

## INTEGRATION OF PEACE EDUCATION INTO NOMADIC EDUCATION: A PANACEA TO FULANI HERDSMEN VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA.

*Dr. Beatrice Adanna Achilike*

### **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to discuss the need to integrate peace education into nomadic education in Nigeria as a panacea to the rampaging Fulani herdsmen violence. Fulani cattle grazers have wreaked enough havoc in Nigeria to be acknowledged by the global community as the fourth deadliest terror group in the world. Since this problem is a threat to the peaceful co-existence of Nigeria as a nation, this paper therefore, discussed the role of peace education in curbing it. It also discussed proactive sensitization and orientation of Fulani herdsmen via peace education, pertinent public policies and provision of infrastructure in nomadic schools as a lasting panacea to the wanton destruction of lives and property orchestrated by the Fulani herdsmen. Finally, the paper recommended among others, that peace and conflict studies should be integrated into the academic curriculum of nomadic education.

**Key words:** Integration, Peace Education, Nomadism, Herdsmen, Violence.

The conflict between farmers and pastoralist groups in Nigeria has become a dangerous menace that must not be allowed to continue. This menace which had been hitherto restricted to some parts of the north central geopolitical zone of the country is now spreading like wild fire to other parts of Nigeria with the recent hostility recorded at Uzo-Uwani Communities in Enugu State of South East Nigeria.

The establishment of the Nigerian National Commission for Nomadic Education in

1989 created wider opportunities for an estimated 9.3 million nomads living in Nigeria to acquire literacy skills. The commission was focused to address literacy rates among pastoral nomads and migrant fishermen, which put literacy rates at 0.28% and 20% respectively (FME, 2005). To improve the literacy rate among Nigeria's nomadic populations, the National Commission for Nomadic Education employed various approaches such as onsite schools, "shift system" schools with alternative intake, and Ishamiyya (Islamic) schools, to provide literacy education to its nomads. A tangential look at these approaches adopted by the commission, however, shows that very few of the schools were viable. This means that the commission is yet to achieve its mission. This paper explores the need to intensify these approaches by integrating peace education into the scheme as a panacea to the herdsmen's violence.

Less than ten percent of the herdsmen and two percent of the Fulani are formally literate and numerate. Even though Nomadic Education is fairly successful, a good number of the Fulani have not embraced this 25-years old programme and this has a link with their hostile tendencies.

According to Iro (2006) Government have spent millions of naira in nomadic education program, which modified curriculum in English, Arithmetic, Social Studies, and Primary Science and developed by the Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, yet the measure of educational attainment among the Fulanis

remains low. There is always a link between ignorance, illiteracy and level of numeracy with conflict management and resolution. Since majority of these herdsmen are uneducated, they tend to exhibit vulnerable and hostile behaviours at the slightest provocation.

Iwe in Premium Times Publication of January 10, 2013, noted that Nomadic Fulani herdsmen and indigenous farming communities are main parties to the present conflict. Clashes between the nomadic Fulani husbandry communities and unsuspecting farming communities in the thirty-six states are incessant and dominate the news and political landscape. Violence, wanton destruction of properties and fatalities resulting from such clashes has reached epic conflict proportions. The grazing conflict, which already risks becoming identity-based, is further worsened by activities of cattle rustlers.

The former Special Adviser to President Goodluck Jonathan on political matters, Professor Rufai Ahmed Alkali, in an interview published by Tribune Newspaper noted that it has been predicted repeatedly that this century and, of course, the coming century, the struggle will be over access to land and water. Nigeria's agricultural policy have not adequately addressed the need and concern of the arable farmers and the need and concern of the livestock farmers. This is basically the major causes of the violent crisis between the Fulani herdsmen and arable farmers.

### **Concept Definition Peace Education**

Peace Education is the process of acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the attitudes, skills and behaviours to live in harmony with oneself with others, and with the natural environment. Peace education is a powerful tool for social and personal change. It brings about the culture of peace. Peace education programmes centred on conflict resolution typically focus on the social-

behavioural symptoms of conflict, training individuals to resolve inter-personal disputes through techniques of negotiation and (peer) mediation. It also encompasses various techniques involved in anger management.

On nurturing cultures of peace, Sormmerfelt and Vambliem (2008) writes that peace requires citizens to contain their aggression, exhibit cooperative behaviour, and resolve conflicts without violence. Jenkins (2007) illustrated the difference between education about peace and education for peace. Education about peace includes modules on war and peace and leaders of peace movements such as Gandhi and King. Education for peace on the other hand, intends to nurture knowledge, values, behaviours and capacities to confront violence. Peace education as a practice in schools is attributed to Maria Montessori, John Dewey and Paulo Freire, though earlier thought on education for peace is traced back to Erasmus and Socrates among other schools. While it is paramount that education for peace be specific to the teaching and learning context on which the learning is to take place and where the lessons are to be practiced, educators may nonetheless formulate their peace education themes. Aspeslagh (1999) describe these themes in five domains:

- The international System
- Peace,
- Development
- Human rights and
- The environment.

Additionally, there are several peace education frameworks to draw from as educators according to Kester (2008). Two of these frameworks highlight peace education content as the exploration of root causes of conflict, knowing international humanitarian, and human rights law, envisioning alternative structures of security, and learning skills for managing micro/macro conflicts without resorting to violence. For a better

comprehension of the concept of peace education, Hague Appal for Peace (2005) states: "Peace education is participatory, holistic process that includes teaching for and about democracy and human rights, non-violence, social and economic justice, gender equality, environmental sustainability, disarmament, traditional peace practices, international law, and human security".

### **Fulani Herdsmen**

#### **Who are the Fulanis?**

According to Osokoya (2002), the Fulani herdsmen are believed to be the largest semi-nomadic group in the world and are found across West and Central African Republic. In Nigeria, some continue to live as Semi-nomadic herders, while others have moved to cities. Unlike the more integrated city dwellers, the nomadic groups spend most of their lives in bush and are the ones largely involved in violent clashes with arable farmers.

#### **Examination of the Causes of Fulani Herdsmen violence in Nigeria**

What are the remote causes of the clashes between the Fulani herdsmen and the farming communities in Nigeria? According to Aderinoye, Ojokleta and Olojede (2007), disagreements over the use of essential resources such as farmland, grazing areas and water between herders and local farmers are said to be the major source of fighting. Another cause of the fighting is that the farming communities and the herdsmen are not adequately protected. The grazing conflict can also be attributed to tertiary causes such as unemployment and lack of education, population pressure, ethnic hatred and availability of arms. Climate change and desertification is also a contributing factor. Many Nigerians have also recognized that the grazing conflict is being exacerbated by a policy lacunae and absence of enforceable ordinances on grazing and land ownership and violations. They recognized also that grazing crises are worsening

and that government tardy and nonchalant approach in terms of quick response is compounding the crisis. Since the grazing conflict is not being proactively addressed through sensitization, pertinent public policies or provision of adequate infrastructure the crisis persists.

#### **Evaluation of Nomadic Education in Nigeria**

Education serves as the spring board for social and economic change. To remove the chronic illiteracy among the mobile population of Nigeria, the government introduced the nomadic education. The nomadic education program started officially in November 1986, after the Yola National Workshop on Nomadic Education. The Workshop resolved that "the nomads needed a fair deal through the provision of education and social amenities to reciprocate their contribution to national building..."

The National Commission for Nomadic Education (N.C.N.E.) began functioning in January 1990 with 206 schools, 1,500 students and 499 teachers. Ninety-seven of the schools had permanent buildings, Iro (2006). The rest of the schools operated in temporary structures or under the trees. Some schools had furniture, others used mats. The schools taught modified curricula in English, Arithmetic, social studies, and primary science, developed by the Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. To adapt to the work rhythms, nomadic schools run morning and afternoon shifts, and children rotate between herding and schooling. By January 1991, the N.C.N.E. had spent 72,930 naira to produce textbooks in the four curricula areas. The first prototype of collapsible, mobile classroom, manufactured by the Federal Science Equipment Manufacturing centre, Enugu was tested on April 23, 1991, The nomadic education program has three broad goals: to raise the living standard of the rural community; to harness the potentials of the

Fulani, and to bridge the literacy gap between the Fulani and the rest of the society. The nomadic education according to Iro (2006) has a multifaceted schooling arrangement to suit the diverse transhumant habits of the Fulani. Different agencies are involved in the educational process. These agencies include the Ministry of Education, Schools Management Board, the National Commission for Nomadic Education, the Agency for Nomadic Education and the Scholarship Board. They work together to offer a mobile school system where the schools and the teachers move with the Fulani herdsmen.

### **Problems of Nomadic Education in Nigeria**

Iro, (2006) identified among others the following shortcomings of pastoral nomadism in Nigeria:

- Difficulty in recruiting teachers
- Difficulty in monitoring nomadic students.
- Use of English for instruction at the elementary level instead of Fulfulde
- Inappropriate/suitable curricular – A serious impediment to learning.
- Defective policy;
- Inadequate finance;
- Faulty school placement;
- Incessant migration of students;
- Unreliable and obsolete data; and
- Cultural and religious taboos.

Among these problems, faulty curriculum design is the most pertinent and worrisome as the suitability of curricula is integral in the success of any academic program. The curricular according to the Miyetee Allah Cattle Breeders Association (M.A.C.B.A.N) focus on teaching irrelevant subjects like cockroach breeding how to play basket ball and how to climb the mountains, things that do not interest the Fulani or that look down on their cultures and lifestyles. The curricula are designed in such a way that it provides literacy in modern times, but their content is weird and foreign to the nomads. They

teach the value of sitting in offices behind desks rather than the value of the land. Instead of teaching pastoral procedures, the curricular wastes too much time in subjects like history and cultures of societies the pastoralist least known or desired to know about.

### **Overview of some suggested panaceas to the Fulani violence in Nigeria: An opinion poll.**

What are the solutions to the perennial crisis between Fulani herdsmen and farmers? Some social commentators, political correspondents cum analysts, academics and attentive Nigerians at home and diaspora have been eloquent on the panacea to the rampaging Fulani herdsmen violence. Some of these panaceas are highlighted below in a bid to linking their opinions to the concept of peace education in curbing the crises:

Some of their opinions include among others:

1. Education, empowerment, tracking and legislation
2. Importation and cultivation of good and nutritious grass will put an end to the clashes between the Fulani herdsmen and farmers (*Chief Audu Ogbeh – Minister of Agriculture*) – *Interview with cross section of journalist.*
3. Delineation of grazing zones in all the 36 states of the federation – *National Assembly.*
4. Redecoration of the existing ancient culture of migratory grazing as a government public relation gambit – *the premium times.*
5. Tagging herdsmen to make them identifiable – *social media.*
6. Empowering the farmers with necessary means of calling for help or sending SOS messages to relevant security agencies for quick responses during emergencies – source: *social media.*
7. The federal ministry of Agriculture must take up the responsibility of educating the Fulani herdsmen on non-peripatetic livestock techniques and how to grow and

- sustain or produce processed livestock feeds – *public opinion (social media)*.
8. Registration of all herdsmen with States or Federal Ministries of Agriculture – *Social Media*.
  9. Explicit ban on all forms of violence backed by effective enforcement and establishment of a sound data and research system – *Banki-moon-UN Secretary General*.
  10. Matching order to the Security Agencies to track down the arm-bearing herdsmen - *President Muhammadu Buhari*.
  11. Establishment of ranches and large-scale cattle farms – *public opinion*.

### **Conclusions**

Crises resulting to conflict and mayhem are best addressed through policies that focus on the causes of the conflict, the dramatis personae, the conflict theatre, cross-conflict theatre and any cross-cultural differences at play. The peripatetic, precarious and rugged nature of the Fulani herdsmen's job makes them ferocious, violent, and horribly unsociable with little or no empathy to human lives.

Nomadic education in Nigeria has not addressed the literacy of these nomads appreciably to minimize their violent tendencies. There is always a direct link between illiteracy and violence. Intensification of nomadic education via integration of peace education will go a long way in assuaging the menace of herdsmen's violent clashes with farmers.

There is no gainsaying that the major causes of Fulani herdsmen violence is illiteracy. This paper highlighted the shortcomings of the nomadic education program in Nigeria in raising the literacy level of the nomads and the benefit of inclusion of peace and conflict resolution studies as a panacea to the clashes between the herdsmen and arable farmers.

### **Integration of Peace Education into the Academic Curricular of Nomadic Education: The Way Forward.**

- Peace education is a powerful tool for social and personal change. Integrating peace and conflict education program into nomadism will help check the hostile tendencies of the nomads by developing critical skills and abilities in them that will help them deal constructively with conflict.
- Educational methods already contained in the nomadic education (e.g. lecturing, test-taking and use of English at elementary level) do not match the intended social outcomes such behavioural modifications, whether it relates to government, business, education, or technology, and that is largely what peace education concerns.
- If the nomads from tender age are taught peace education that hinges on frameworks such as nature of conflicts, what conflict is, how it develops and how to manage it, the way they learn English alphabets, it will develop in them the mindset of cooperative behaviour and a culture of peace. This will indeed be proactive in checking the violence of the herdsmen.
- Educational methodologies that will not obliterate the culture/life styles of the nomads including their occupations should be adopted and integrated in to nomadic educational curricular i.e. the academic curricular of nomadic education should be amended to suit the nomads.
- Nigeria needs to rise above a tradition that insists that Fulani herdsmen can realize their potentials as citizens by perpetual homelessness. Nomadism should be modernized. The eminence of desertification occasioned by climate change, policies and programs that will reduce the migratory patterns of the nomads should be put in place by the

- government via infrastructural interventions.
- Government should invest more money in nomadic education in Nigeria to diversify its geographic spread.
- Government should also monitor the activities of National Commission for Nomadic Education vis-à-vis policy implementation and corruption.

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***Dr. Beatrice Adanna Achulike***  
Department of Educational Foundations,  
Ebonyi State University,  
Abakaliki.