THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION AS A CATALYST TO CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS IN AFRICA

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Abstract
The fundamental aim of education is to create a conducive environment to meeting the emotional, social, and intellectual needs of diverse groups of individuals. The emphasis on education and conflict resolution is based on the fact that peace and education are inseparable aspects of civilization. No civilization is truly progressive without education and no education system is truly civilizing unless it is based on the universal principles of peace. Education enhances the acquisition of the worthwhile values, knowledge and development of attitudes, skills, and behaviors to live in harmony with oneself and with others. There is thus no shortage of enough information on the importance of education in conflict resolution thus enhancing peace. The fundamental principles entailing education is that there should be desire for peace, nonviolent alternatives for managing conflict, and skills for critical analysis of structural arrangements that produce harmony and dialogue. To appreciate the impact of education in managing conflict, factors that cause conflict were not inexhaustible discussed.

Keywords: Education, Catalyst, Conflict, Resolutions

Introduction

Education is the foundation of any successful society and a vital part of the human experience. Education as a human right was enshrined in the Universal Declaration on Human rights in 1948, a document that can be rightfully be described as one of the highest pronouncements of our time. Education is therefore the right of all citizens of Nigeria to enjoy. In today's knowledge-driven society, Education is perceived as a vaccine that solves all problems. Education, therefore, serves as a catalyst for economic well-being, democracy and good governance, social justice, environmental preservation, peace building and others in this age of globalization and in the realization of the UN millennium Development Goals. Records show that Nigeria like any other countries in Africa is where peace is severely threatened. Ethnic religious and cultural tensions and conflict are identified as one of the major factors hampering the stability and development of Nigeria since independence says

Salawu.[33] Education for peace should be a participatory process which aims at changing society's way of thinking and which promotes learning of peace. Education should be put on issues that may lead to conflict well such as gender studies, speaking the language of non-violence and creation of proper international relations.

Common Factors Responsible for Conflicts in Africa

Violent conflicts of one type or another have afflicted Africa and exacted a heavy toll on the continent's societies, polities and economies, robbing them of their developmental potential and democratic possibilities. Violent conflict in sub-Saharan Africa has been responsible for the direct and indirect deaths of millions of civilians, destruction of monumental structures and property and has contributed significantly to the low levels of human security in the region. As a result, Africa is known to have experienced an over strained history of armed conflicts and resultant violence. Though limited in scope, statistics show that Africa is a continent where peace has been severely threatened over the years and there is no sight to its end. When we do not understand conflict, we cannot possibly work towards its resolution or initiate forum for peace education. An analysis and understanding of conflict are therefore crucial. But it is much more critical to properly analyze and understand the causes of conflicts, if we intend to stop and prevent violence. There are multifaceted factors that lead to conflict that may be complex and country specific. In Africa, there are common risk zones from which conflicts are likely to emerge. From a historical point of view, Africa as far back as pre-colonial times or to anti-colonial struggle and the formation of Nation States sometimes underlies general threats of dissatisfaction between countries. There are also religious, economic, cultural and geographical fault lines that run across the continent breeding unsafe environments for peace. It's worth discussing a few of them.

Poor Leadership

Adedeji observes that during the four decades between the 1960s and the 1990s, there have been about 80 violent changes of governments in the 48 sub-Saharan African countries. During the same period, many of these countries also experienced different types of civil strife, unrest, conflicts, and wars.[34] This data

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[33] Salawu, B. "Ethnicism and Political instability in Nigeria. Implications for the survival of Democracy". *African Journal of International Affairs and Development Vol. 6 No* 2001, 34.

[34] Adedeji, Adebayo (Ed). *Comprehending and mastering African conflicts*. London: Zed Books, 1999, 3.

indicates that Africa has consistently suffered from the problem of inept leadership which has retarded political integration and unity in almost all African states. Given the heterogeneous composition of most African states, perhaps what they needed most are the virtues of administrative tact, political tolerance and social justice. These essential ingredients are to be provided by the continent's leadership. Unfortunately, however, the realities on ground in most African nations have revealed that most African leaders are weak, corrupt and unpatriotic. Apart from retarding national integration and socioeconomic developments, the attitudes of these rulers have sparked off widespread bloody violence. Sudanese, Nigerian, Algerian and Liberian civil wars lend credence to the fact that African leaders have failed to forge national unity in their respective countries. Judging from the above observation, one cannot but agree with Adedeji when he asserts that:

> what African countries have lacked during most of their history, as independent states are leaders who are unifiers, chiefs in the true sense, who bind wounds, hold everything and everyone together, mobilize and motivate their people, pursue a policy of inclusion rather than exclusion and are seen by one and all to be of the highest integrity and beyond suspicion.[35]

As a result of this lack, African nations have remained underdeveloped over the years.

Demographic Factor

Demographically, Africa has witnessed the collapse of traditional cultures, weakening traditional authority. There is general population growth with young people adding to instability and unprecedented pressure on land and natural resources. Increasing migration also leads to increase in the population in the host countries. Increase in population could set appropriate grounds for extreme violence. According to Schneider, the instability caused by the magnitude and nature of refugee populations in the Great Lakes region plays a major role in regional interventions, which precipitated first the overthrow of the Mobutu Sese Seko's regime and eventually the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This is the same case as in Burundi and Rwanda where migratory tendencies are fueling resentments and political violence.[36] It is also

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[35] Adedeji, 11.

[36] Micheilof, S., Kostner, M., Devictor, X. "Post-Conflict Recovery in Africa: An Agenda for the Africa Region". *Africa Region Working Paper Series No. 30*, 2002, 56.

argued that most of the wars witnessed in West African countries of Liberia (1989), Sierra Leone (1991), Guinea (1999-2000), and Ivory Coast (2002) were partly a result of migratory tendencies. An estimated one million people fled from Liberia and Ivory Coast within the first twelve months of violence to seek refuge in other countries. Meanwhile, virtually every neighboring country in Southern Africa hosted several million of Mozambicans, fleeing a civil war. Malawi alone hosted over a million notwithstanding its own population estimated at over 8 million; South Africans found refuge in Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia and others further afield.[37]

Corruption

One of the major factors responsible for internal conflicts in Africa is the devastating impact of corruption. Corruption, manifested in the embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds, has paralyzed development efforts and caused debilitating progress towards socio-economic transformation and political integration in Africa. Africa's resources have been badly managed over the years that masses are fed up with their leaders. This has provoked militant nationalism against Africa democratic leaders. The result, expectedly, is the unending conflict across Africa states. The Africa Union itself acknowledges the debilitating impact of corruption on the political and socio- economic stability of Africa states. This perhaps explains the adoption of the "Africa Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption" by the 2nd ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union on 11 July 2003. The convention is meant to, among other things, promote and strengthen the development in Africa by each state party, of mechanisms required to prevent, detect, punish and eradicate corruption in the public and private sectors.[38]

African Elites are largely responsible for corruption. The "political economy of war theory supports the view that African armed conflicts are the direct response of certain elites to its unequal integration into the world's economy. According to this view, "the neo-patrimonial state built up since independence started (after the end of the Cold War) to suffer a crisis of accumulation and

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[37] Schneider, J. "The Refugee Crisis in Southern and Central African". The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance, 2000.

[38] Aremu, Johnson Olaosebikan. "Conflicts in Africa: Meaning, Causes, Impact and Solution". *An International Multi-Disciplinary Journal, Ethiopia Vol. 4 (4), Serial No. 17*, October 2010, 549-560.

governance that prompted a crisis of legitimacy".[39] In this sense, elites started looking for new sources of authority, privileges and material benefits, whether through processes of democratization or consolidating economies of war that include control of natural resources, arms dealing, manipulation of humanitarian aid, etc. most African elites have property in countries other than their own. Since corruption gives them access to public funds, they fight to remain relevant in positions of authorities.

Creation of Arbitrary Borders

One reason for the crisis-prone character of the African states is the nature of the historical processes that led to its formation. Alabi has observed that the colonization of Africa by European powers in the 19th century created political units that divided ethnic groups in some cases and combined rival groups in others. As currently composed, boundaries of most Africa states were arbitrarily drawn without regard to ethnic and cultural affinities.[40] In some cases, European boundaries forced starkly different, rival cultures to cohabit within the confines of a single state. The impacts of these borders were felt to varying degrees from one country to the other throughout Africa. For instance, the Akan speaking peoples were split between Ghana and Cote d' lvoire; the Ewe ethnic group has also been split between Ghana and Togo while many Yoruba are found in the Benin Republic, Hausa people are found in many west African states. It should be noted that since the 1950's when Africa nations started to gain independence, these arbitrary borders have more often than not become source of conflict.

Poverty, Illiteracy and Unemployment

These pose a threat to peace in Africa. Largescale unemployment and rapid demographic growth leave young people idle with few prospects in life. It is also worth noting that illiterate poor groups are easy targets for war recruiters. According to the 2012 United Nation development Program (UNDP) nearly half of sub-Saharan Africans live in poverty. Consequently, the poverty that many across the continent endure can be seen to be one of the major contributing factors to the occurrence of violent conflicts in Africa.

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[39] Clapham, C. *Africa and the international system: The Politics of State Survival*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 34.

[40] Alabi, D.T. "Emerging Trends and Dimensions of the Rwandan Crisis" African Journal of International Affairs and Development, 2006, 57.

Many scholars have examined the role of poverty in civil conflict in Africa. While some writers believe that poverty is a cause of conflict, others have argued that it is conflict that causes poverty. Notwithstanding this debate, it is generally agreed that poverty is one of the principal factors, in civil conflict in Africa. Absolute poverty and to a certain extent relative poverty, can be considered as the two main factors in civil conflict in Africa. This is because most countries which have had civil wars in sub-Saharan Africa, were or are at the time of going to war classified as Least Developed countries, with large numbers of people living under the poverty line of $1/ $1.25 per day, representing absolute poverty. Access to education is key to poverty reduction because an empty mind is prone to criminalities. Of a total 38 Least Developed countries in the world, 34 are in Africa. Many of these countries, though some have experienced solid economic growth after the end of civil war, have been to war or are still going through civil strife. These include Angola, Cote d' lvoire, DRC, Liberia, Mali, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Mozambique, Mauritania, Chad, South Sudan and Sudan.[41]

Ethnic Marginalization

Ethnicity by itself is not a violent factor, however the concept has been manipulated in 'societies polarized into two imbalanced divides with one faction feeling marginalized.[42] Nevertheless, to a larger extent, for a heterogeneous community, ethnicity has become a dividing factor that continues to drive violent conflicts and civil strife within and among communities and states, destabilizing the peace in the sub-region. Research conducted across the sub-Sahara Africa identifies ethnicity and ethnic fragmentation as one of the root causes of violent conflicts in Africa. However, as Kwanashie asserts, "while poverty and economic marginalization do not automatically result in insurgency, evidence from history suggests that the existence of this marginalized sector provides ample manpower for insurgence"[43]

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[41] Ntesang, Lorraine Molemele. "Factors Which Prolong Civil Conflict in Africa: The Case of Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone".

academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1345&context=cc_etds_theses. Accessed 06/09/2020.

[42] Annan, N and Danso, S. "Religion and Ethnicity in Africa: An Obstacle to Development?". Séne, Yaye Nabo (Ed). *Africa: A New Dawn?* Addis Ababa: AU Herald. January-December 20133.

[43] Kwanashie, Mike. "Diagnostic review of Insurgencies in Nigeria: Sources, Causes, and Remedies- the Economic Dimension", quoted by Aduku Akubo and Benjamin Okolo. "Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigerian: Implications for National Security". *African Journal on Conflict Resolution, Vol. 19, No. 2*, 2019, 144.

Eminue for instance submits that of all the factors, multi- ethnicity is the most frequently associated with conflict. Truly, given the fact that ethnic cleavages are already deep and political discrimination against minority groups is widely practiced in Africa, ethnicity cannot but be a great potential for separatist activities. Ethnicity has bred the feelings of suspicion, hatred and distrust among members of the various ethnic groups in Africa and has no doubt retarded political integration in Africa. It is therefore not surprising to note that at least twice (1967-70 civil war and 1993 -1999 friction) ethnic rivalry has been the major cause of internal conflicts in Nigeria. Similar stories may also be told of Liberia, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Sudan, Congo and a host of other Africa states.[44] For instance, there have been a number of separatist movements causing attempts at secession, such as Katanga in Zaire, *Biafra* in Nigeria, and others in Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia. Such was the genesis of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, in which historically oppressed Hutu people rose up in retaliation against the Tutsi people.

Military coups have also often been caused by ethnic rivalry, as well as personal rivalry such as Idi Amin's coup in Uganda in 1971, caused by inter-ethnic rivalry among leading army officers, as well as by ethnic resentments against the civil head of state. During the 100-day genocide, over 800,000 Tutsi and Hutu moderates were murdered. It is estimated that 75% of the Tutsi population was wiped out, erasing almost an entire generation.[45]

Religious Extremism

Throughout the long era of human history, religion has been a major contributor to war, bloodshed, hatred, and intolerance. Religious elements have been present in many of Africa's conflicts ever since pre-colonial times, just as European colonialism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries gave rise to resistance movements that were partly inspired by religion either by traditional religions or Islam. Since independence, religions have also played a role in various armed conflicts in Africa. Religious intolerance appears to be on the rise in parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, leading to infringements of religious freedom and abuses of human rights. Islamist militancy has garnered the most attention, which in its most extreme form has found expression through the violent activities of Boko Haram, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and Al-Shabaab.

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[44] Eminue, O. "Conflict Resolution and Management in Africa: A Panorama of Conceptual and Theoretical Issues". *African Journal of International Affairs and Development, Vol. 9, Nos.1 and 2,* 2004, 56.

[45] Uvin, P. "Reading the Rwandan genocide". *International Studies Review, 3(3),* 2001,75-99.

Unfortunately, many researchers shy away to naming Islamic as a factor for conflict giving the indices of this fact in Nigeria and Africa as a whole.

Since 2009, there has been a fourfold increase in the number of militant attacks and a staggering 850 per cent increase in deaths on the African continent. Groups such as al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, and Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) flourish and have made concerted efforts to expand their presence in a broad arc from the Horn of Africa to northeast Nigeria, spanning over much of North Africa and the Sahel. Similarly, in northern Nigeria, armed conflict between Sunni and Shias rarely stems from differences over religious doctrine and practice, but rather from historical and contemporary competition for power.[46] Obviously, this means that religious extremism and terrorist network have increasingly posed new challenges to peaceful coexistence among the major religious groups, Christianity and Islam.[47] Violent extremist groups currently active in Africa largely define themselves in religious terms, invoking distorted interpretations of Islam, much as their roots and the drivers that facilitate their expansion can be traced to a cluster of other factors.

Education is Double-edged Sword

While education is central to peacebuilding, it is important to note that it has two facets. There is evidence to the view that when equitably available, of good quality, relevant and conflict sensitive, education can help promote peace and provide safe environments. On the other hand, when its delivery is characterized with exclusion and inequity, it can exacerbate conflict. It is for this reason that deliberate effort needs to be made to put in place necessary policies and strategies to maximize the positive effects of education for peaceful coexistence. Africa has over 60 per cent of its population living below the poverty line of US$1 a day, civil unrest and grievances, both recipes for conflicts, become widespread. These agitations sometimes take violent forms and are seen as channels for punishing governments for their failure to alleviate poverty (ECOWAS 2009).

There are instances from various conflicts around the world where education has formed part of the problem and not the solution. In these contexts, education has served to divide and antagonize groups both intentionally and

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[46] Oluwaseun, Bamidele. "Religion and Armed Conflict in Northern Nigeria and Northern Uganda: Exploring a Symbiotic Relationship". *The International Journal of African Catholicism, Winter, Vol. 6 No. 2*, 2015, 96.

[47] Theo, Neethling. "The Entanglement between Peacekeeping and Counterterrorism, with Special Reference to Peacekeeping Operations in Africa". *African Journal on Conflict Resolution Vol. 19, No. 2*, 2019, 64.

unintentionally.[48] Although the fact is that the right kind of education leads to peace, the wrong kind of education may make conflict worse. Those who are educated may also develop a sense of social responsibility and civic engagement, resulting in the desire or determination to contribute to a particular cause. Those who are already interested in joining terrorist organizations may pursue an education if they believe that it will improve their chances of implementing terrorist activities.

Education may be perceived politically as a powerful tool for ideological development. This can take many forms, ranging from the use of education in the development of liberal ideas, to nation building and, in extreme cases, political indoctrination. Secondly, education may be perceived as an instrument for providing the knowledge and skills necessary for economic development and societal mobility. However, this may or may not include equity concerns, thus further excluding certain groups from economic and social benefits that education can provide. Thirdly, education is a means by which social and cultural values are transmitted from generation to generation and, depending on the values concerned, these may convey negative stereotypes or encourage attitudes that explicitly or implicitly condone violence or generate conflict.

Fundamental Aim of Education

John Dewey is of the view that education is not preparation for life, but that education is life itself. This means that education is the foundation of any successful society and a vital part of the human experience. In English the term, "Education" has been derived from the Latin word Educare (Educere), which means "to train, nurture or mold". Again, it means to bring up or to lead out or to draw out, propulsion from inward to outward. It is on this premise that this paper draws its argument that education is meant to train the individual to live a good life in the community. To acquire skills for meaningful living or to solve problems is vital in a hostile community which education aims to achieve in the individual. Socrates said that "one who had true knowledge could not be other than virtuous". Hence, education is an instrument for developing an individual in social, mental, physical, emotional, moral and psychological aspects. Education can be considered as a process which enables people to understand the difference between good and bad attitude, right and wrong behaviour. Therefore, the role of education is inevitable in producing new generation that

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[48] Bush, K. and Saltarelli D. (Eds). "The Two Faces of Education in Ethnic Conflict: Towards a Peacebuilding Education for Children". UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Italy, 2000. unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/insight4.pdf. accessed 08/09/2020.

are able to solve the real problems in our society. Among other objectives, the main purpose of education is to educate individuals within society, to prepare and qualify them for work in economy as well as to integrate people into society and teach them values and morals of society. Quality education is a means of socializing individuals and to keep society smoothing and remain stable. Education in society prepares youngsters for adulthood so that they may form the next generation of leaders.

Formal or informal education has the power to contribute to efforts for advancing peace and justice in the world. Education can enable students to understand the causes of injustice and violence in past history and in present situations through a careful study of history and the social sciences. It can assist students through the study of theology, philosophy, psychology, and the social sciences to understand what it is about human nature and human institutions that causes violence and injustice. Makulu observes that education in Africa fails if it does not make the child or learner understand himself/herself and his social and cultural past and the life of the society of which he is a member. It does not even help him/her to adjust himself/herself intelligently to the changes in this society because he/she has no root in his culture.[49] Consequently, African educational authorities should revise and reform the content of education in the areas of curricula, textbooks and methods, so as to take account of the African environment, child development, cultural heritage and the demands of technological progress and economic development. More importantly education policies should be entrepreneurship focused for effective productivity.

Education and Worthwhile Living

Education involves more than the accumulation of assorted facts, opinions and skills. For this reason, one may be well-read yet very poorly educated. Thomas Aquinas defined education as "the promotion of offspring the perfection of man, that is the state of virtue"[50]. This definition links all elements of education to a definitive reality that virtue denotes the symptom of the educated. It is only in Africa that education is perceived as job provider even as jobs become scarcer by the day. However, R. S Peters maintains that education is not about getting a good job but also getting the prerequisites for leading a meaningful and

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[49] Makulu, H.F. Education, Development and Nation-building in Independent Africa: A Study of the New Trends and Recent Philosophy of Education. London: SCM Press,1971.

[50] Summa Theologica, Supplement Q.41 a.1. Silvano Borruso. *A History of Philosophy for Almost Everyone.* Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 2007, 213.

fulfilled human life.[51] Education and skills training can help reduce the risk of people turning to or returning to conflict and can support economic regeneration. Access to education can reduce attitudes towards and participation in violence, although it can also raise awareness of injustice and discrimination. An educated person says John Young is one who is in close contact with reality, who penetrates the meaning of things, whose judgments are fixed by reality itself.[52] With such attitude conflict has no room in the life of the individual.

From a global point of view, education has largely become the training of man for his environment. In this sense, one might as well say it is like conditioning a parrot to it cage, a dog to its kennels, or a cow to its stable. True education says Allan Bloom "is the taming or domestication of the soul's raw passions-not suppressing or excising them, which would deprive the soul of its energy but forming and informing them as art".[53] Cardinal Mindszenty puts it more pithily "school is the home of virtue and learning. God saves us from the school where the latter is taught without the former".[54] A flourishing life is worthwhile living that is achieved by other means, but only virtuous life stands the test of time.

Education as an Instrument for Social Change

The role of education as an instrument of social change is widely recognized today. Education can initiate change by bringing about a change in the outlook and attitudes of a person. It can bring about a change in the pattern of social relationship and thereby, it may cause social changes. Social change refers to the modifications in the organization and behavior of the group expressed in its laws, institutions, customs, modes and beliefs. One of the purposes of education is to change person and his life and living style. To change a man is to change society only. No civil law or religious norms can change or mold an individual expect education. Education whether secular or religious is the most powerful instrument of social change. It is through education that the society can bring desirable changes and modernize itself. Education can transform society by providing opportunities and experiences through which the individual can cultivate himself for adjustment with the emerging needs and

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[51] Peters, R. S. *The Philosophy of Education.* London: Oxford University Press, 1973, 43.

[52] John Young. The Scope of Philosophy. Gracewing: University of New South Wales, 2008, 321.

[53] Silvano Borruso. *A History of Philosophy for Almost Everyone.* Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 2007, 218.

[54] Borruso, 218.

philosophy of the changing society[55]. Education helps to change the attitudes of people in favor of modern ways of life and develops attitudes which can fight prejudices, superstitions and traditional beliefs if they contribute to harmful ways of life.

As a catalyst for conflict resolution, the crown of education is the vision of the idea of good, which brings about happiness. It is for this reason that Hamman opines that the institution of education was a creation of man to enable him or her fulfil certain basic functions in the society. Among which are to preserve, transmit the culture, norms and values of society as well as develop positive attitudes and adjustment to change. In this 21st century, the only major means available by which the yoke of ignorance, poverty, hunger, underdevelopment, diseases, war could be destroyed among African populace is through the provision of relevant functional and integrative education for the people. Universally, it has been accepted that education holds the key to individual and national peace building and this important process of education begins in the family at the infant stage of the child and continues in the school environment. Where this opportunity is missing the individual can easily become wild to the environment.

Education and the Culture of Peace

Learning is not an end in itself but rather a means of eliminating violations of human rights and building a culture of peace based on democracy, development, tolerance and mutual respect. Consequently, the values of peace and tolerance are an essential part of quality and basic education. Basic education not only provides the skills of literacy and numeracy, but also provides the values and attitudes needed for self-development, improving the quality of life, and for active participation in society building. Most importantly, basic education provides the ability for continuous learning, giving people the power to think, to form opinions and to work towards the promotion of peace, tolerance and universal respect for human rights. Although basic access to education is essential for attaining a culture of peace, it is not enough as mentioned earlier. Educational and training programs must be available to people at all levels, both formally and non-formally. In such programs, the dimensions of peace education must include tolerance, respect

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[55] Chand, P. Basha. "Role of Education in Social Change". International Journal of Advanced Educational Research Volume 2; Issue 5; September 2017, 236-240. educationjournal.org/download/300/2-5-116-730.pdf. Accessed 09/09/2020.

for human rights and democracy, international and intercultural understanding, cultural and linguistic diversity.[56]

A culture of peace is achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems, have the skills to resolve conflicts and struggle for justice non-violently, live by international standards or best practices of human rights and equity, appreciate cultural diversity, and respect the Earth and each other. Such learning can only be achieved with systematic education for peace. Building a systematic culture of peace requires committed efforts by educators, researchers and other members of society. Through education, people are taught tolerance and others' right to existence, and how to incorporate these teachings into their everyday lives. This requires a change in attitude, a difficult process that will not happen overnight. But this is where the role of knowledge will come into place. Education provides people with worthwhile information, but most essential is the appropriate application of this information. This information must be transformed into knowledge. Only then will people begin to adapt a change in mindset, attitude and behavior characterized by long-term goals. Only then will they be able to engage properly and be able to contribute to the promotion of a culture of peace.

A culture of peace must first take place in the classroom at an early age. It must be reflected in the curricula at secondary and tertiary levels. Education for peace must be a dynamic, long term process and a life time experience. The aims of education for peace are to develop caring and non-aggressive individuals who relate peacefully with others in their own lives, who promote the welfare of others and who act to prevent violence in their society and in the world. Obeka and Agwu rightly observe that "Education plays a key role in teaching about conflicts, solidarity and global citizenship".[57] This is because when people are educated on the importance of resolving conflicts in a peaceful way without resorting to war with its devastating effects on the social, economic, educational and technological and political aspects of the society, then there will be rapid development in the nation.

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[56] Cheptuto, Paul. "The Role of Education in Fostering Peace, Solidarity and Prosperity in Kenya". *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences August Vol. 4, No. 8*, 2014, 354.

[57] Obeka Ngozi Ohakamike , Agwu S. N. "Education for Peace & Development: Education Against Violence in Nigeria". *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 21, Issue 6, Ver. 8* June. 2016, 22-28

Education and Conflict Resolution

The concept of conflict resolution typically focuses on the social-behavioral symptoms of conflict, training individuals to resolve inter-personal disputes through techniques of negotiation and mediation. Learning to manage anger, "fight fair" and improve communication through skills such as listening, identifying needs, and separating facts from emotions, constitute the main elements of these mechanisms. These mechanisms should aim to "alter beliefs, attitudes, and behavior that is from negative to positive attitudes toward conflict as a basis for preventing violence.[58] Quality education is a cornerstone in any nation peacebuilding process. As today's youth become increasingly desensitized to violence, the roles of schools and the curriculum they represent assume great importance. Schools have the power to shape the attitudes and skills of young people toward peaceful human relations. Through teaching young children values of respect, tolerance, and empathy, and by equipping them with the necessary skills to resolve conflict in a non-violent manner, they are provided with the tools they need, now and in the future, to foster peaceful relations at home, at school and around the world.

In this sense, education builds the foundations for good citizenship, respect for self and others, democratic values and tolerance of opinions. Educational research indicates that when young people are trained in civics, mediation, ethnic tolerance and conflict resolution, the likelihood that they will resort to violence later in life is diminished. History articulates that education is no guarantee against hatred and war, but it enlarges people's horizons and breaks down stereotypes and prejudices. Wars and conflicts threaten peace and security to all. Their urgent nature calls for the need to reduce violence through education. Times have changed, and this requires a more proactive outlook. Education covers economic, political, social, cultural, moral and ethical issues, and is vital in transforming people's attitudes towards dealing with conflicts and psychological needs of individuals and groups. Gamut opines that "a culture of peace is built from values, attitudes, behaviors and ways of life based on non-violence, respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity tolerance, human rights, equality between men and women, appreciation of cultural diversity

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[58] Balanandan, E. "Social Development, including Questions Relating to the World Social Situation and to Youth, ageing, Disabled Persons and the Family". Statement by Member of Parliament of the Third Committee on Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Issues, United Nations. October 1998.

and respect for others". A culture of peace grows not from the barrel of a gun but from participation, dialogue and co-operation.[59]

The impact of violence affects all countries. It is a global concern, requiring a global approach to a solution. The usual method countries use to deal with conflict and wars is through oppressive military measures. But control is not enough; it merely delays future violence. A preventive approach is becoming increasingly recognized through provision of basic education promoting a culture of peace and non-violence. Therefore, African governments must shift their central priorities from accumulating political and military power towards building a stronger educational infrastructure for peace. Security and stability are all dependent upon a sound education. For this reason education must promote the formation of a wide alliance of actors, which could collectively tackle problems relating to economic exclusion, political domination, sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination, as well as violence that is based on a system that favors market interests over the needs of society and the environment. This alliance should promote common values relating to social justice, peace, fraternity, equality of opportunity and respect for nature, and become an instrument of liberation and emancipation of people.[60]

Conclusion

Man or woman comes into the world that is already conflict driven. Without the effort of the society, the individual succumbs to violence itself. Hence, the ultimate purpose of education is to civilize the thousands of barbarians that are born into this world every hour. If education fails to bring change in the learner, then it is worthless. Education is considered the most powerful tool in bringing change in man. On one hand, education acculturates an individual; on the other hand, it preserves, transmits and develops the culture of a society. In short, education and culture are mutually interdependent, complementary and supplementary in all their aspects and activities. Finding stability and peace is certainly the greatest collective challenge that mankind has ever faced. Conflict is unavoidable, but violence is not. The cause of African underdevelopment is not conflict itself but one that leads to violence in large magnitude. Most of the past conflicts in Africa and particularly the raging ones are due to issues, such as lack of understanding,

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[59] Gamut, V. "Peace Education and Peer Mediation". Shedract G.B (Ed). *Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies in West Africa*. Ibadan: Spectrum, 2006, 172.

[60] Obeka Ngozi Ohakamike , Agwu S.N. "Education for Peace & Development: Education Against Violence in Nigeria". *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 21, Issue 6, Ver. 8* June. 2016, 22-28.

misconceptions of felt-needs, besides the prevalence of greed and grievances, which combined to compound the much-needed spirit of homogeneity for progress. Without any doubt, inculcating education through both formal and informal channels, will go a long way in meeting the wide gaps of the felt-needs of African people. The thesis of this paper is that education can assist in a longer-term development processes related to dealing with the tendencies to conflict. Effective education management is critical to the role of education in responding to conflicts and emergencies if they were to arise again. Also, poor quality of education that fails to deliver the relevant skills may increase the risk of conflict.