

## **INCLUSION OF PEACE EDUCATION IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME CURRICULUM: TOOL FOR PROMOTING PEACE AND UNITY IN NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Peace is a value cherished by all and sundry, absence of peace will lead to chaotic situation which is an obstacle to any meaningful qualitative and quantitative development. This paper focuses on the relevance of inclusion of peace education in teacher education programmes as a means of bringing back peace and unity in the society and the nation at large. The concept of teacher education and peace education curriculum were discussed; peace education, peace education curriculum, elements of peace education, inclusion of peace education in formal education programmes were examined; challenges facing the inclusion of peace education in teacher education programmes were identified; and recommendations were also made on how to overcome the identified challenges.

**Keywords:** Peace, education, teacher, curriculum, unity

### **INTRODUCTION**

Every day in the world, thousands of people die from violence both in armed conflict and non-armed conflict situations. Every day throughout the world, thousands of people die from hunger and other poverty related causes. Every day in the world, people are either physically or emotionally attacked as they differ from the rest of the ethnicity, religion, sex or gender. Everyday natural resources are depleted without regards for the needs of future generations. A former Catholic Pope summarised what can be done to bring back peace in a few words, that is, 'teach peace to reach peace'.

Peace Education is indeed central to the task of conflict prevention and peace building. Peace Education aims to transform mindset, values and behaviours that produce and exacerbate conflict. Academic institutions and civil society organizations in various parts of the country have long been educating for peace, these initiatives were bolstered by the adoption of executive order 570 calling for the institutionalization of Peace Education, in Basic Education and Teacher Education Programmes. Education for peace is most meaningful when students can relate to the concept, as these are very much part of their lives as our country and the world can no longer afford the consequences that aimed at structural violence creation. Building a culture of peace is an urgent task and educating for peace is a great pathway to get there. Therefore, the inclusion of peace education in Teacher Education programme will go a long way in bringing back peace and unity in the society and the nation at large.

Education as we all know is an instrument used in informing, educating, enlightening, awareness creation and above all total development of the entire humanity. Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human right and fundamental freedom, it shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

### **THE CONCEPT OF TEACHER EDUCATION**

Teacher Education refers to the policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitude, behaviours and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school and wider community. Although ideally it should be conceived of and organized as a seamless continuity, teacher education is often divided into these stages which is below:

- I. Initial teacher training/education (a pre-service course before entering the classroom as a fully responsible teacher).

- II. Induction: the process of providing training and support during the first few years of teaching or the first year in a particular school.
- III. Teacher development or continuing professional development (CPD) (an in-service process for practising teachers)

### **TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

Curriculum in education, is broadly defined as totality of students' experiences that occur in the educational process. The term often refers specifically to a planned sequence of instruction or to a view of the students' experiences in terms of the educators or schools instructional goals. Kelly (2009), the word "curriculum" begins as a latin word which means "a race" or "the course of a race" which in turn derives from the verb, curere meaning "to run/to proceed", the first known use in the educational context is in the *Professio Regia*, a work by University of Paris professor, Petrus Ramus published posthumously in 1576. The word's origins appears closely linked to Calvinists' desire to bring greater order to education (Hamilton, 2014). Teacher Education curricular can be broken down into four areas:

- I. Foundational knowledge in education, related aspects of philosophy of education, history of education, educational psychology and sociology of education.
- II. Skills in assessing students' learning, supporting English language learners using technology to improve teaching and learning, and supporting students with special needs.
- III. Content, area and methods knowledge and skills, including ways of teaching and assessing a specific subject, in which case this area may overlap with the first (foundational) areas. There is increasing debate about this aspect because it is no longer possible to know in advance what kinds of knowledge and skills pupils will need when they enter adult life. It therefore, becomes harder to know what kinds of knowledge and skills teachers should have increasingly, emphasis is placed upon "transverse" or "horizontal" skills (such as learning to learn or social competences) which cut across traditional subject boundaries, and therefore call into question traditional ways of designing the teacher education curriculum (and traditional school curricula and ways of working in the classroom).
- IV. Practice at classroom teaching or at some other form of educational practice usually supervised and supported in some way. Though not always practice can take the form of field observations, student teaching, or internship.

### **PEACE EDUCATION AND PEACE EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

Abebe, Ubesso & Nyawalo (2006) explained peace education as a unifying and comprehensive concept that seeks to promote a holistic view of education. However, its relevance is inextricably part of and is highly dependent on contextual specificity. UNESCO literature states that, peace education is more effective and meaningful when adopted accordingly to the social and cultural context and the need of a country. It should be enriched by its cultural and spiritual values together with the universal human values. It should also be globally relevant. Given such a framework, it is hard to find a universally accepted definition. As such, peace education is characterized by its many definitions (P. 14). Dewey (1923), defined peace education as a curriculum which will make it more difficult for the flames of hatred and suspicion to sweep over the country in the future, which indeed will make this impossible because when children's minds are in the formation period we should have fixed in them through the medium of the schools, feeling of respect and friendliness for the other nations and people of the world. The United Nations in its earliest years voiced similar support for peace education as a catalyst for international respect and human right as described in its universal declaration of human rights. Peace Education as means of skill development and action. More recently, numerous definition focus on peace skills that empower students to tackle real-world issue and thus actively create peace in the world. Foundation (1999), Peace Education in UNICEF refers to the process of promoting knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behaviour changes 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 intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level (P.1) According to Abebe et al. (2006), Peace Education is a process of developing knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours and values that enable learners to identify and understand sources of local and global issues and acquire positive and appropriate sensitivities to the problems, resolve conflicts and to attain justice, in a non-violent way, live by universal standard of human rights and equity by appreciating cultural diversity respect for the earth and for each other (P. 14). Curriculum covers informal, non-formal and formal education. Curriculum is a

veritable instrument for achieving the educational goals, the content or fact to be learnt, the learning experiences, outcome of learning encounters and the learning environment. The overriding goal of peace education in formal, non-formal and informal education is to develop in the learners the dispositions and confidence as agents of peace who can live in harmony with one self, others and the natural environment as well as promote peace, human right and democracy in the society. The goal of Peace Education is based on the eight keys of Peace Education emanating from the United Nation resolutions and the Nobel Peace Price laureates manifesto 2000 (Hawke Research Institute 2012:2) as follows:

- I. Respect all life, respecting the right and dignity of each human being.
- II. Non-violence rejection of violence, obtaining just by convincing and understanding.
- III. Sharing developing attitude and skills for living together in harmony, putting an end to exclusion and aggression.
- IV. Listening to understand, giving everyone a chance to learn and share through the free flow of information.
- V. Preservation of the planet, making sure that progress and development are good for everyone and for the environment.
- VI. Tolerance and solidarity, appreciating that people are different and that everyone has something to contribute to the community.
- VII. Equality of men and women, ensuring an equal place for men and women in building the society.
- VIII. Democracy, making decisions by having your say and giving others theirs.

### **INCLUSION OF PEACE EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

The curriculum for Peace Education is concerned with planned objectives for learning the content, delivery strategies for achieving the objectives, evaluation to certify the extent the objectives have been achieved and the environment within which learning takes place. This curriculum is predetermined, organized and sequentially arranged. However, it is necessary to note that inclusion of Peace Education Curriculum in formal education includes both conscious classroom teacher directed work and incidental curriculum within the school. To achieve the goals of peace education through the conscious classroom teacher directed work, the integrative approach to Peace Education instruction and Element of Peace Education are integrated into all learning subjects and implemented bearing in mind the eight keys to promoting a culture of peace as well as the basic elements of Peace Education. The integration occurs at the levels of content, instructional methods and material. While developing and presenting the learning content of any subject of study, the teacher endeavours to identify and highlight any item or idea that is related to the basic element of peace education. The Basic Element of Peace Education are as follows:

<b>PEACE DIMENSION</b>	<b>BASIC ELEMENTS</b>
Knowledge	peace, justice, human right, civic participation, emotional literacy, problem solving (including conflict resolution)
Values and attitudes	tolerance, caring, social equity, peace, justice, cooperation and solidarity, human right, active citizenship, gender, equity, self-awareness, empathy, conflict resolution using peaceful means, promotion of sustainable environment, freedom of religious practice, compassion, respect for human life etc.
Skills	active listening, understanding, similarities and difference, co-operation, mediation, problem solving, trust, critical thinking, self-reflection, self-esteem etc.

### **CHALLENGES FACING THE INCLUSION OF PEACE EDUCATION**

- I. Teachers' qualification: majority of the teachers to teach peace education are not specifically trained for the subject, majority are trained for social studies, government, religious studies and moral education.
- II. Newness of Peace Education as a subject: many educationists continue to ask intriguing questions on the need for the teaching of peace education as a subject. Abubakar (2004) stated that since peace education is specifically designed to teach and inculcate the culture of tolerance, understanding, unity in diversity, and respect for the elders and constituted authorities. The author however, believed that the content

methodology, skills and abilities could be integrated into the teaching of social studies, civic education, economic, political science, citizenship education and general studies at various level of education.

- III. Introduction of Peace Education as a subject: the new subject peace education will demand more books, researchers, instructional materials, new curriculum and teachers which will be too expensive for the government and other stakeholders to provide, the need to integrate the teaching of peace education into the conventional subject like social studies, moral education, citizenship education, general studies and religious studies. All subjects which will effectively handle the concepts, method and strategies of peace education in Nigeria subjects.
- IV. In-depth of socio-economic crises: another problem confronting the introduction of peace education is the in-depth of socio-economic crises and violence. In the country Nigeria, over the years Nigerians had been experiencing high rate of social crises such as bombing, insurgency, killing, kidnapping, ethnic/religious crises and political crises all which had destroyed lives and properties of the innocent citizens. According to Oyebode (2011), nobody will forgive the kind that had destroyed the life of the bread winner of a family. However, with the high rate of loss of lives and property destruction in Nigeria, workable peace education can be integrated into the school in Nigeria.
- V. Perpetration of social crimes in the society: this made the integration of peace education into schools to be difficult. Nigerian society is characterised by a lot of cheating, unequal distribution of resources, poor standard of living, hunger, poverty, illiteracy, forgery, examination malpractice and robbery. According to Abdulkareem (2014), the teaching and learning of peace education become difficult because individuals are made to understand their right and everybody wants to fight for that right in the society and nobody wants to be cheated, however, in a bid to fight for individual right resulted to un-peaceful atmosphere in the society which also caused intolerance, rowdiness, fighting, thuggery etc. among members of the society, the situation constitute a major problem for the integration of peace education into the school system in the society. It should be noted that unless, members of the society tolerate each other in order to live in peace and harmony, the teaching of peace education becomes very difficult.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

For any development to take place in a country and recognised as a developed nation in the world, there must be peace. As Iyande (2009) rightly put that un-peaceful environment constitute high problem for the national transformation and socio-economic development of any nation.

- I. It should be noted that there is the need to inculcate the culture of peace and order into the life of all and sundry in Nigeria for the benefit of oneness, unity in diversity and cultural integration. However, the following strategies needs to be adopted for the proper integration of peace education in Nigerian teacher education
- II. There should be training and establishment of peace support groups in schools. The management should try to encourage the students to be interested and committed to the peace education that can be integrated through effective participation in extra-curricular activities like games, clubs and societies, religious groups, involvement of students in the school decision-making process, students-teachers forum, students-representatives council; all which enhance students' commitment, active participation and interest in peace education.
- III. There may be public campaign for peace education: the school should complement government's effort to organize peace education campaign for the students and members of the society. The effort will aid effective teaching of peace education in the school system.
- IV. Adequate funding should be provided since peace education is a new concept in the school curriculum. Adequate funds should be provided to make available necessary instructional facilities, qualified teachers and public enlightenment of peace education in the school. Learners' support services should be provided in the school system.
- V. Provision of learners' support service in the school: the government should try to provide the learners' support services that will aid their educational provision in the school system. Ogundele and James (2014)

identified the basic types of learners' support services they include: counselling, welfare, transportation, library, financial, recreational services. Availability of these services will aid self-understanding, inter-personal relationship, friendship, and understanding. All efforts will be made to develop culture of peace in schools.

- VI. Formation of world peace education forum: the forum should be formed to coordinate all forms of peace talk at the global level, and be charged with the provision of all necessary infrastructural resources and personnel that will conduct researches on mode of initiating peace education in the developing countries. The forum will try to educate the world about the need to have peace in the world in the interest of global socio-economic transformation. However, the forum will perform the role of developing the strategies for eradicating all form of violence and those threats to world peace. The forum will have an agency in every country in the world.
- VII. Use of media and digital technology could be used to teach peace: peaceful discussion can take place among members of the society through social media like Facebook, 2go, YouTube, twitters, email, Google, ovi-mail, armchair. Since, the whole world is now a micro digital village, through all sort of undesirable habit that could lead to violence and other threat to peace could be favourably condemned in the society and among the friends at global village. The world peace songs, statements, slogans and language should be used as caller tunes.
- VIII. Government should demonstrate equity, egalitarianism, non-discrimination in resources distribution and encourage knowledge of peace building and deal with any situation that can cause conflict in the society. The postal, bulletin and signal boards writing materials should be distributed to engrave peace slogan

## CONCLUSION

Peace is very important in the life of each and every citizen, there is the need to acquire the knowledge of peace, values and skills in peace education so as to establish a culture of peace in the society. In this regards, the society has to adopt the system of inclusion of Peace Education in our schools especially teacher training institutions. Peace Education is an indispensable component in our educational system today. The effective delivery of Peace Education at all levels, teacher Education programmes in particular will go a long way in bringing back peace as well as creating a peace literate society. The teachers' role in this regard cannot be overemphasised.

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