
PEACE EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN STATES: THE NIGERIAN SITUATION

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Abstract

Peace Education though a millennium mission and mandate, is an essential tool for ensuring sustainable social transformation and achieving an appreciable level of global economic development especially in the African States. Peace Education in its positive perspective involves training and committing individuals to love good governance, peaceful co-existence, social justice, enhanced social amenities and so on. In its negative connotation, it entails ameliorating the high level of violence, conflict, poverty, war, kidnapping, destruction, crime, etc. The main trust of this paper is to examine the role of peace education on economic development in Nigeria. The paper addresses the concept of Peace Education and Economic Development. It identifies the terrorist attacks in Nigeria, particularly by Boko Haram and kidnapers, and its negative effect on economic development. The paper critically expresses the views of world powers, for example, President Barrack

Obama of United States of America, against conflict, destruction, kidnapping, Boko Haram and poverty in Nigeria. The paper observes that peaceful environment is a prerequisite for quality human-capacity building and economic advancement. Recommendations to sustainable socio-economic and political reforms such as conflict resolutions through dialogue, improvement in agriculture instead of sole dependence on oil, imbining peace education in the family and at all levels of education through the amendment of Nigerian National policy on Education were made.

The incessant ethnic and religious conflicts, wars and violence in various African states have called for great concern for constructive conflict resolution by UNESCO, UNITED Nation and other well meaning powers of the world. Insecurity and fear in Africa or third world countries are attributed to poor human-capacity building, greed and consequently poor economic development. The protracted Syrian and Egyptian wars, and the destructive Boko Haram activities in Nigeria have led to loss of lives and properties, insecurity and non-harmonious co-existence. Nwachukwu (2012. 29) asserted that “Government at all levels (in Nigeria) seem to have failed the people with so much insecurity and selfish desires by those in charge without accountability. The nations is engaged in wanton destruction of property and lives of innocent and helpless people by Boko Haram group without check. Not long ago it was the militant of Niger Delta who knows the Next group”. Nigeria, the “Giant of Africa’ has become a dreadful country to live in because of kidnapping, wars, violence, armed robbery, tribalism, terrorist attacks, human trafficking, rapping, unhealthy environment, non – democratic governance and assassinations.

Education has always been regarded as the most fundamental empowerment for human sustainability in terms of socio economic, socio political and socio-cultural development. The yearning for more economic and technological development in Africa, Nigeria inclusive, cannot be sufficiently attained except there is effective peace-education in the society especially, the education institutions. 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” (Wikipedia, 2013). Peace is a golden gift, hence it is the last precious gift Christ gave to his apostles (John, 20:20). Yes, peace is one of the essential global quest for human happiness, despite the attainment in information and technology. Some developed nations of the world like England value peace, discipline and order.

Since July 2013, tertiary institutions in Nigeria have been shot down due to poor environmental state, insufficient human and material resources, poor salaries, etc., yet there is a lot of economic wastes by politicians and Boko Haram. There is a correlation between peace and economic growth. Where there is peace and democracy, there is adequate financial allocation to various institutions, and the out-put is better

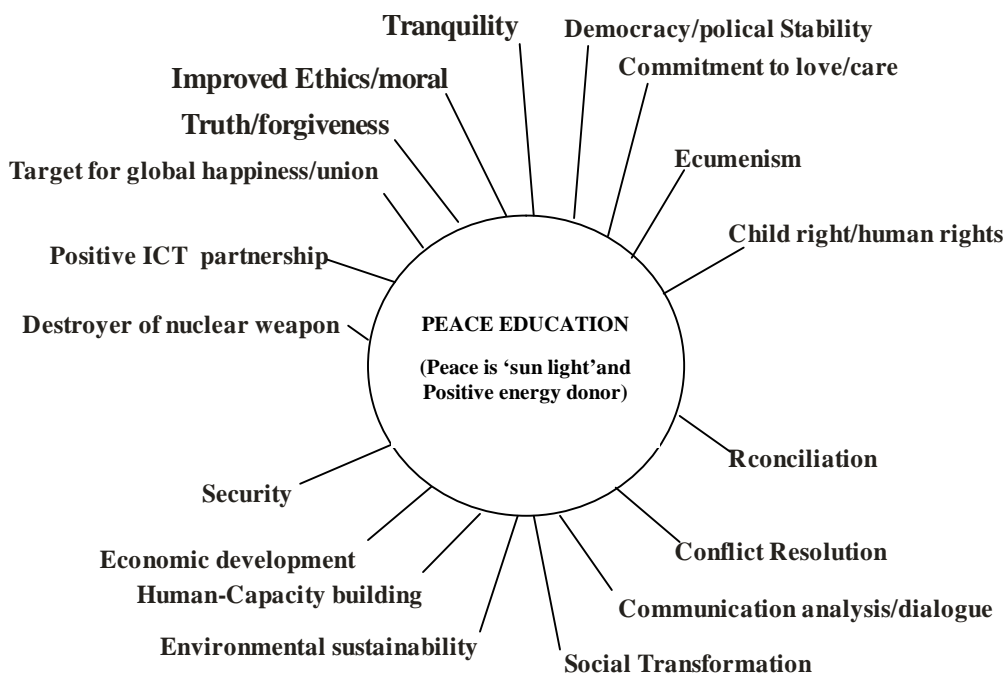
human capacity building and higher income per capital. Nigeria and Africa at large need peace education for both harmonious co-existence and economic development.

Concept of Peace Education

Peace is expression of love, co-operation, unity and harmonious co-existence. It is absence of war, injustice, violence, greed and bad governance. Peace as seen by Kaitholil (2009) means tranquility, a state of undisturbed, well being of daily experience, ones brother/sister, and ones God. Peace is security, self assurance, freedom from fear and undue restraint. It is one of the deepest desires of every person and basic yearning of human race. Herbert in Kaitholil (2009:112) testified that “peace is not made at the council tables, or by treaties, but in the hearts of men”. This is because peace involves calm conscientious decision.

Peace education as described by Hariss and Synott (2013) is series of teaching encounters that draw from peoples; their desire for peace, non violent alternatives from managing conflict, and skills for critical analysis of structural arrangements that provide & legitimize injustice and inequality. Peace education around the world has represented a spectrum of local themes e.g., anti-nuclearism, international understanding, environmental responsibility, communication skills, human rights, tolerance of diversity, and gender equality. It involves theories of education that will help teachers to impart attributes of peace to students and help students to learn the skills of dialogue, tolerance, caring, sharing understanding and loving in human interactions. Peace education is to be taught through informal education in the families, through formal education in educational institutions at all levels and non-formal process for those who receive education outside the formal school e.g. Adult education programme, media, conference, seminars and family education. Peace education is a commitment that will enhance national economy and tranquility. Pope Francis (2013) urged all those in economic, political and social life to be protectors of nature, humans and environment. Peace education is necessary in Nigerian education system and curriculum because of political instability, unplanned migration due to violence, social injustice and consequent poor economy/standard of living.

Network of Benefits of Peace Education



Source: Authors Discretion

Concept of Economic Development in Nigeria

The economy of a country or region is the system by which money, industry and trade are organized. It is wealth obtained by a country from business and industry. A good economy is based on manufacturing hence the importance of raw materials which are mainly products of agriculture. In Nigeria however, oil wealth has overshadowed other sectors of our economy. Thanks to the Northern region that has mainly sustained the country with food from agriculture. Naam (2013) opined that the most fundamental empowerment of humans is education, and next to it is connectivity; which implies access to information and communication technology. This connects persons to global market and various interactions that improve our sustainability. Finally, democracy is a key to economic development because of dialogue. Economic development refers to the improvement in the standard of living of a people.

Threats to peace have led to poor economic development in Nigeria and Africa in general. Incessant religious conflicts and violence have distorted business, agriculture and industry in Nigeria. People migrate from one part of the country to

another to seek for security because properties and industries are destroyed without replacement. Education which is meant for human resource development is neglected, coupled with strikes. Many Nigerians are poor and cannot afford their daily bread because money is in the possession of few politicians. Entrepreneurship is discouraged as well as agriculture, due to poor finance and equipment. Commenting on this St Matthew-Daniel (2013) suggested that the challenges confronting Nigerian economy in the 21st Century are diverse and enormous. The unacceptable state of Nigeria's economy is most galling given Nigeria's enormous endowments of natural and human resources. This is more so given the fact that African countries such as Singapore and Malaysia, with same colonial heritage and natural resource endowments have recorded significant successes in the development of their economies since 1965 when they were at par or even behind Nigeria. For instance 30 years later, Singapore had a per capita income of US \$10,000 whilst Nigeria had per capita income of US \$300. Nigeria is endowed with numerous human and material resources and could do better than Singapore if it adopted Agriculture, ICT, human resource development, and environmental management.

Unemployment is obvious due to bad economy and many unemployed young graduates have contributed to insecurity and crimes in the country. The standard of living in Nigeria is generally poor, though there is some level of improvement since independence.

Terrorist Attacks in Nigeria: A Threat to Peaceful Co-existence

The main reason and mission of Nigeria Nationalist of the colonial era was to promote the nations economy through functional and sustainable education (Alabekee, 2010). They aimed at maintaining a peaceful nation through proper character development and democracy as was even seen in the former National Anthem. "Nigeria we hail thee, our dear native land, though tribes and tongues may differ in Brotherhood we stand..."

However, the post –war scenario brought about increased development in terms of expansion in education and technology but also introduced more anarchy, terrorist attacks, insecurity, greed, tribal's wars, leadership tussle, to mention but a few. At a stage armed robbery became a welcome development in Nigeria. People were mercilessly attacked by armed robbers in their home, high –ways, business areas, streets, regions, churches and even educational houses institutions. Worst than armed robbers are the "big guys" who loot the nations' wealth to other nations. Shidman (2009:20) stated that "the United State government has threaten to publish the list of wealthy Nigerians and others who own about \$18bn stashed away in secret accounts in Switzerland". These acts increases poverty in Nigeria and robbery is an agent of poverty.

Boko Haram in the North and Kidnapping in the South are two major threats that are heightening the state of insecurity in Nigeria leading to mass-drain to other countries instead of the former 'brain-drain'. Ahanonu (2012) describing the pitiable state of insecurity in Nigeria opined that the introduction of suicide mission in Boko Haram's tactics are inadvertently restricting the ethnical value of killings, thus one man's willingness to die is sufficient to terrorize a myriad of lives. Properties, factories, business areas, churches, educational institutions, motor parks are attacked, destroyed & above all human lives are lost without qualm of conscience. The failure of the security agents to protect lives and properties is increasingly affecting the legitimacy of the local, state and federal government. The group adoption of information technology in their attacks is facilitating the networking between the group's leader and various cells scattered around the country. Internet and e-mail are being utilized effectively to send instructions to their adherents for their negative mission. To worsen the situation, the sects do not believe in western education. The so called poor Muslim fanatics, simply lack civilization. Examples of their terrorist act include, **the Kaduna Bomb Blasts by their suicide bombers at St. Rita's Catholic Church in Ungwan Yero, Malali area.** According to a reporter "I saw dead bodies litter the church premises". In another report by Leader editor, **Boko Haram bombed five loaded Luxurious buses at the New Road Luxury park, Kano & dozens of innocent men, women and children died.** There are countless accounts of these suicide bombers and yet they boast to continue their threat in Nigeria. It was noted by (Abdul, 2013) that Late leader Malam Mohammed Yusuf sent Abdul Rasheed Abubaka, 23, and Mahammed Ali to Taliban, Afghanistan to learn how to make bomb. Yusuf promised to pay him on his return to Nigeria to teach other members. However, Arinze (2012) emphasized that peace has no religious frontiers. There is no separate Christian peace, Muslim peace or Hindu peace. Religions (and adherents) have no choice but to work together to promote peace. Peace is an apostle of love and anyone who has peace and love cannot destroy lives and properties.

Kidnapping is another terrorist attack that one is not suppose to wish his greatest enemy. Comment from a kidnapped person showed that it is worse than slave trade. Some wealthy Nigerians are abducted by humdrums and taken into thick bushes, hidden places/buildings, to remain there until ransoms are paid for their deliverance. Sometimes in the bid to get the ransom, some of the victims die, owing to hunger, threats, suspicion of any reports to police, lack of care, stress, fear, inability to bring the ransom on time, illness, weakness and cruelty etc. Some victims are slaughtered for sells or rituals.

Kidnapping in Nigeria was formerly meant for the rich and Niger Delta oil processing agents who the abductors demanded huge sums for release, or they assassinate their victims if they were not satisfied with the ransom paid. Today

anybody could be kidnapped even for five thousand naira. For instance, **“Three Primary School Teachers were Kidnapped in the Classroom”** in Edo State and the Nigeria Union of Teacher (NUT) blamed the governor Adamus Oshiomhole for giving impression through the media that teachers were well off. Nero (2013) said that it was abominable that teacher could be target. However, the horror of kidnapping to the families of the kidnapped is enough to stair the federal government to stop the menace.

Assassination, lawlessness, killings, ritual murder are becoming part and parcel of Nigeria society. Dead bodies could be found along the roads, even with the least intention of removal by the sanitary department. As a result, vultures could feast on their carcass. A public mob can burn a robber before arrival of police. Some bus driver could load passengers, and such could become victims for rituals as they would be deposited in thick bushes. Some people also kill their family members for rituals to make fast money. For instance, **‘a father killed son for N1m in Adamawa State’** as reported by the police command –(Ibrahim, 2013). Rappah Buba took his son to the farm and severed the head with the intention of selling it N1m, but was caught in the barbaric and guilty act. There are stories of politicians killing their opponent during elections and so on. This is why the issue of democracy in Nigeria is yet a dream to be achieved.

President Barrack Obama & other World Powers Views About Boko Haram and Kidnapping in Nigeria

It could be recalled that Pope Benedit XXVI called for immediate end to what he called “terrorist attacks’ against Christians in Nigeria and urged both sides to avoid reprisals in his speech captioned **“Pope seeks end to violence in Nigeria”**. He appealed to Islamist Boko Haram sect and others responsible for violence to stop spilling blood of many innocent souls, attacks on government buildings & churches (Benedict, 2012). These are barbaric acts.

In the same vein, **President Barrack Obama** (2013) has promised Nigeria’s leader that US will help fight terrorism in Nigeria. His discussion with **President Goodluck Jonathan**, dealt with the threat that terrorism posses across Africa, including in Nigeria, where government is battling the Boko Haram terrorist group – which he called **“an extraordinary security challenge”**. He called on lovers of peace to assist him to stand against the senseless attacks and to dismantle terrorist networks of destruction. Obama said US assistance would help Nigeria confront the problem in a way that is consistent with human rights & stressed on democratic election and possible supply of power in the continent.

Effect of Boko Haram and Kidnapping on Economic Development

Boko Haram

Boko Haram uprising is a “compounded terrorism” mingled with some foreign aids (Ahanonu, 2012). The effects include:

1. Loss of lives and properties
2. Some casualties/victims wail in the hospital and government is not usually responsible for their treatment.
3. Religious fanaticism has led to burning of churches/mosques
4. Closure of business areas/parks.
5. Migration from North to other parts of the country resulting to loss of jobs, owing to insecurity.

Kidnapping

The effects include:

1. Loss of lives and properties especially houses where the kidnappers hide their victims are usually destroyed.
2. Loss of some heads of Departments/important persons that plan the economic development of Nigeria.
3. Loss of money given to kidnappers.
4. Brain drain and migration to other countries for security.
5. International relations, tourism and other global communications that yield money to the country have depreciated.

Conclusion

Peace education is a global phenomenon because on it hinges social transformation, tranquility and economic development. Nigeria, “the giant of Africa” has recently been menaced by two major crimes that deflected her economy, namely, Boko Haram and Kidnapping. World powers such as the Pope Benedict XVI and President Barack Obama of USA have unequivocally condemned these terrorists because they are obstruction to better human resource and economic development. It is therefore pertinent among others that peace-education could be imbibed in education curriculum for all learners.

Recommendations

1. Peace Education should be enshrined in the Nigerian National Policy of education for all levels of learners.
2. Peace education should be an aspect of the curriculum for colleges of education and faculties of education so that the student-teachers will be conversant with the methodologies for teaching peace education.
3. Terrorists should be adequately dealt with by law.
4. Nigeria borders should be guarded against infiltrators.

5. Supply of amenities and booms in the country should be checked.
6. Victims of terrorist should be adequately treated and compensated by government or the government should make extra effort to stamp out the menace.
7. Nigeria needs adequate security in all walks of life.
8. Problem of unemployment needs to be addressed.
9. Agriculture and entrepreneurship should be encouraged.
10. Human resource development is essential. Government needs to appease lecturers of higher institutions, and provide institutions with adequate facilities.
11. Democracy and good governance are essential for good social transformation.
12. The spirit of ecumenism should be cultivated by various religious groups as sign of unity and maturity.

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