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Lebanese Young Citizens' Attitudes toward Peace and Democracy



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Abstract

Lebanon is a small democratic country with a population of less than four million and a range of diversity; there are at least 18 different religious sects and 19 different political parties. The diversity among ethnic, religious and/or political groups has created conflicts that severely impact the Lebanese economy, environment, politics and most importance our young citizens. The aim of this investigation is to capture students' awareness and attitudes toward the accountability and mechanisms of peace and democracy. Data for the study was obtained from extensive literature reviews and questionnaire surveys of 70 high school students. The investigation was conducted in the fall of the year 2013. The results of the study showed that most Lebanese young citizen view peace and democracy process associated with the end of violence and conflict behaviors; very small percent of respondents believe that bringing peace and democracy process should be answered by the people or by themselves. Results also indicate a lack of a sense of security among young citizen. This raises the urgent need to put into practice an effective peace education program that inspires and motivates young citizens to be involved in the peace and the democracy building process.

Keywords: Civic, Curriculum, Democracy, Lebanon, Peace, Peace education, young citizens

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INTRODUCTION

Lebanon is a small democratic country with a population less than 4 million and a wide range of diversity. There are at least eighteen different religious sects, and nineteen different political parties, (Collelo, 1987). This diversity has created tension where each group desired to create a country that is custom-made to suit its wishes ignoring the needs of the others. This had led to many clashes in the country, some of which lead to civil wars. Lebanon has witnessed two civil wars since its independence in 1943; a short one (1958), and a protracted one (1975-1990). Recently, Lebanon has managed to escape the threat of internal divisions and conflicts during the 2006 war and in 2008.

The Lebanese constitution affirms human rights; however, after thirty years of war and violence, Lebanon failed to carry on the true meaning of democracy. Violence includes physical, verbal and mental oppression becoming a common phenomenon, which affects the Lebanese family and society as well as institutions.

Young citizens have been severely influenced by the identity separation and been involved in different acts of violence, (Jabbour, K. 2012, p20). Hague Agenda in 1999 affirm that in order to combat the culture of violence that pervades our society, the coming generation deserves a radically different education – one that does not glorify war but educates for peace and non-violence and international cooperation. These demonstrate the urgent need for a curriculum that helps young Lebanese to understand and live in peace and harmony. The Lebanese education system is a powerful tool capable of playing an important role in shaping the way our children view each other, and can prompt a nationwide harmony.

2. LITERATURES REVIEW

2.1. Lebanon in Context

Lebanon is a democratic country with a population less than 4 million. There are at least eighteen different religious sects, and nineteen different political parties. Lebanese formed separate identity groups based on their ethnic, religious, and/or political following that are not tolerated or accepting of the others. This has produced much tension and many clashes in the country, some of which lead to civil wars.

Lebanon has witnessed two civil wars since its independence in 1943; a short one (1958), and a protracted one (1975-1990). Recently, Lebanon has managed to escape the threat of internal divisions and conflicts during the 2006 war and in 2008. Ever since the last civil war, the Lebanese citizens have become more attached and loyal to their different ethnic, religious, and/or political leaders more than to Lebanon.

Lebanese constitution affirms human rights; however, after thirty years of war and violence, Lebanon failed to carry on the true meaning of democracy. Violence includes physical, verbal and mental oppression becoming a common phenomenon, which affects the Lebanese family and society as well as institutions.

2.2. Impacts of the conflict on education

As we mentioned above, Lebanese young citizens are often going to schools where there is not much diversity among students; not giving them the chance to be much exposed to cultural perspectives of the others until later in life when they enter college. As a result, young adult are often carrying the baggage of their culture and identity separation into college, which disallow a start on creating the social cohesion that is needed to avoid further conflict. Furthermore, the current influences of the conflicts within ethnic, religious, and/or political groups on the higher education system are upsetting. Political turbulence in the country has led to physical, verbal, and mental oppression in many universities in Lebanon. Political violence is becoming a common phenomenon.



Sometime students were involved in different acts of violence, (Worth, 2009, p5).

In 2011 classes at the Lebanese University were suspended following clashes involving over 200 students, (Dhumieres, 2011). In November 2011, clashes at Lebanese American University (LAU) campus between political groups left seven students and the head of campus security injured, (The Daily Star news, November 02, 2011). The above incidents are examples of what is ongoing at



Lebanese Riot Police in front of the American University of Beirut's Main Gate on the Student Representative Committee Elections in 2010

Lebanese universities. In January 2007, a sudden outbreak of violence at the Arab University in Beirut campus; four students were killed and more than 30 students were wounded in escalating sectarian violence, (Fox News, 2007). In 1984, the American University of Beirut school's president was assassinated on AUB campus by a student as a result of political violence. Prior to his assassination, he implemented a rule forcing all students to sign a promise that they would not involve themselves in political activities on university grounds, (Ziad M., 1984, p. 14).

The above incidents represent a few examples of political violence at university campuses in Lebanon. University students are plagued by political tension on an ongoing basis, much of which is not reported. As a result of this unhealthy situation, it is obvious that there is a need to put into practice a peace educational program that can shape the way youngest view each other, and help to diminish the impact of persistent divisions and delusions. A program can contribute to peace and stability on every level; including family, society and the country as a whole.

2.3. Peace Education

Peace education is often illustrated as an important means for solving issues and mending the harm done to a society torn by conflict or war. However, many supporters of peace education also identify it as a method to put a stop to conflict. If peace education is to be the building block of a peaceful and democratic society, it must concentrate on more than the destructive. If the thought of peace is to go before the thought of war then it has to be developed from the first birth of independent thought. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi "if we are to teach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children." Offspring are born with an intrinsic logic of approval, acceptance and cooperation. They start their life with no biases and are not judgmental. These qualities are shaped afterward in response to their relations with society.

Hypothesizing about psychosocial growth stages right up to middle age, Erik Erikson proposes that the first year of life, is the period of moral growth, where the character wants to trust with disregard to their view of the person and the situation. This period is important to promote the development of moral conscience. Failed achievement of this phase can have long-term effects on the individual's sense of apprehension and suspicion of others. This

apprehension can take many shapes, including the apprehension of losing something or being subject to unpleasantness in the form of harassment, laugh at or isolation.

According to Erikson, each phase influence the next. The kid realizes to apply self control and will in the following phase, start to impersonate adults and develop a self image by the time they reach twelve years old. Achievement of each phase will influence the quality of the relations between the individual and society, (Harder, 2009). The early stages of life are important for an individual's ethical development; it is throughout the education years that an adolescent trained to discover their own individuality and personality. In view of that, the seeds for peace should be sown early on in school.

2.4. National Civic Education

Lebanon's education systems are the main institutes that have an effect on younger citizen. Education institutes not only have an impact on the intellectual development of young citizen, but also their mental, emotional, and social development as well. The government recognize of the importance of the education system as an influential tool. Following the French mandate (1918-1943), the Lebanese government established necessary transitions towards an independent republic through designing standardized curriculum. Ever since 1925, the government has made an attempt to promote harmony and nationwide social cohesion by designing a standardized national civic and history school curriculum in order to impact young citizens' mental, emotional, and social development, and assist in demolishing the impact of persistent divisions and misconceptions, (Frayha, 2003).

Civic education in Lebanon became a statutory subject and it is formally taught for 30 hours per year across all grade levels, from grades one to twelve (Frayha, 2003). The Civics textbook throughout all Lebanese schools is an identical text published by the Ministry of Education and it is obligatory by the Ministry of Education. The Lebanese Civic Education last updated in 1997 as part of the revised of the Lebanese National Curriculum. It primarily focus is the knowledge of civil rule, relations, Lebanese and Arab identities, (Frayha, 2003).

However, according to Frayha, the civic curriculum lacked an essential theme in educating students about their society and pluralism. This deficiency leads young citizen to confusion about their society. Young citizens have been directed to assume of their society as a homogeneous,

however all around them, they have been dealing with profound diversity and conflicts. They have been educated that Lebanon is a self-governing and independent nation with an Arab aspect, yet they are confused about the meaning they were Lebanese, Arab, or Lebanese-Arab, (Frayha, 1985).

2.5. The Face of Modern Lebanese Education

The modern of Lebanese education has been shaped by the ongoing controlled by ethnic, religious, or political leaders. Frayha in 2009 articulated that “the opposition of religious groups on several subjects has prevented the emergence of new united curricula. For example, in relation to history curricula, sects have advocated for teaching it from their own perspective and were the main opponents of a new single textbook.” He continues by documenting “Sects’ leaders were also successful after the civil war to impose religious education in public schools, which was traditionally absent before the war, despite the opposition of many secularists in Lebanon. Two separate textbooks for each faith were created for each grade with no information about the other religion; actually the writing of a common book for Christian and Muslim students based on common spiritual values was refused by the sects”, (Frayha, 2009). The Minister of Education, Dr. Khaled Kabbani (as cited in Harrison, 2007), called for the separation of state and education, particularly in light of the fact that sectarian politics and sympathies often get in the way of making any real inroads on education reform; Dr. Kabbani considers that educational development will only be accomplished when it is in conjunction with political reform and general restructuring of the government, (Harrison, 2007, p121).

2.6. Classrooms in Context

Lebanese kids are often going to schools where there is not much diversity among students; not giving them the chance to interact with different sects. As a result, they are not much exposed to cultural perspectives of the others until later in life when their preconceptions have been solidified. Mackey in 2006 articulated that “Lebanese youth entered the foreign mission schools and emerged twelve years later ignorant of everything concerning the history, geography, and social life of their own country. Further, children passed through the schools



of their own confession, often barely meeting children of another faith”, (p. 131). Paul Salem (as cited in Harrison, 2007) articulated “I think the key thing is having kids grow up together; there’s nothing you can say in the classroom... if you don’t live it, it’s going to have limited impact. So I would say the key is growing up together in schools that are mixed”.

3. RESEARCH STUDY

3.1 Mythology

This study investigates the civic education programs at Lebanese school. The investigation examines students’ concepts of civic knowledge and explored their learning experiences in the classroom and any related education issues and gaps. This effort led to an understanding that can guide governments, professionals and educators evaluate, modify, and develop civic educational programs at the Lebanese schools. The research results were based on the findings of the data gathered from the questionnaire surveys and the interviews. The survey instrument of the study was a paper survey that was used to gather data from 70 students from 8 different schools. The researcher chooses to explore students in grade ten and grade eleven. Each student completed a 10 minute questionnaire survey. The survey was conducted in the fall of 2013. The questionnaire surveys were administered in Arabic language.

The schools chosen for this study were an array of ethnicities and socioeconomic levels. The students from all the different schools were treated as a single group; therefore no distinction was made between the schools. This study was conducted in a manner that protected the confidentiality of the participants. The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire administered in paper and pencil form. Survey items were developed based on an extensive literature review as well as querying participants using an exploratory questionnaire. The study gathered quantitative data to answer the research questions.

3.2 Research Questions

The objective of this research was to capture students’ awareness and attitudes toward the accountability and mechanisms of peace and democracy. The results can strengthen our understanding and guide governments, professionals and educators evaluate, modify, and

develop peace programs in the Lebanese schools. In this research study, the following research questions were addressed:

Research Question 1: What are the overall students' understanding of peace and democracy?

Research Question 2: What are the overall young citizens' attitudes of toward accountability and mechanisms of peace and democracy in Lebanon?

Research Question 3: What are the attitudes of young citizens toward a sense of security?

3.3 Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire administered in paper and pencil form. Survey items were developed based on an extensive literature review as well as querying participants using an exploratory questionnaire. The instrument used in this study was administered in Arabic language and translated to English to serve up this documentation of this research. The survey was 1 page in length and took approximately 10 minutes to finish. In order to validate the content of the survey, three expert professors were asked to evaluate the survey questionnaire. The data collected was entered into the computer and analyzed.

4. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Survey Implementation and Collection

We conducted a survey in eight schools from October to November 2013. The schools chosen are in the different districts area and include both public and private schools in order to capture young citizens' attitudes and understanding about peace and democracy and a sense of security. The researcher visited the school's principals who agreed to participate. The school's principals were given the opportunity to be involved in the study; the school's principals who decided to participate were acknowledged verbally that this study was voluntary and that it was understood that all information would remain confidential. The researcher administered the survey to grade ten and eleven at the school who agreed to participate. By the mid November 2013, the researcher collected 70 survey questionnaires from 8 different schools. The data collected from the survey was entered in the spreadsheet software and then transferred to SPSS software, for further analysis.

4.2. Survey Objectives

The specific objectives of the survey were the following:

- Capture the understanding of peace and democracy
- Capture the opinions about the role of young citizens' in the peace and democracy building process
- Capture the opinions about achieving peace and democracy in Lebanon
- Capture the respondents' opinions about sense of security

It is our hope that this report will assist policy makers to develop coherent and integrated effective peace education programs that promote peace and social coherence among the Lebanese people.

4.3 Research Design and Instruments

The survey instrument was designed to collect quantitative data on seven topics. The instrument was first developed in Arabic and it was translated to English in order to serve the purpose of writing this report.

Research Instruments: The survey instrument covered 5 topics including:

1. Understanding of peace and democracy
2. Attitudes toward the accountability and mechanisms of peace and democracy
3. The role of young citizens' in the peace and democracy building process
4. Sense of Security
5. Achieving peace and democracy

5. DATA RESULTS

5.1 Demographic Information

A total of 70 surveys were conducted in eight different schools within the Beirut area. The researcher administrated the survey to grade ten and eleven in eight different schools within

districts in the Beirut area. Therefore, the results for the selected group may not be representative of the attitudes of all Lebanese students. Table 1 shows the demographic information of the respondents. The ratio of female-to-male respondents was almost equal (54 percent of respondents were female).

Gender of the respondents	Frequency	Percent
Male	31	45.71
Female	38	54.29
Total	70	100.0

5.2. Young Citizens' Attitudes and Understanding of Peace and Democracy

Student's respondents were asked about their attitudes toward peace, democracy and security and how it could be achieved. In order to gain further insight into their responses, it was important to understand how student's respondents understood the concept of peace and democracy.

5.2.1. Understanding of Peace and Democracy:

Student's respondents were asked: What do you see as the three most important criteria for peace and democracy? Close to three-quarters of the respondents (74%) related peace and democracy with the "End of war violence and conflict behaviors" and 33 percent defined it as "Providing protection and security". Respondents also associated peace and democracy with "Strong economy" (33%) and "Tolerant of the others' religious or political parties" was mentioned by (27%). Twenty six percent also referred to it as having "Strong Government"; "Education" was mentioned by 11 percent. Four percent of respondents associated the concept of peace with other criteria. It is important to note that respondents did not show a uniform understanding of peace and democracy, (Table 2, Figure 1).

Table 2: What do you see as the three most important criteria for Peace and Democracy?

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Strong Economy	23	32.9
100% literacy	8	11.4
Strong Government	18	25.7
Tolerant of the others' religious or political views	19	27.1
Providing protection and security	23	32.9

Table 2: What do you see as the three most important criteria for Peace and Democracy?

	Frequency	Percent
Valid		
Strong Economy	23	32.9
100% literacy	8	11.4
Strong Government	18	25.7
End of war, violence and conflict behaviors	52	74.3
Others	3	4.3

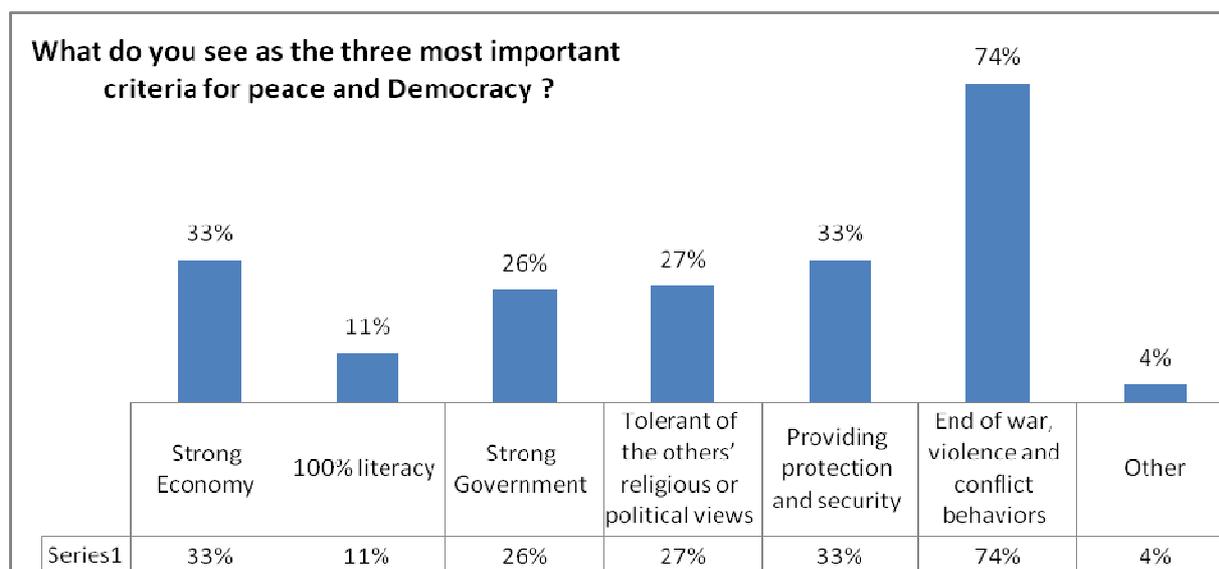


Figure 1: What do you see as the three most important criteria for peace and democracy?

5.2.2. What is the Role of the Young Citizen in the Peace and the Democracy Building Process?

According to the survey, 36 percent respondents said that young citizen has no role in the peace and the democracy building process. Whereas 27 percent said that young citizen has some role but ineffective; and 26 percent said that young citizen is no active role; and 9 percent don't know/ can't say. Only 3 percent of the respondents said that young citizen has an important role in the peace and the democracy building process. This supports the need to target young citizen in building awareness about their role in peace and democracy building, (Table 3, Figure 2).

Table 3: What is the role of the young citizen in the peace and democracy building process?

	Frequency	Percent
Valid		
No role	25	35.7
Some role but ineffective	19	27.1
They are not active	18	25.7

Table 3: What is the role of the young citizen in the peace and democracy building process?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No role	25	35.7
	Some role but ineffective	19	27.1
	They are not active	18	25.7
	Don't Know/ Can't Say	6	8.6
	They have important roles	2	2.8

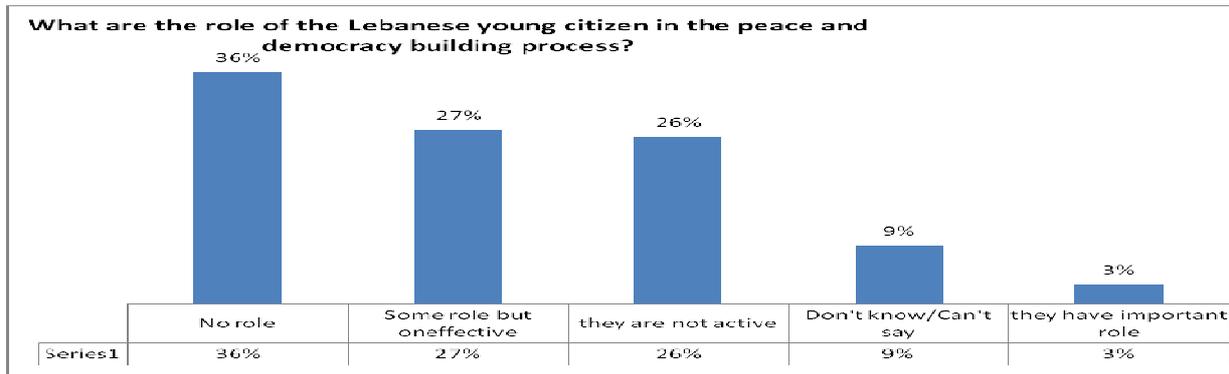


Figure 2: What are the role of the young citizen in the peace and democracy building process?

5.2.3. What should be the priorities of the Lebanese Government?

We asked respondents to identify the top priorities of the Lebanese government. Respondents were allowed to give more than one answer and identified peace and security (66%), jobs (54%), health, (36%), electricity (31%), and education, 21%; as their main priorities. This suggests that any approach to peace and democracy in Lebanon must take into account the strong desire on the part of the people to have their most basic needs met. Table 4; figure 3, respondents' current main priorities, (Table 4, Figure 3).

Table 4: What should be the priorities of the Lebanese Government?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Health	25	35.7
	Peace and security	46	66
	Education	18	21
	Jobs	38	54.3
	Electricity	22	31.4
	Justice	2	3
	Water	1	1
	Other	14	20

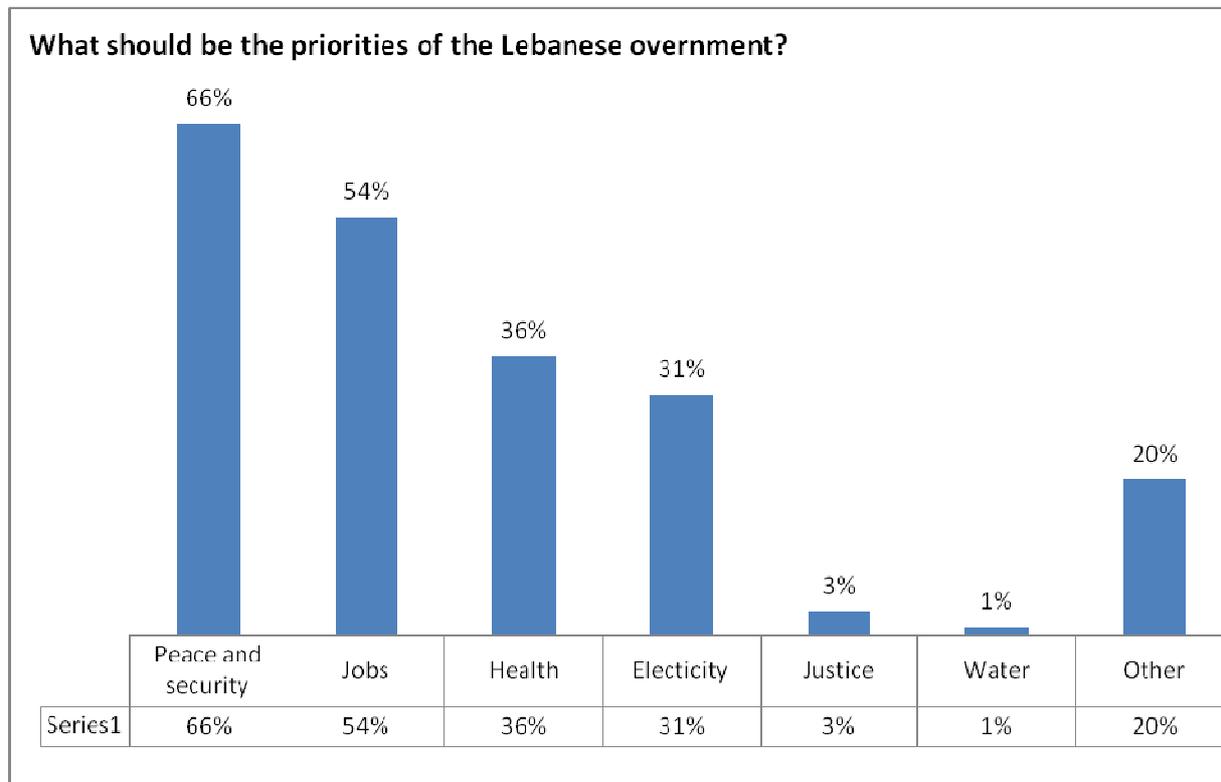


Figure 3: What should be the priorities of the Lebanese Government?

5.3. Attitudes toward Peace and Democracy in Lebanon

5.3.1. Achieving of Peace and Democracy in Lebanon

Student's respondents were asked if they believe that peace and democracy could be achieved in Lebanon. Almost half of respondents (47%) believed that Peace and Democracy could be achieved in Lebanon, and a very high percentage (44%) did not believe that Peace and Democracy could be achieved in Lebanon, and (9%) did not know, (Table 5; Figure 4).

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	33	47.1
	Do Not Know	6	8.6
	No	31	44.3
	Total	70	100.0

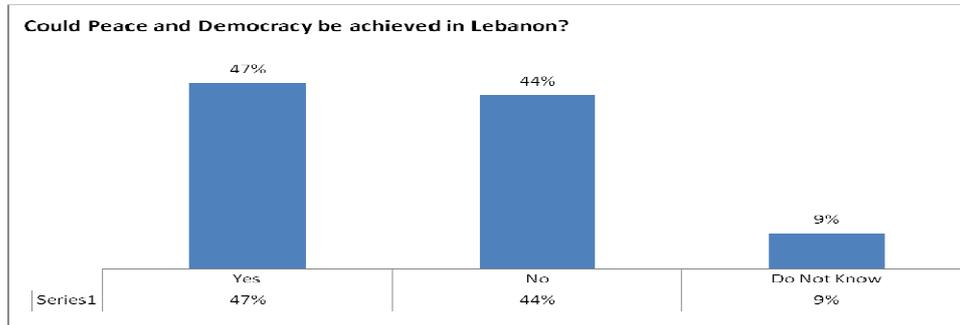


Figure 4: Could Peace and Democracy be achieved in Lebanon?

5.3.2. How could we Achieve Peace and Democracy in Lebanon?

Student’s respondents were asked: how could we achieve peace and democracy in Lebanon. The majority of the respondents (89%) believed peace and democracy could be achieved through “improving the economy” and even more believed peace and democracy could be achieved through “Support political parties or religious leaders” (90%) or “Support the government” (86%). And “Improve education and literacy” was mentioned by 40 percent. Only 39 percent of respondents associated achieving peace and democracy in Lebanon concept with the “dialogue among the political parties or religious leaders”. Respondents also linked peace and democratic achievement with “Unite the Lebanese spirit in all Lebanon” (31%), (Table 6; Figure 5).

Table 6: How could we achieve Peace and Democracy in Lebanon?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Improve the economy	62	88.6
	Improve education and literacy	28	40.0
	Support the government	60	85.7
	Support your political parties or religious leader	63	90.0
	Dialogue among the political parties or religious leaders	27	38.6
	Unite the Lebanese spirit in all Lebanon	22	31.4
	Others	0	0

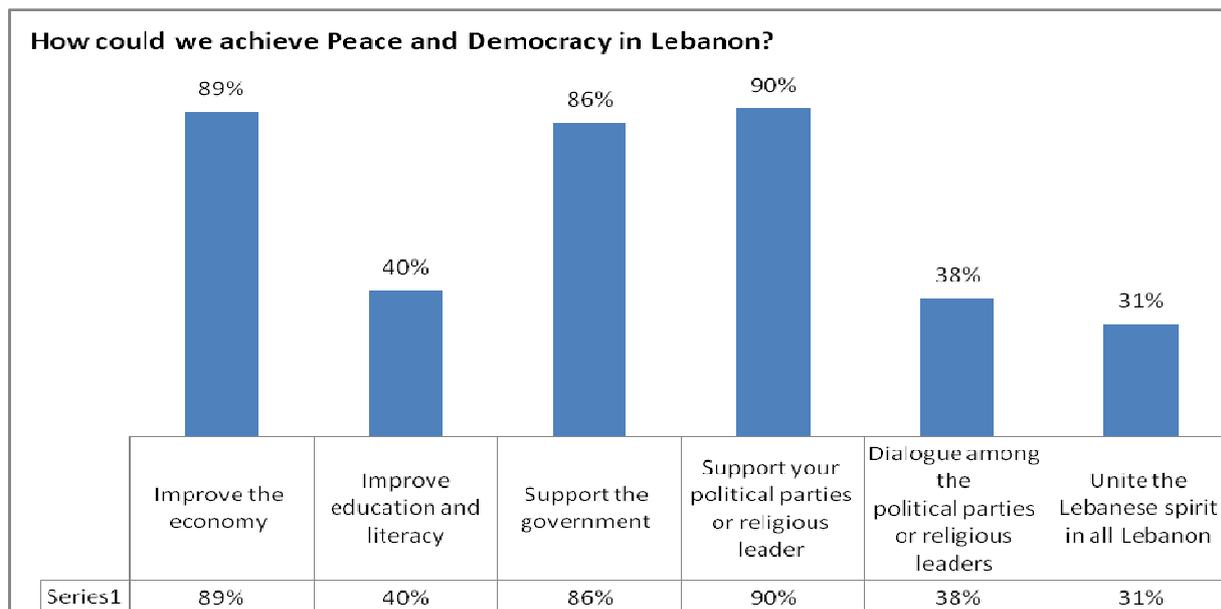


Figure 5: How could we achieve Peace and Democracy in Lebanon?

5.3.3. Who should take action to bring about Peace and Democracy in Lebanon?

When student’s respondents were asked: who should take action to bring about Peace and Democracy in Lebanon, respondents generally believed that the government was more committed to the peace and democracy process than the political parties or religious leaders: the majority of the respondents (96%) stated they believed the government was committed to achieving peace and democracy, whereas more than three-quarters of respondents (79%) believed the political parties or religious leaders was similarly committed. And (29%) of respondents believe that “Groups & Organizations” should be in charge of bringing peace and democracy process. Only 9 percent of respondents associated the process of bringing peace and democracy with the “Education institutes”, and as little as three percent of respondents believe that bringing peace and democracy process should be answered by the “Lebanese People” or with “themselves”, (Table 7; Figure 6).

Table 7: Who should take the actions to bring about Peace and Democracy in Lebanon?

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Education institutes	6	8.6
Valid Government	67	95.7
Valid Political parties or religious leaders	55	78.6

Groups & Organizations	20	28.6
Lebanese People	2	2.9
Yourself	2	2.9

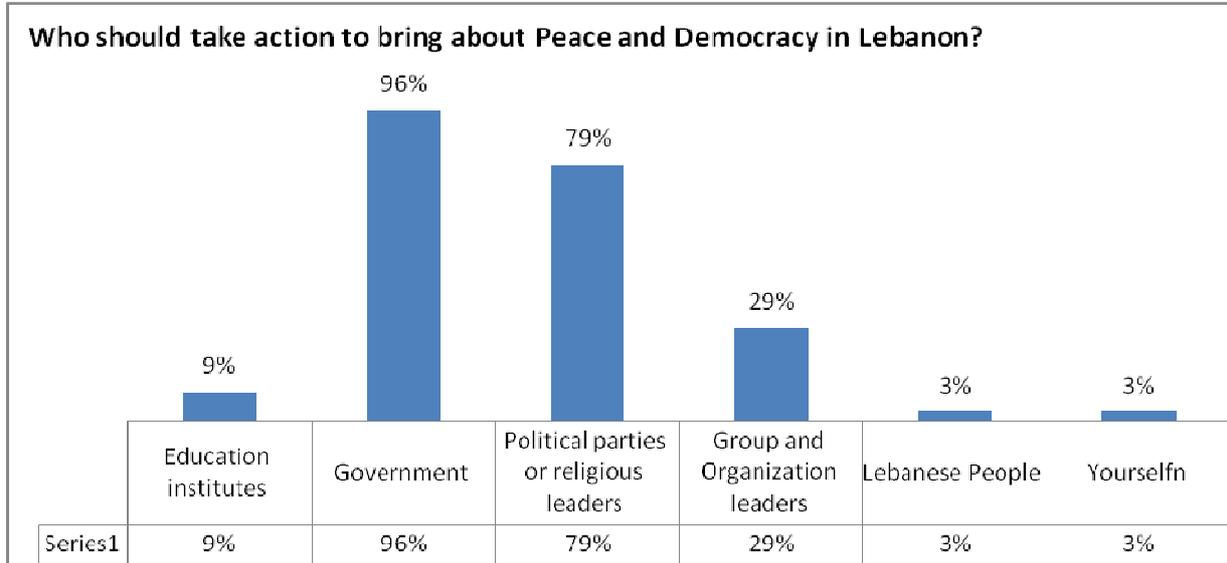


Figure 6: Who should take the actions to bring about Peace and Democracy in Lebanon?

5.4. Sense of Security

5.4.1. Who will protect You and Your Family?

A higher percentage (77%) of respondents felt that the political/ or religious groups were protecting them, and their family (67%). A small percentage (26%) felt that the police or the governments are protecting them, and (11%) felt that no one is protecting them or their family. These figures may reflect the immediate need for implementing adequate security measures, (Table 8, Figure 6).

Table 8: Who will protect you and your family?

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Your political or religious leader	54	77.1
Your family	47	67.1
The police or the government	18	25.7
The international community	4	5.7
No one	8	11.4
Other _____	0	0

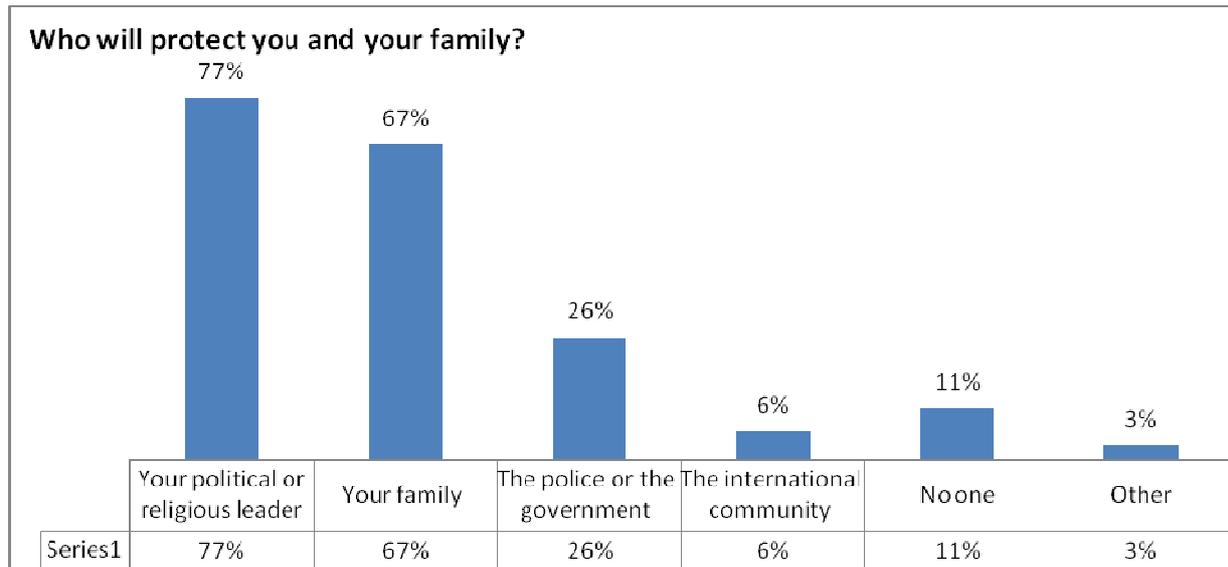


Figure 6: Who will protect you and your family?

5.4.2. Do You Feel Safe in the Following Situations?

Respondents were also asked if they feel safe in a range of situations: Talking openly in public about your faith and belief; Talking openly in public about politics; Complaining to your political or religious leader when you are a victim of theft or violence; Complaining to the government when you are a victim of theft or violence. In general, around 60 percent of respondents felt safe when complaining to their political or religious leader when they are a victim of theft or violence. Approximately half of respondents felt safe talking openly in public about their political view (53%). Slightly more felt safe talking about their religion (57%). A small percentage (27%) felt safe when complaining to the police or the governments when they are a victim of theft or violence. All of these indicators point to the need to establish adequate policing to deal with violence and crimes, (Table 8, Figure 7).

Table 8: Do you feel safe in the following situations

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Talking openly in public about your faith and belief	40	57.1
Talking openly in public about politics	37	52.9
Complaining to your political or religious leader when you are a victim of theft or violence	42	60.0
Complaining to the government when you are a victim of theft or violence	19	27.1

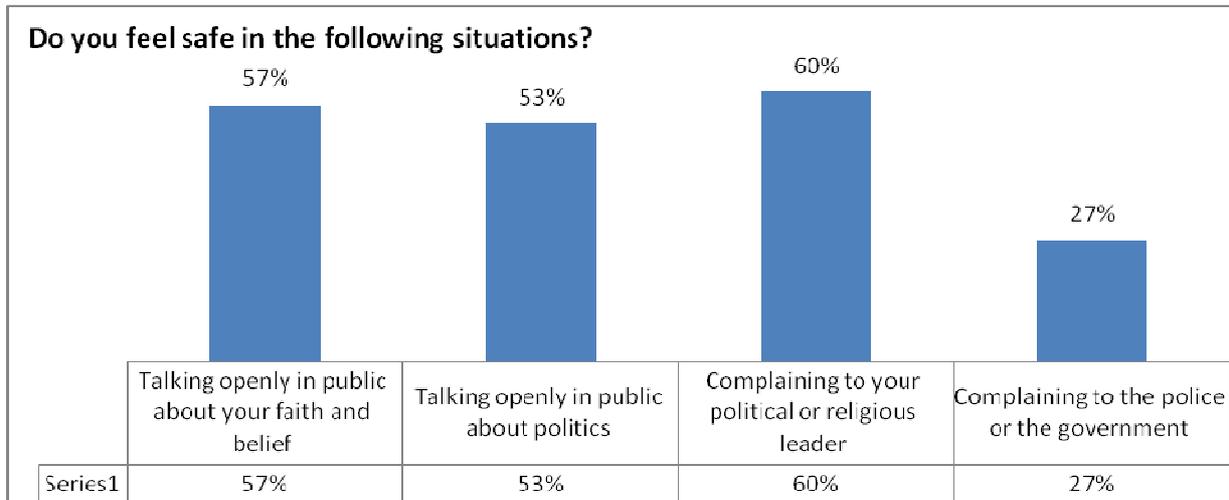


Figure 7: Do you feel safe in the following situations

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This diversity within the Lebanese communities has created tension which had created many clashes in the country, some of which lead to civil wars. The Lebanese constitution affirms human rights; however, after thirty years of war and violence, Lebanon failed to carry on the true meaning of democracy. Violence in Lebanon is becoming common phenomenon, which is affecting the Lebanese family and society and most importance our young citizen. Against this background, we conducted a survey in eight schools in Lebanon. The study aimed to capture the attitudes of young citizen (15-17 years of age), about peace and democracy.

The results of the assessment indicate that a large proportion of young citizen feel the peace and democracy process is largely related to the “End of war violence and conflict behaviors”; and identify the top priorities of the Lebanese government should be to “Providing protection and security”. Almost one-thirds respondents feel that they do not have any role in building peace and democracy in Lebanon. (27%) of respondents believe they do have some role but ineffective; and (26%) were in the “They are not active” category. Only 3 percent believe that they have an important role in building peace and democracy in Lebanon. Thus, it is important to design a project aims to increase young citizen’s role in peace and democracy building by designing, and assume leadership roles in collaborative efforts. And unfortunately, the survey found that more than half of the respondents (53%), did not believe (44%) or did not know (9%), whether peace and democracy could be achieved in Lebanon. This is likely due to the

continuous violence and conflict in the region. Furthermore, data suggests that youngest citizen has less faith in their government to address peace and no democratic issues than political or religious leaders. The majority of the respondents believed peace and democracy could be achieved through “Support political or religious leaders” (90%), and (86%) through the “Support the government”. On the other hand, data suggest that most of young citizen stated that government should be responsible to take action to bring about peace and democracy into Lebanon by (96%) and (79%) of the respondents believed the political parties or religious leaders was similarly committed, as little as three percent of respondents believe that bringing peace and democracy process should be answered by the “Lebanese People” or with “themselves”.

Results also indicate a very clear lack of a sense of security among respondents; (77%) of respondents felt that the political/religious groups were protecting them, and their family (67%). A small percentage (26%) felt that the police or the governments are protecting them, and (11%) felt that no one is protecting them or their family. These figures may reflect the immediate need for implementing adequate security measures.

Involving young citizen into the peace and democratic process is vital to both peace and democracy structure in Lebanon. In most of the time, young citizen is manipulated to be participants of violent behavior rather than an instrument of peace. Young citizen involved in the youth section of political parties are often the ones that engage in violent clashes among each other and incite violent demonstration. The violence of the young citizen section has increased over the past year; its members are vulnerable to manipulation to violence by their parties. Increasing the role of young citizen in the decision making practices, giving them the chance to shift from a role of violence to one of the contributors, and attending to the essential aspect that cause them to alternative to violence will be an important factor of the country's successful transition.

The seeds of peace must be sown in early childhood. Building a sustainable peace and democracy involves both ends of violence, conflict behavior and providing peace education that develops skills and attitudes that support the development of a peace-seeking mindset. The Lebanese education system is a powerful tool capable of playing an important role in young citizen transitions in shaping the young citizen prospect, and can prompt a nationwide peace and

democracy. Peace education can play a valuable tool for resolving issues and repairing the damage done to a society torn by war or strife. The idea of peace should be nurtured from the very birth of independent thought; along with the words of Mahatma Gandhi “if we are to teach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children.” Based on the findings of this research, we recommend that peace education be integrated across the curriculum, in lessons as well as activities.

Data

Understanding of peace and democracy: respondents believed the three most important criteria for peace and democracy:

- (74%) End of war violence and conflict behaviors
- (33%) Providing protection and security
- (33%) Strong economy
- (27%) Tolerant of the others' religious or political parties
- (26%) Strong Government
- (11%) Education
- (4%) Other criteria

Understanding of peace and democracy: What is the role of the Lebanese young citizen in the peace and the democracy building process?

- (36%) No role
- (27%) Some role but ineffective
- (26%) They are not active
- (9%) Don't Know/ Can't Say
- (3%) They have important roles

Understanding of peace and democracy: Respondents assumed the priorities of the Lebanese government should be as follows:

- (36%) Health
- (66%) Peace and security
- (21%) education
- (54%) Jobs
- (31%) electricity
- (3%) Justice
- (1%) Water
- (20%) Other

Attitudes toward peace and democracy in Lebanon: Respondents' attitude in achieving peace and democracy in Lebanon:

- (47%) Yes, can be achieved
- (44%) No, can't be achieved
- (9%) did not know

Attitudes toward peace and democracy in Lebanon: Respondents' attitude how could we achieve peace and democracy in Lebanon

- (89%) Improve the economy
- (40%) Improve education and literacy
- (86%) Support the government
- (90%) Support your political parties or religious leader
- (39%) Dialogue among the political parties or religious leaders
- (31%) Unite the Lebanese spirit in all Lebanon

Attitudes toward Peace and Democracy: Respondents assumed the one who should take action to bring about peace and democracy in Lebanon?

- (9%) Education institutes
- (96%) Government
- (79%) Political parties or religious leaders
- (29%) Groups & Organizations
- (3%) Lebanese People
- (3%) Yourself

Respondents Sense of Security: (respondents believed who will protect them and their family):

- (77%) political or religious leader
- (67%) family
- (26%) police or the government
- (6%) international community
- (11%) No one

Sense of Security: (the respondents feel safe in the following situations?)

- (57%) Talking openly in public about your faith and belief
- (53%) Talking openly in public about politics
- (60%) Complaining to your political or religious leader when you are a victim of theft or violence
- (27%) Complaining to the government when you are a victim of theft or violence

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