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# THE ROLE OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN PEACE EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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## **Abstract**

*Nigeria a great country with multi ethnic and different types of religions has been living in peace for long. But one wonders today with the present situation if peace is possible on a global stage. Bribery and corruption, dictatorship, terrorism, ethnocentrism, racism, political differences, religious fanaticism etc. have led the human race into conflict and crises for long in the name of justice, religions and revenge in the past, soldiers were more of the casualties or victims of war. But today in the modern conflict, ninety percent (90%) of the casualties are civilians and the majority of whom are women and children. For example the Borno Crises, Yobe Crises, Kaduna, Kano, Jos etc where men, women, children were killed innocently. As at present, peace is more than the absence of war. It is against this background that this paper focused attention on the wicked forces against peace and the importance of peace education in Nigeria. How teacher education can bring about national development and the core message of peace education in Nigeria. How can conflict be resolved? Finally conclusions and recommendations are made.*

Education is an important level towards economic development and social progress. This is because it is one central activity through which the human resource of a country can be developed. However, it is through the total engagement of our productive capacity can we ensure a self sustained development in multi-national country like Nigeria. Peace is the absence of conflict and where there is peace, development can take place. Education is an effective instrument for socializing and to bring about national development. This cannot be achieved without the contribution of teachers for no nation can develop and grow effectively in all the organs of the society more than the

effectiveness and efficiency of its classroom. Teachers are trained, to also train others to be good citizens, political awareness, social and economic development or national sustainable development. Education is seen as the transmission to what is worthwhile, for those who become committed to it, and must involve knowledge and understanding in some cognitive, affective and psychomotor perspectives. It is really seen as a way of developing and disciplining the mind to absorb facts and it is as well, the cultivation of mental abilities. This makes the individual to acquire acceptable values, knowledge and skill to make him functional in the society. This makes education the bedrock of any civilization, and even an instrument for excellence.

### **The Wicked Forces against Peace Education**

Terrorism can simply be defined as an unlawful application of force or violence against individual or properties with the intention of intimidating government and societies in order to achieve political, ideological or religious objectives. Terrorism poses a major threat to peace and sustainable development in today's globalize and multicultural environment, as acts of organized violence and terrorism, for instance have characterized Nigeria and Africa and indeed the world in recent times Nigeria; educational system has suffered a setback as a result of various terrorist acts. Every sector of the society is a target of any terrorism or criminal act. Terrorism is one of the wicked forces hindering peace education and national development in our country Nigeria, Ukeje (1995) argued that Nigerians should concern themselves more with quality of education, as a result of terrorism. It is high time Nigerians realized that the youths are the future leaders of the country, and their education must not be compromised. This subsumes that the nation depends greatly upon her educational system to help produce able leaders and faithful followers, failure of which the nation is doomed. Therefore, the act of terrorism used by these in the society to exploit the people for personal advantage, rather than for position development of the country is not the best. Education is concerned with desired behavioural changes in human beings. The wicked forces are political terrorism, economic terrorism, social terrorism and educational terrorism. Our main concern in this work is educational terrorism and its effect on the quality of education in Nigeria. Examination malpractice and cheating is a form of terrorism which is a major threat in our educational system, is also a challenge to the development of the nation. Another form of educational crisis under terrorism can be traced to four main sources and these are teachers, facilities, function and management. To highlight the seriousness of these Nwagwil (1998) opined that student's poor performance in academic work and behaviours are manifestations of the problems associated with staffing in Nigerian school, inadequate facilities and poor funding. This situation he further observed is aggravated by inefficient and ineffective planning, organization and management of the available human and material resources to proper training of teachers in the schools. This could simple mean because the finances are inadequate or priorities misplaced. Many classrooms in our schools have remained without teachers students and in some cases over-crowded with poor teacher

student ratio as high as 1:60, 1:80 or 1:130 or more in some cases in primary or secondary schools instead of the approval ratio 1:35 or 40 students. How then can effective teaching and learning take place in such over-crowded classroom manned by over-worked teachers? This of course is another form of learning on both the students and the teachers, which has affected performance and dropout.

To buttress the above observation, Aghenta (1998) viewed that teacher's turnover in the Nigerian system was not high and this was caused by many factors such as poor incentive in Nigeria which can best be minimized by the minimum standard set by the Ministry of Education, while students were expected to perform well.

Another threat that constitutes terror to education is the frequent change of educational policies and instability in government. The consequences have been that educational projects and programmes were hastily formulated and implemented, while some were abandoned half-way, these affect school operations as continuity in policies is lacking.

### **The Importance of Peace Education in Nigeria**

The importance of peace education to the Nigerian child are:

1. Peace education in school will influence the child to cultivate peace values, the child will grow to be non violent and recognize human right and embrace democracy.
2. Peace education in the school curriculum will focus on the fundamental values of democracy, large generosity of mind, care and compassion.

UNESCO (1998) position that peace education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century should centre on equipping the learner with knowledge, values and skills with emphasis on:

1. Non-violent resolution of conflict, North/South and South/South co-operation, preparation/observation. Follow-up to international ways and years like year of the family (1994). Year of tolerance (1995), 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations system (1995), year of culture of peace (2000) etc.
2. Human right of children, women, minorities and refugees, elimination of xenophobia, fundamental freedom, disciplinarian, reinforcing citizen for a global society and practice of democratic principles.
3. A better understanding and appreciation of other culture. Mutual respect and contributing to the objectives for the world decades for culture development, cultural identities, participation in the cultural life of the community and promoting international culture co-operation.

### **Objectives of Teacher Education**

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria in her (2004) National Policy on Education, the objectives of teacher education are to:

1. Provide highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system.
2. Encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers.
3. Help teachers fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to National goals.
4. Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations.
5. Enhance teacher's commitment to the teaching profession on how peace can bring about national development.

Peace is freedom from war or fighting. Peace education is aimed at uniting the people for development and non-governmental organizations as an excellent instrument for national development. Rodney (1972) viewed development in human society "as a many sided process. At the level of individual, it implies increased skills and capacity, getting freedom, creating self discipline, responsibility and material wellbeing". To him, the undisputable fact is the achievement of any of those aspects of personal society as a whole. Thus, at the social group level, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationship

### **Goals of Development**

1. To increase the availability and widen the distribution as basic life sustaining element, such as food, shelter, health and protection
2. To raise the level of living, the provision of more jobs, better education and better attention to cultural and humanistic values.
3. To expand the range of economic and social choice to individuals and only in relation to other people and nations built also to the forces of ignorance and misery. Peace education is therefore a strong vehicle of development without peace, people's attention will be distributed and they cannot concentrate on anything meaningful.

### **Core Message of Peace Education**

Fundamentally, peace education aims at peace building in the society. Peace building, like any building at all, is a process which recognizes that certain concrete efforts and processes are required to be made by individual, groups and communities for conflicts to be reduced to a minimum level, and for peace in the society to be achieved. Peace thrives on justice, fairness, equity, trust, friendship, mutual respect, communication, a common aspiration and similar elements. Peace building as core message of peace education involves identifying and supporting indices and structures

which will consolidate peace and allows trust to enhance interaction and prevent the recommence of conflicts. The other activity includes preventive diplomacy which is generally preventing disputes, escalation or spread. Preventive development usually serves as deterrence to the conflicting parties who request on consent to have a United Nations military presence. Peacemaking also requires the neutral military or civilian presence of the UN in the field to execute or supervise the implementation of agreement, policies and other arrangements related to the control or resolution of conflict and the protection and delivery of food and humanitarian aids to the conflict zone.

### **How Can Conflict be Resolved?**

The following can bring about conflict Resolution

1. Dialogue
2. Mediation
3. Judicial means

1. **Dialogue:** Three truths in dialogue which are my truth, youth truth, and the truth for any good dialogue, truth and peace are often the watchword of the process. Good dialogue has the following trust, openness, shared interest, values, friendship, honesty, tolerance, harmony and the spirit of give and take. It requires openness to a new information a willingness to be challenged and a deep hope that change is possible.
2. **Mediation:** This is a means of ensuring that normally situations returned, not necessarily an end to the conflict. It is an intermediary which may be an individual, or group of individuals or a country or group of countries working with the disputing parties to help them improve their level of communication and their analysis of the conflict situation. The resolving different unlike arbitration, where the intermediary listens to the arguments of both sides and makes a decision for the arguments a mediator helps the disputants to design a solution themselves.
3. **Judicial means:** In the judicial means or modern means of conflict resolution, there are formal structures and institutions like the police, the court and prison are found in modern society to take case of inter-personal conflict or conflicts between groups. They mediate or intervene to arrest, adjudicate and punish the offenders and compensate the victims.

### **Conclusion**

The maintenance and promotion of peace and peaceful co-existence for all round development is the responsibility of all in the society. Conflict can never be avoided in any society but it is always good to find a way of resolving them without

violence. We must therefore endeavour to stay in harmony with one another no matter our difference in religious, tribe or race.

### **Recommendations**

1. Government should provide enough funds to introduce peace education in all our schools.
2. Workshops, seminars and conferences should be organized for all teachers on peace education

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