–12	Loneliness, anxiety	TSPP, peer mediation, conflict resolution	Schools	USA	—	—
Jones (2007)	Theor.	—	—	Children	K–12	—	PE, conflict resolution education	—	—	—	—
Kabasakal et al. (2015)	Emp.	Quasi-experimental; pre/post/follow-up, control group	142	Students	Grade 9 (14–16)	Socio-economic status, gender	PE: Peace Education Program	High schools	Turkey	—	—
Kagaari et al. (2017)	Emp.	Qualitative focus groups	36	Children	Primary	Limited resources, trauma, experience of war	PE, curriculum	Primary education	Uganda	Post-conflict: civil war trauma in the north	—
Kumar (2024)	Emp.	Youth participatory action research (YPAR)	13	Students	Grades 7–8 (12–15)	Religion, gender, caste, colour, sexuality, language	PE	Middle school; two private schools	India	Culture of conflict: discrimination by religion, gender, caste	—
Lantieri & Patti (1995)	Theor.	—	—	Children	K–12	Socio-economic inequality, colour, gender, ability	PE: Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP)	Public schools	USA	Youth violence: violent crime among young people	—
Ma (2014)	Theor.	—	—	Children	11–16	Religion, race, ethnicity, language, culture, age	PE: Language of Peace for Abraham's Children	Schools	Israel/Palestine (Middle East)	Armed conflict: Israeli–Palestinian conflict	Muslim, Jewish, Christian
Mangolo & Qomarrullah (2025)	Emp.	Qualitative; interviews, observations, documents	50 (students not specified)	Physical education teachers, students, principals	Secondary and high school	Urban/rural, ethnicity, access to sports facilities	Physical education instilling peace values	Schools	Indonesia (Papua)	—	—

STUDY	STUDY CHARACTERISTICS			POPULATION			CONCEPT	CONTEXT			
Study	**Type**	**Methodology**	**N**	**Population**	**Age / stage**	**Social markers**	**PE focus**	**Educational**	**Geographical**	**Conflict**	**Religious**
McGivern (1975)	Theor.	—	—	Children	—	—	PE	Schools	USA	—	—
Mena et al. (2022)	Emp.	Qualitative thematic analysis	209	Students	14–18	Gender, socio-economic class	PE after the 2016 Peace Agreement	Public schools	Colombia	Post-conflict: 2016 Peace Agreement	—
Mitrayani & Peel (2017)	Theor.	Two case studies	—	Youth	15–25; high school	Indigeneity, class, race, ethnicity, gender, exposure to violence	PE: Play for Peace; University Lab School	School and after-school contexts	USA (incl. Hawai‘i)	Structural violence	—
Molina-Fernández et al. (2024)	Theor.	—	—	Children	Young children	Gender inequality, poverty	PE: Education for Peace	Early childhood education	—	—	—
Morris et al. (1990)	Emp.	Curriculum field test; pre/post tests in six schools	199	Students	Grade 7 (10–13)	School socio-economic status, grade, class size	PE: Conflict and Change curriculum	Elementary school	Canada	Cold War: fear of nuclear war	—
Morrison et al. (2011)	Emp.	Mixed-methods survey; mainly t-tests	84	Workshop participants, incl. students	10–15 (42%), 16–20 (18%), 21+ (41%)	Gender, ethnicity, nationality	PE: Help Increase the Peace Program (HIPP)	Workshops (school link not stated)	—	—	—
Ndwandwe (2023)	Emp.	Qualitative evaluation; three case studies, focus groups	15	Students	Grades 10–11	Gender	PE	Secondary school	South Africa	School violence	Ubuntu
Okanlawon et al. (2017)	Emp.	Quantitative Likert survey on instructional games	360	Students	Junior secondary	Gender (ethnicity in framing only)	PE through instructional games	Junior secondary curriculum	Nigeria	Intergroup violence: ethnic, religious, political	—
Pentini (2024)	Theor.	—	—	Children	Early childhood	Class, urban/rural, family and public resources	PE, children’s rights	Early childhood education	Exemplified: Chad, DR Congo, Uganda, Somalia, Germany, UK, Italy	—	Exemplified: Catholic Catechism

STUDY	STUDY CHARACTERISTICS			POPULATION			CONCEPT	CONTEXT			
Study	**Type**	**Methodology**	**N**	**Population**	**Age / stage**	**Social markers**	**PE focus**	**Educational**	**Geographical**	**Conflict**	**Religious**
Quisumbing (2000)	Theor.	—	—	Children	Young children	—	PE	Early childhood education	Exemplified: USA, Philippines	—	—
Ramadhani et al. (2023)	Emp.	Quantitative; purposive sample, t-test	118	Students, victims of bullying	High school	Seniority, economy, religion, gender, family, school climate	PE programme	Vocational high school	Indonesia (Langkat Regency)	School violence: bullying	—
Rennebohm-Franz (1996)	Theor.	—	—	Children	Grade 1	Nationality (US, Kenya)	Multicultural PE	Schools (grade 1 classrooms)	USA, Kenya	—	—
Shahab et al. (2022)	Emp.	Mixed methods; qualitative data, quantitative analysis	113	Students	Grades 9–12	Gender, culture, language, socio-economic background, conflict exposure	Education for peacebuilding	Public secondary school	Pakistan (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)	Armed conflict: militancy in the province	Islam
Stomfay-Stitz (1994)	Theor.	—	—	Children	—	—	PE	Schools	USA	—	—
Stomfay-Stitz & Hinitz (1995)	Theor.	—	—	Children and parents	Infants to primary grades	Race	PE	Preschool and primary education	USA	—	—
Tomovska (2010)	Emp.	Ethnography; observation, semi-structured interviews	47	Children	10–11	Religion (Protestant, Catholic), age	PE: School Community Relations Programme (contact)	Schools	Northern Ireland	Intergroup conflict: Catholic–Protestant marching dispute	Protestant, Catholic
Usakli & Eren (2024)	Emp.	Qualitative document analysis	—	Children	Kindergarten	—	PE: Circle Time	Kindergarten	Turkey	—	—

STUDY	STUDY CHARACTERISTICS			POPULATION			CONCEPT	CONTEXT			
Study	**Type**	**Methodology**	**N**	**Population**	**Age / stage**	**Social markers**	**PE focus**	**Educational**	**Geographical**	**Conflict**	**Religious**
Walker et al. (2008)	Theor.	—	—	Children	Young children (3–8)	Culture, exposure to political violence, refugee status, ability	PE	Early childhood education	USA	—	—
Wessells (2005)	Theor.	—	—	Child soldiers	Under 18	Family context, orphanhood, gender	PE, reintegration in schools	Schools, community-based	Sierra Leone	Post-conflict: reintegration of child soldiers	—
Yablon (2014)	Theor.	—	—	Students	—	Religion (Jewish, Muslim), territory, cultural origin	PE, religious intergroup interventions	Schools	Israel	Intergroup conflict: Jewish–Arab, Israeli–Palestinian	Jewish, Muslim
Yilmaz (2018)	Emp.	Qualitative phenomenology; drawings	68	Children	Grades 4–5	—	PE	Primary school	Turkey	—	—
Zelyurt & Ince (2018)	Emp.	Quasi-experimental; pre/post test, control group	50	Children	5	—	PE: Peaceful Life Skills Oriented Education Program	Kindergarten	Turkey	—	—

Note. N = 65, listed alphabetically. TSPP = Teaching Students to be Peacemakers Programme. Emp. = empirical; Theor. = theoretical; PE = peace education. Entries are condensed from the charting. “Exemplified” marks contexts a study mentions only as examples; these are charted but not counted in the results (Section 3.2.3). An em dash (—) indicates that the information was not reported in the study. Full bibliographic details of each study are provided in the reference list.

APPENDIX D

This appendix consists of two parts, titled Part A and Part B. They outline first the descriptive coding, which has informed the whole-study assessment in accordance with the assessment framework.

PART A: DESCRIPTIVE CODES (INDUCTIVE)

Part A lists the descriptive codes, applied inductively to passages across the corpus.

TABLE D1

DESCRIPTIVE CODES

Code	Description	Examples from the studies	Studies	Passages
Child agency	Instances where children's agency is invoked or referenced.	'Centring youth voices and experiences as important and valuable sources of knowledge, understanding, and social action.' (Anderson & Nesterova, 2024, p. 2) 'Can children themselves be involved in peace education and movements that will influence the world? Of course, they can!' (Quisumbing, 2000, p. 9) 'Through the voices and actions of children in this project, the global peace education toward a social consciousness evolve' (Rennebohm-Franz, 1996, p. 266)	21	56
Child concept	Instances where the concept of child or childhood is described.	'most peace studies focus on the conception that children are either perpetrators or victims of violence' (Jabor & Palmos, 2025, p. 2)	8	25

Code	Description	Examples from the studies	Studies	Passages
		‘childhood, even before considering it as a stage in its own right, has been linked to the idea of education that prevailed at each social, political, and economic moment’ (Molina-Fernández et al., 2024, p. 97) ‘Western versions of ‘child-centredness’ have moved towards a focus on the uniqueness of the individual child, often trying to preserve the specialness of childhood before the realities of following a curriculum path of targets and narrow achievement’ (Georgeson, 2025, p. 106)		
Child engagement	Instances where children’s engagement is described, in peace education or in the production of knowledge about peace.	‘starting with identifying student’s needs (…) gives the students the opportunity to express hidden emotions and thoughts’ (Al-Radaideh, 2019, p. 50-51) ‘an additional analysis conducted on the data gathered that focuses on what is ‘going on’ with those presumed to be the primary beneficiaries’ (Bekerman, 2005, p. 236) ‘Students were not limited to suggesting a single explanation. They could include as many aspects and explanations as they desired.’ (Biton & Salomon, 2006, p. 171) ‘lead authors instructed these professionals to select students that demonstrated leadership, defined as their ability to motivate and influence their peers towards a common goal.’ (Gerstein et al., 2014, p. 10)	49	313
Child narrative	Instances where a narrative of children is promulgated, such as a particular way	‘training children on peace since childhood makes them deal with themselves and all that surrounds them in a	61	205

Code	Description	Examples from the studies	Studies	Passages
	children are understood to be or to become, without citation or evidence to substantiate such a narrative.	peaceful and safe way away from violence' (Al Mushaqiri et al., 2019, p. 2901) 'Children develop a sense of understanding about and empathy for others when they engage in meaningful community projects.' (Cellitti, 1998, p. 20) 'Young people learn about human rights by example' (Cunningham, 2011, p. 213) 'Most students view conflict in terms of anger, hostility, and violence.' (Fitch & Marshall, 1999, p. 5) 'some students were still reluctant to open themselves to their many human inclinations and capabilities to promote peace.' (Gordillo, 2021, p. 55)		
Child positioning (educational, epistemic)	Instances where an educational or epistemic positioning of children is made.	'it is necessary to cultivate an understanding of peace in children from a young age and to ensure its continuity' (Amca Toklu et al., 2024, p. 2) 'students receive further training throughout the academic year to enhance and refine their negotiation and mediation skills' (Johnson & Johnson, 2001, p. 6) 'students have the potential to start a movement as a student voice in creating a learning environment that includes the "neophyte" perspective.' (Mitrayani & Peel, 2017, p. 289)	55	185

Code	Description	Examples from the studies	Studies	Passages
Children's voice	Instances where children's voice, as quotations or artefacts produced by children, is shared.	'I imagine the world to be a place where everyone feels free to be who they are without judgement and also somewhere where people feel safe.' (Anderson & Nesterova, 2024, p. 7) 'peace is the absolute opposite of war, it means the ending of killings, something everybody in Israel hopes for' (Biton & Salomon, 2006, p. 172) 'Wars should be aboloished. People should behave one another friendly and sincerely. People should learn about peace culture and the idea of sharing' (Gokce, 2006, p. 34) 'Yeah, because they don't like Protestants. You could see it was on purpose. We should just tie them and send them down to Dublin. Yeah send them down to Dublin and show them how to shit their pants.' (Tomovska, 2010, p. 132)	35	161
Vision for children	Instances where a vision or future-oriented claim is made about children.	'Helps children grow and succeed through life-long, experience based learning. We promote personal and social growth in a diverse community that values respect and responsibility.' (Hettler & Johnson, 2009, p. 110) 'America's as well as the world's children, would be the beneficiaries of Montessori's dreams' (Stomfay-Stitz, 1994, p. 4) 'All students can, and probably should, participate in peace programmes.' (Yablon, 2014, p. 101)	44	83

Code	Description	Examples from the studies	Studies	Passages
Barriers to child engagement	Instances where barriers or obstacles to children's engagement are mentioned, in knowledge production or in peace education.	'the lack of evaluation of peace education programs that involves students and its impact on them' (Bokhari & Ahmed, 2020, p. 75) 'they also expressed frustration about not being able to engage more peers, about "being taken seriously" and the leadership challenges of dealing with team members not following through' (Duckworth et al., 2019, p. 242) 'The views of the children were rarely taken in perspective in the theoretical bases of the contact work as the research was mostly concentrated on measuring the results rather than on understanding the process' (Tomovska, 2010, p. 122)	10	23
Children's rights	Instances where children's rights are invoked.	'Peace education is a right of all children' (Damirchi & Bilge, 2014, p. 310) 'peace educators advocate for ALL of our children, as one of their basic human rights' (Hinitz & Stomfay-Stitz, 1998, p. 8) 'Violence in schools has a detrimental effect on children's development, as it deprives them of their fundamental right to education.' (Ndwandwe, 2023, p. 233) 'enhancing the agency of children if this is done in the perspective of the UNCRC that regards children as rights holders.' (Pentini, 2024, p. 560)	9	16

Code	Description	Examples from the studies	Studies	Passages
Adultism addressed	Instances where adultism, the oppression of children by adults and adult-tailored systems, is addressed.	‘not considered as accessible to young people as they rely on fitting communication of ideas into adult ways of understanding’ (Anderson & Nesterova, 2024, p. 8) ‘authoritarian adults, including parents, teachers, and administrators, are not willing to listen or allow students to make their own decisions, highlighting the gap between the concepts of critical peace education and the realities of most students and teachers.’ (Duckworth et al., 2019, p. 242) ‘Adult-centered arguments have contributed to distancing certain issues from early childhood education, to constructing the idea of the existence of taboo subjects for children, or to approaching them in a banal, stereotyped, superficial, or fragmented way.’ (Molina-Fernández et al., 2024, p. 96)	6	9
Difference stated	Difference (for example gender, ethnicity, class, displacement) is named, but not treated as consequential to how children know or experience peace.	‘a boys’ and a girls’ [grade 6-9] school in each of two cities—one wealthier and experiencing more political violence, the other poorer and experiencing less direct violence’ (Bickmore, 2019, p. 11) ‘72.1% identified as Black (African or African American), 14.1% Latine, 6.2% bi-racial, 4.9% Asian, and 2.6% European American.’ (Braden et al., 2023, p. 356) ‘both urban and rural environments, a diversity of ethnic backgrounds, and different degrees of access to sports facilities’ (Mangolo & Qomarrullah, 2025, p. 988)	34	77

Code	Description	Examples from the studies	Studies	Passages
		‘differences in class (seniority), economy, religion, gender, inharmonious families, inharmonious or discriminatory school situations, individual or group characteristics such as grudges or envy, the spirit of wanting to control the victim with physical strength’ (Ramadhani et al., 2023, p. 1421)		
Difference analytically engaged	The named difference is elaborated as shaping how particular children, from particular social locations, come to know in peace education.	‘Palestinians dealt with many of the structural societal problems which afflict them in a Jewish majoritarian society, the lack of recognition for their tragedy’ (Bekerman, 2005, p. 239) ‘experienced by Black students when “teaching [emphasizes] texts, materials, and standards that center Eurocratic notions of existing and being in the world [providing] a false narrative about Black people”’ (Braden et al., 2023, p. 350) “highlighted context-specific inequities based on socio-cultural factors such as religion, gender, caste, color, socio-economic status, that led the group members to deepen their own understandings about some of the underlying causes’ (Kumar, 2024, p. 315)	30	77

PART B: FRAMEWORK AXES (THEORY-DRIVEN)

Part B is further divided into two sections. Part B1 presents the three assessment axes, colour coded: children’s engagement; children’s epistemic agency; difference. Part B2 presents each study, assigned one level on each of the three axes, as a whole-study assessment. The descriptive codes

in Part A were applied inductively to relevant passages; they did not map deterministically onto individual levels, but provided descriptive evidence considered when making the whole-study assessment on each axis. The codes informing assessment of each axis are stated. For each axis, the highest level for which supporting evidence was present informed the level assigned to the study.

PART B1

TABLE D2

THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK COMPRISING THE THREE AXES

Note. Table D2 comprises Tables 4, 6 and 7 from Section 2.6, with a delineation of the descriptive codes that have informed the assessment according to each axis. Each axis is coloured with a shading, which deepens as the level within each axis increases. It provides an overview of how colours are used in Table D3.

Axis 1 – Children's Engagement		
Descriptive codes informing the assessment: Children's voice; Child engagement; Barriers to child engagement; Vision for children; Child narrative.		
Level	**Definition**	**Decision rule (how a study was assigned)**
1 – Absent	No child perspective is included. Children are described, theorised or prescribed for, but never voiced in any capacity.	Assigned when none of the markers for levels 2–4 appears anywhere in the study.
2 – Instrumental	Children's accounts appear, but as an input to another object of knowledge, such as a programme's effectiveness or a pre-existing theory.	Assigned when children's perspectives are included in the text, but the finding does not concern the children's own knowledge.
3 – Constitutive	Children's accounts constitute the findings. The study exists to learn what children know about peace and reports it as knowledge in its own right.	Assigned when children's perspectives are the object of knowledge.

4 – Co-investigating	Children shape the knowledge produced by informing the research topics, questions and terms. Children's knowledge is included in the published study on its own terms; their framing is preserved, or their dissent is recorded and left in its own right.	Assigned when children shaped what was investigated, or when their knowledge remains in the record as theirs (preserved framing or dissent); their engagement must be more evident than the study merely seeking to learn what the children know.
Axis 2 – Children's epistemic agency		
Descriptive codes informing the assessment: Child agency; Child positioning (educational, epistemic); Child concept; Children's rights; Child narrative.		
Level	**Definition**	**Decision rule (how a study was assigned)**
1 – Does not address	Children's capacity or agency in knowledge production is not addressed.	Assigned when the study makes no claim about children as knowers.
2 – Acknowledges	Children's capacity or agency in knowledge production is acknowledged.	Assigned when children are treated as holders of relevant knowledge, without a normative claim.
3 – Advocates	A normative claim advocates for children's capacity or agency in knowledge production.	Assigned when the study explicitly makes a normative claim about the capacity of children as knowledgable.
Axis 3 – Children's difference		
Descriptive codes informing the assessment: Difference (none / stated / analytically engaged); Child concept; child narrative		
Level	**Definition**	**Decision rule (how a study was assigned)**
1 – None	No social marker of children beyond age is mentioned. "Children" or "students" figure as a uniform category.	Assigned when no difference beyond age is named across the study.
2 – Stated	Difference (for example gender, ethnicity, class, displacement) is named, but not treated as consequential to how children know or experience peace education.	Assigned when difference is named but not analytically connected to the findings.

3 – Analytically engaged	The named difference is elaborated on, informing the discussion and/or results in relation to how particular children, from particular social locations, experience/know peace education.	Assigned when difference is treated as consequential to the findings.

PART B2

TABLE D3

THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK'S THREE AXES APPLIED TO ALL INCLUDED STUDIES

Note. Each cell gives the assigned level and assessment confidence per study. Cell shading deepens with the level within each axis (engagement in purple, epistemic agency in blue, difference in green). Coding notes are abbreviated from the review's records: E = engagement, EA = epistemic agency, D = difference. Where a coding notes has not been recorded (not all levels with high coding confidence have a recorded note, e.g., Al Mushaqiri (2019) has no note on epistemic agency (EA). Where no note is recorded, the table does not report it.

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
Al Mushaqiri (2019)	**1** *(low)*	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**E:** Children are engaged, however only through parents and teachers that respond on their behalf, bordering a level 2. **D:** Difference is stated in relation to gender and geography of the participants, only noting how these differences are reported in dataset, not informing the data.
Al-Radaideh (2019)	**1** *(high)*	**3** *(medium)*	**2** *(high)*	**E:** This piece is difficult to assess as 1; it anticipates a greater engagement with children than other level 1 studies, but given no inclusion of child perspectives, it is assessed as level 1. **EA:** Difficult to code, but it proposes that students ought to express their minds and express hidden emotions.

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
				D: Difference between children is not discussed, a one unit-plan for all children in the Middle East is presented.
Amca Toklu et al. (2024)	**2** *(medium)*	**2** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	**E:** Children's perspectives are included in the format of their attitudes measured on a 3-point Likert scale of emojis to assess the intervention. **D:** Difference is stated, but does not report on how this difference has informed the results.
Anderson & Nesterova (2024)	**4** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** This study is coded as 4 due to the rich child engagement throughout. It activated a re-thinking of the framework, distinguishing between level 3 and 4. **D:** Research question, "Are there any differences and similarities in conceptualisations and contributions of youth of different socio-economic and geographic backgrounds?" (p. 3).
Bacher et al. (2024)	**2** *(medium)*	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	**E:** This study borders a level 3, but considering the other studies assigned a level, this study does not reach the same engagement. The students' knowledge is used to assess the efficacy of the peace education programme. **D:** The only social markers mentioned are nationality, Ukrainian/Austrian. Not analytically engaged.
Bedir & Arslan (2013)	**3** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** This study engages children, with rather simplistic notions of those children. It sits at the lower end of level 3.

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
				EA: Does not address children's voice as mattering in its own right. **D:** The ways in which difference is analytically engaged is rather simplistic, not further noting beyond "the reason that girls are more sensitive than boys" (p. 51).
Bekerman (2005)	**2** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** Children's position, power and rights are engaged through critical reflection, with the citation of one child perspective, throughout the piece. **EA:** Claiming that the voice of children matters beyond just "mirroring" teachers and parents' views. **D:** Differentiation is engaged substantially, both through connections to wider global structures (of modernist and westernised perspectives of peace and education), but also in Israel and through the Palestinian struggle.
Bellino et al. (2026)	**3** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** Bordering 4 due to the reflexive inclusion/engagement of children's voice, and how much they emphasise the necessary need to engage children, while still bearing in mind their emotional wellbeing and duty not to reignite past traumas. Yet, the study does include children as co-investigators. **D:** For instance, it is noted how the different students (based on socioeconomic strata and ethnicity) have different, opposing and contrasting views on peace.

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
Bickmore (2019)	4 *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(medium)*	**E:** This is coded as a 4 due to their "speaking back" to teachers and researchers, including how it is noted that they "worked like reporters" **EA:** Drawing on Fraser, Freire, and other critical thinkers, the author makes a case for youth-engaged action and education **D:** Gendered differences observed in the answers are engaged
Binns-Thompson & Joong (2018)	**2** *(high)*	**1** *(medium)*	**1** *(high)*	**E:** Children's accounts appear, but only as inputs into what can be done to prevent violence and as a way of capturing their perspectives on the programme implemented. **EA:** The study considers children's knowledge valid to some degree and acknowledges that their experiences matter; however, there is little (if any) orientation towards their knowledge of peace (or violence). Hence, it is classified as "do not address", albeit with medium confidence. **D:** No stance on difference is taken; students are treated as one homogeneous group, with the initial conceptual framing oriented towards the view that "all children experience this; or all students need that".
Biton & Salomon (2006)	**3** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** The focus is on measuring children's perceptions; hence, it is not coded higher than 3. **D:** The entire article is an analytical engagement with difference with respect to Israeli-Jewish and Palestinian youth.

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
Bokhari & Ahmed (2020)	**3** *(medium)*	**2** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** Children's knowledge of peace and their perspectives on peace education are the object of examination. **EA:** The study potentially does more than merely acknowledge children's agency, especially considering its orientation towards a youth-led NGO. However, it does not advocate for greater inclusion of children in, for example, curriculum development.
Braden et al. (2023)	**4** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** Children's knowledge is engaged and informs the findings. It is coded as 4 due to, for example, the children's active production of materials. **D:** The entire piece is a critical examination of social markers. Although it is confined to analysing race, it also notes the implications of class and disadvantaged backgrounds (intersectionality).
Carter & Pickett (2014)	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**2** *(medium)*	**E:** There is no direct engagement with children in this piece. **EA:** While references are made to critical pedagogues such as Freire and Reardon, it is unclear whether, and if so how, the author actually advocates for the epistemic agency of youth. **D:** Social difference is recognised, both between Indigenous and dominated peoples and in the differing power positions of men and women in society. However, youth appear to be clustered together as one universal whole whose needs, conditions and contexts are reduced to one.

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
Cellitti (1998)	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**1** *(high)*	**E:** There is no engagement with children's voices or perspectives, although children are mentioned heavily. **EA:** This may be due to the nature of the short piece, which focuses on how to teach peace; yet it advises to "talk with children about people they know (…) invite these people" and to "find out what children know (…) build on that information".
Corboz et al. (2019)	**2** *(medium)*	**1** *(high)*	**3** *(medium)*	**E:** Children are engaged through the questionnaires, and their knowledge and attitudes are the object of evaluation; yet their perspectives are not included beyond the scope of the evaluation. **D:** Differences between boys and girls structure the reporting of results and the discussion throughout. The research was conducted in sex-segregated schools; note, however, that there is little reporting on how difference has shaped the children's experiences and knowledge of peace.
Cunningham (2011)	**3** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**EA:** No normative claim about children's knowledge, or about how it should be included, is identified, although the study does recognise the need for participatory approaches. **D:** The article engages with the stated differences, showing how children are informed differently depending on the schools the child participants attend. Although the children are clustered together once the school or context is declared, there remains an analytical engagement with the differences experienced in relation to conflict and war.

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
Damirchi & Bilge (2014)	**2** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	
Duckworth et al. (2012)	**4** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** Coded at level 4, considering how integral a role the children played in shaping the project being researched. **D:** Difference is analytically engaged throughout. Although the study notes the need to treat students with greater confidentiality, difference is presented as shaping how students perceive peace and what they learn from the programme.
Duckworth et al. (2019)	4 *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(medium)*	**E:** This study was steered by the students throughout. **D:** The study does not necessarily report on how differences between students informed their perceptions of the programme or of peace education. However, it is coded as 3 due to its situatedness within difference and its recognition of issues related to race and religion, how these affect students differently, and how they may shape students' ability to engage in efforts for peace.
Fitch & Marshall (1999)	**1** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	
Freedman & Chen (2023)	**2** *(medium)*	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**E:** Although children's knowledge is the primary finding, the children are to some degree perceived as input into an adult-defined object (the efficacy of forgiveness education, tested within a pre-set framework).

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
				D: Difference is noted but set aside for the analysis: "measures of forgiveness and anger did not significantly differ by class, gender, or age, participants with parental consent from the two classes were combined into one group for analyses".
Georgeson (2025)	**1** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** No perspectives of children are included.
Gerstein et al. (2014)	**2** *(high)*	**1** *(medium)*	**2** *(high)*	**E:** Children are engaged to measure the effectiveness of the programme. **EA:** Since children are asked about their attitudes through self-assessment, their epistemic agency may be seen as acknowledged; yet no explicit statement of this was found outside the declared assent forms. **D:** The study's stance on difference is illustrated on p. 14: "Second, the demographics of the sample were not representative of the general population in the United States or elsewhere. Within the sample used in this study, 50 percent were Caucasian, around 43 percent were African-American, and about seven percent were of mixed race. These percentages are not an accurate representation of the general population of children in the United States or around the world."
Gokce (2006)	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
Gordillo (2021)	**4** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** Children are engaged somewhat on their own terms, with their answers and opinions included in the text as a guiding lens for policy, which is why it is coded as 4, although with medium confidence. **D:** Difference is analysed only with respect to gender, e.g., p. 53: "during the focus group interviews girls demonstrated a higher level of optimism towards the implementation of the Lectures on Peace than boys when saying several times that the lectures 'do have an impact' on them. This aspect could be related to the fact that 'women, girls, gender minorities, men and boys are affected differently by violent conflict and peacebuilding processes'".
Graham (1936)	**1** *(medium)*	**1** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**E:** The child perspectives included are marginal and are referenced at the beginning without a clear account of how they were obtained, other than as recorded by a salesperson selling toy guns. It is therefore coded as 1 rather than 2, as child engagement is much more present in the studies coded as 2. **EA:** No claims are made about children's pre-existing knowledge. **D:** Different children are not mentioned; all US children are effectively subsumed under one category that can be educated for peace.
Hettler & Johnston (2009)	**1** *(high)*	**3** *(medium)*	**2** *(high)*	**E:** No engagement with children was identified. **EA:** Epistemic agency is addressed only sparsely, confined to a single sentence. This is all the more critical given that the

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
				programmes' success is evaluated without any inclusion of children's epistemic power. **D:** Difference is addressed only with respect to prior experience of, and/or exposure to, violence.
Hinitz & Stomfay-Stitz (1998)	**1** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**D:** This piece addresses difference and suggests that it matters for peace education, or indeed explains why peace education matters; yet it does not analyse the implications of such differences further.
Ilyas (2025)	**3** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** Children's knowledge is extensively engaged as the object of the findings, yet it is coded as 3 because the children do not drive or direct the findings. It sits at the higher end of level 3. **EA:** The findings rest on children's voices, noting, e.g., that "the youth of Kashmir persistently seek knowledge as a beacon of empowerment and change." **D:** The study notes that "Students from underprivileged backgrounds tend to exhibit a more muted aspirational outlook and face limited opportunities for geographical mobility and pursuit of ambitious goals, due to various socioeconomic determinants." Further, it notes that conflict is an important factor in how children conceive of peace and conflict.
Jabor & Palmos (2025)	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**1** *(low)*	**D:** There does not seem to be any recognition of difference, although many references are made at the beginning to children who have been exposed to armed violence or have been perpetrators or victims of war, with reference to UN frameworks, the UNCRC, and legal

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
				frameworks in Nepal and the Philippines. This orientation denotes some degree of consideration of difference, but difference does not appear to be an integrated part of the article.
Johnson & Johnson (1995)	**2** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**1** *(medium)*	**E:** Quotations from children are included; however, the children remain the object of testing the programme's effectiveness. **EA:** Epistemic agency is conditional on the training received and the knowledge gained from it. However, there is a recognition that children can be empowered through such training. **D:** Difference is sparsely reported and limited to distinguishing between urban and suburban settings; no further differentiation between the children is offered.
Johnson & Johnson (1996a)	**2** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**2** *(high)*	**EA:** Epistemic agency is conditional on the training received and the knowledge gained from it. However, there is a recognition that children can be empowered. **D:** Difference is merely stated and is not analytically engaged as influencing the results.
Johnson & Johnson (1996b)	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**2** *(high)*	**EA:** Epistemic agency is conditional on the training received and the knowledge gained from it. However, there is a recognition that children can be empowered. **D:** Difference is merely stated, not engaged as something important or worth differentiating between; it is disclosed only as part of the ten studies included and reflected upon.

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
Johnson & Johnson (2001)	**2** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**E:** Quotations from children do occur, but only to highlight points already made. Thus, there is no engagement with children beyond the selective, author-directed focus. **D:** Difference is merely stated as a factor present, not as something that shapes or changes the positioning of children or what they need; indeed, the study notes that all students should receive the same training.
Johnson & Johnson (2004)	**1** *(high)*	**1** *(medium)*	**2** *(medium)*	**EA:** Students are, to a degree, seen as capable, but only once they have been taught (thus, epistemic agency is not credited per se). **D:** Difference is mentioned only in relation to loneliness and anxiety and is not analytically engaged.
Jones (2007)	**1** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	
Kabasakal et al. (2015)	**2** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	
Kagaari et al. (2017)	**4** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** This is among the highest levels of child engagement identified, so extensive that it did not make sense to code all of it. The entire findings section was elicited through children's insights, including the recommendations and implications for peace education. **D:** Difference is analytically engaged across several dimensions: the global discourse on peace in relation to the Ugandan context; the

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
				internal research team; and the child participants, including differences in their previous experiences of war and conflict, gender, etc.
Kumar (2024)	4 *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** Clearly reaches level 4: interpretation of the data is genuinely shared, and students brought artefacts, shaping how they envision and understand peace and conflict in their education. However, in line with the author's own claims, the relationship is closer to a 'partnership' than to students exercising "citizen control"; the author thanks the students for their contributions, and the piece is single-authored. **D:** Difference is discussed throughout as an important factor that shapes the knowledge produced and is constitutive of the conflicts studied, their underlying causes, and stereotypes related to gender, race, ethnicity, class, and caste.
Lantieri & Patti (1995)	**1** *(medium)*	**2** *(medium)*	**2** *(medium)*	**E:** There is one quotation from a child; however, it is marginal and appears only at the end. Moreover, the evaluation results shared do not necessarily engage children, as most responses seem to come from teachers and parents. Hence, it is coded as 1, not 2. **EA:** The study does not deliberately acknowledge epistemic agency, but it notes that in a peaceable school, students share power. **D:** While the study comments on the diversity of students and how such differences matter for their lives, it does not engage further with how children ought to be educated in light of these differences.

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
Ma (2014)	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**3** *(medium)*	**EA:** There is a recognition of children's agency, encouraging them to engage actively in seeking questions and answers. Yet there is no clear perspective on how children can play an active role in the curriculum beyond a recipient/participant lens. **D:** There is a clear engagement with religious difference and how it manifests in societal structures (privileges and opportunities, or the lack thereof) for Israeli and Palestinian students, and how this can be addressed through bilingual or even trilingual approaches. However, confidence is rated as medium, as there is no deep engagement with how the curriculum speaks to these differences; the focus lies on unity.
Mangolo & Qomarrullah (2025)	**2** *(high)*	**1** *(medium)*	**3** *(low)*	**EA:** The study does not seem to deny children agency, but neither does it address the question. **D:** There is little engagement with how different students and teachers may have responded to physical education as peace education, yet there is considerable discussion of difference in terms of race, ethnicity, language, culture, and Indigenous practices, especially how these are important factors that may influence how the programme is to be adopted. Hence, categorising it as a "mere" 2 seems insufficient.
McGivern (1975)	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**1** *(high)*	**EA:** Draws on Freire but positions action and agency with the adult who guides children, and says nothing about children as agentic on their own terms, e.g., "Encourage them to work at a food co-op or to plant a vegetable garden in order to gain experience in economic alternatives. Children can eat peanut butter sandwiches instead of

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
				lunchmeat in order to conserve protein. Children can be helped to change sexist language patterns and thus make a small dent in that oppression. Whatever the action issue is, your own involvement will keep stimulating you to generate new ways children can involve themselves."
Mena et al. (2022)	4 *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** It borders on level 3, given how the findings are presented (the categories are drawn from the children's narratives), but it is a clear 4 in terms of how children helped shape the enquiry and analysis.
Mitrayani & Peel (2017)	**4** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** The children are centred both in developing the projects and in giving firmer grounding for, e.g., "the introduction of mindfulness and social emotional learning". Yet their perspectives remain somewhat confined to how the programme works. It is coded as 4 due to how constitutive the youth are in the first case study, Play for Peace (level 4), although the USL case study may reach only level 3.
Molina-Fernández et al. (2024)	**1** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**EA:** The study argues that children must be considered capable of understanding complexity, not in the sense of going beyond their still-developing capacities, but in that realities should be presented not as simplistic, dichotomous, or stereotyped reductions.
Morris et al. (1990)	**2** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**2** *(medium)*	**E:** Children's perspectives are included merely as aggregated data points from the questionnaires administered to them; these aimed to assess their perspectives, but only following their participation in an adult-created peace education programme.

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
				EA: Coded as such because children's own perceptions are recognised as the subject of the study. **D:** Difference is merely stated and not analysed beyond the descriptive labels assigned to the students (socio-economic class, parents' education, urban/suburban).
Morrison et al. (2011)	**2** *(medium)*	**1** *(low)*	**2** *(high)*	**E:** To a degree, this could be coded as 1, given that the study does not recognise whether these perspectives are shared by children; the authors do not seem particularly interested in what the children and youth have to say about the approaches applied. **EA:** This seems in tension with the theories referred to and the general orientation of the study; yet there is no further reflection on why children's and youth's voices are important for HIPP's goal of moving beyond conflict resolution towards peace education.
Ndwandwe (2023)	**3** *(medium)*	**2** *(medium)*	**2** *(medium)*	**E:** While children's knowledge is the object of the research, there is no participatory element or further engagement with children as knowledge producers; hence, it is coded as 3, but with medium confidence. **EA:** Children's epistemic agency is recognised in that their perspectives are considered important, yet no further articulation of epistemic agency is made. **D:** There is sparse engagement with difference; it is merely mentioned that girls were more likely to engage with the peace education because they are significantly affected by conflict (implicitly, as opposed to boys). This argument may be made in

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
				relation to gender equality or gendered violence, but that remains unclear.
Okanlawon et al. (2017)	**2** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	**EA:** No claim is made about children as knowers or agents. The nearest gesture is the citation of Akudolu (2006) on the "lack of opportunity for learners to engage in activities" and the focus on "student-centred" methods; however, students were not consulted in the development of the two games, for example. **D:** Difference is reported ("The study also revealed that there is significant difference in students' attitude towards the instructional games based on gender though both boys and girls are positively disposed to them.") but is not analytically engaged.
Pentini (2024)	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**E:** Children's knowledge is not engaged. **EA:** The study asks "how can independent agency in children of all ages be recognised and nurtured in a nonexploitative way and for the purpose of enhancing responsible agency in relation to the practice of rights and without imposing again adult-determined frameworks." (p. 562) **D:** The study's treatment of difference is illustrated by: "It is as if the physical boundaries that set limits to personal choosing are being pushed back more and more, barriers of physical abilities for instance in the area of extreme sports, and also in relation to any 'given' genetic identity. Questions of sexual orientation confront children at an ever-younger age, not least through the increase of medical intervention methods that permit such plasticity".

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
Quisumbing (2000)	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**EA:** Does not regard children as producing knowledge, but rather as needing to be educated. However, children are positioned as capable of being involved.
Ramadhani et al. (2023)	**2** *(low)*	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	**E:** The students' scores and marks are included, yet this article appears to warrant a lower score than other pieces coded as 2; hence the low confidence in this coding. **D:** Many markers of difference are mentioned, yet none drives the analytical work.
Rennebohm-Franz (1996)	**2** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(low)*	**D:** Difference is engaged through embracing multiple ways of knowing, but it is not reported as something shaped by power or social structures.
Shahab et al. (2022)	**4** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** It is uncertain whether this reaches level 4; however, the students' answers drive the discussion and recommendations, which is why it is coded as 4, with medium confidence. **D:** One research question enquires about gendered differences; further, the study notes that "The choice of schools in different districts within the province was informed by the need to consider the linguistic and cultural diversity of the region (…) selecting participants from three different districts would allow the exploration of the differences and similarities in learner perceptions about education and peacebuilding in their particular contexts." (p. 553)

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
Stomfay-Stitz (1994)	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**1** *(high)*	**E:** The only engagement with children's voices is through a historical perspective: "Their major efforts were designed to teach that war was a barbaric practice, but arbitration was a more promising method to prevent hostilities. A child wrote a prize-winning essay on this topic and is one of the 'voices from the past,' a child's voice represented in the chronicle." **EA:** However, the study notes the following, raising the question of whether epistemic agency is conditional on educational training: "If we listen to the children, those who have completed training in conflict resolution and peer mediation, we can hear voices of empowerment".
Stomfay-Stitz & Hinitz (1995)	**1** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(high)*	
Tomovska (2010)	**4** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** Children's engagement is key throughout in terms of how knowledge is generated; their voices and perspectives inform the entire study. **EA:** The study states that "it is very important to engage in understanding of the children's previous experiences before any contact situation is organized so that the process does not try to introduce something which is idealistic and too far away from the influences of the environment and children's views" (p. 136).

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
				D: Difference is engaged analytically throughout, along the lines of religion, age, and the children's contexts (e.g., the perspectives of parents).
Usakli & Eren (2024)	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**1** *(high)*	**E:** This may have been coded too low. **EA:** The entire piece is framed as being for children. It speaks of including young people so that they can express themselves democratically and freely, yet little attention is paid to their perspectives. A punitive/authoritarian element is prescribed for the teacher "if children break the rules"; however, "children are encouraged to develop their social emotional learning in a caring and safe environment with a child-centred and child-led approach".
Walker et al. (2008)	**2** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**E:** As a theoretical piece, it cannot be coded much higher; it is coded as 2 because children's perspectives are not engaged beyond quotations, and children are not necessarily credited beyond the adult lens applied. Quoting is not the same as crediting. **EA:** See the engagement coding (E), which shows the extent of engagement with children's epistemic agency. **D:** Difference is reported but not treated analytically.
Wessells (2005)	**2** *(medium)*	**3** *(high)*	**3** *(high)*	**E:** Children's engagement is discussed as crucial to positive outcomes of peace education.

Study	Engagement Level *(conf.)*	Epistemic agency Level *(conf.)*	Difference Level *(conf.)*	Coding notes (E / EA / D)
				EA: The study states that "students can become effective advocates for healthier policies that protect children's rights and well-being" (p. 368).
Yablon (2014)	**1** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**2** *(medium)*	**D:** There is engagement with religious difference, pertinent to Jewish–Muslim relations; however, the author clusters all students together as capable of relating in similar ways due to, rather than in spite of, religion.
Yilmaz (2018)	**2** *(medium)*	**2** *(medium)*	**1** *(high)*	**E:** Children are engaged in the research but are only sparsely consulted about the results. **EA:** However, the study notes that "drawings are considered as an indicator of how the child perceives external world, they help adults in communicating with the child and overcoming the difficulties that the child faces" … "children may draw what they see even in early ages and attribute special meaning to these (Cox, 1992; Cox, 1993). In this context, the best way to understand the message in children's drawings is to talk to them about their drawings or images."
Zelyurt & Ince (2018)	**1** *(low)*	**1** *(high)*	**1** *(high)*	**E:** Children are engaged through the programme and the research but are not consulted beyond their role as research subjects.