
PEACE EDUCATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICAN STATES: A THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL EXEGESIS

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Abstract

It is an incontestable fact that mankind has continuously desired to be at peace in the world but ironically and helplessly too, the same mankind has perpetually worked tirelessly towards creating an un-peaceful environment. Indeed, with the end of the cold war, there were high expectations that the new millennium would usher in a new era of global peace and prosperity that comes with it. Unfortunately, it appears that the end of the cold war and the beginning of the new millennium only opened up new hostilities and threats to world peace. This manifest in African States in the form of intrastate conflicts (leading to civil wars) inter-religious and ethnic conflicts, terrorism, massacres, genocides and various forms of injustices perpetrated against helpless people. Today, peace and security are major problems that hinder positive economic development in the continent. To drive the point home, Africans need a value theory that will equip them with what is important to their lives and development which can only be achieved through peace education. The paper therefore examines the role of peace education towards promoting social justice, equality, human rights and fundamental freedom. It also discusses the relevance of peace education to social environment for human development and relationships base on trust; which should lead to positive economic development of African States.

In this 21st century, Africans need a value theory that will enable them to know what is important to their lives and development. It is vital that Africans should learn formally and informally how to value peace and security. Africa is a vast and varied continent, thus African nations have different histories and geographical conditions, different stages of economic development, different sets of public policies and different patterns of internal and international interaction. Therefore, the sources of conflict in Africa reflect this diversity and complexity, hence, some sources of conflicts are purely

internal, some reflect the dynamics of a particular sub-region, and some have important international dimensions. Despite these differences the sources of conflict in Africa are linked by a number of common themes and experiences. Among scholars and policy-makers, awareness is growing that young people in Africa hold the key to the continent's ability to realize the promises of an African renaissance. It is a truism that in all societies, young people are "the future" and the conditions in Africa make this truism especially relevant. Demographic trends reveal that African nations have extraordinarily high percentages of their populations between the ages of 15-25 with little access to education or employment. Hence, many are vulnerable challenges in their physical and mental wellbeing.

Indeed, today many youths have to fend for themselves, their families and communities. Fueled in part by these trends, the African youths feature prominently in several of the major conflicts in Africa, as soldiers and as civilian targets. At the same time, students and the urban dispossessed groups have been at the forefront of democratization movements in many parts of the continent. Young people actively participate in religious organizations and other components of civil society aimed at transforming the public sphere. In some ways, the political and social mobilization of young people can be seen as claims to effective citizenship.

The prevailing conception of peace is the absence of war or any form of violence. Peace is not an isolated incident or an event that happens by any means. It is a process that builds trust, cooperation, compromise, equity and justice which are the essential ingredients for peaceful co-existence between individuals, communities and nations. In essence, economic development prevails in an atmosphere that is free from war and social injustice, acrimony, idleness, physical, psychological and structural violence within an individual, the family, community and the larger society.

Concepts of Peace and Peace Education

Meaning of Peace

It is not easy to define the term "peace" because of the different ways people perceive it to be. Most people consider peace as the "absence of war". For example, according to Cambridge International Dictionary of English (1996:1039) peace is defined as; "Freedom from war and violence". This definition falls short of giving full definition of peace, because there may be conflict without war.

Sills and David (1988:487) categorized peace into two i.e. negative and positive peace. Negative peace is defined as; "...the absence of organized violence not only between such major human groups as nations, but also between social and ethnic groups..." while positive peace is defined as, "...a pattern of cooperation and integration between major human groups...".

Haavelsrud (2004:1-5), also categorized peace into two i.e. negative and positive peace. While negative peace applies to cases where there is an absence of war between nations and within nations, positive peace is the absence of structural violence or presence of social justice. Nevertheless, there is still difficulty in understanding the two types of peace. From the aforementioned, negative peace is silent about some types of conflicts, like conflicts between individuals and there is no detail of what is structural violence when defining positive peace. However, Haavelsrud (2004:7) posited that:

A peace structure means the presence of relatively permanent relations that enhance peace values (both negative and positive values) between specific units... But peace is also the process of interaction between specific units as long as the interaction is geared to the enhancement of negative or positive peace.

It is also worthy to note the consequences of absence of both negative and positive peace. They all have very dangerous consequences; they often produce the same results in terms of death and human sufferings.

Peace Education

Having observed what is peace and its different categories, the researcher now discuss what peace education is. The United States Cyberschoolbus (2005:1) mentioned that peace education evolved out of the desire to actualize the goals of the United Nations Charter, which was established among other things to:

- 1) Save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war.
- 2) Establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of International Law can be maintained and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

It is further argued that the spirit of peace can be inculcated through educational programmes by the Hague Appeal of Peace (2005:1); Thus

...a culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems; have the skills to resolve conflict constructively; know and live by international standards of human rights, gender and racial equality; appreciate cultural diversity; and respect the integrity of the earth. Such learning can not be achieved without intentional sustained and systematic education for peace. Peace for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Peace education is defined by Peacewalk (2005:1) as a participatory process which changes our way of thinking and promotes learning for peace and justice. Also, on the

importance of Peace Education, UNICEF (2005:3) believes that, peace education will help in the followings:

- a) Integrate an understanding of peace, human rights, social justice and global issues
- b) Provide a forum for the explicit discussion of values of peace and social justice.
- c) Enable children to put peace making into practice in the educational setting as well as in the wider community.

UNICEF (1999) described peace education as schooling and other educational initiatives that:

- 1) Function as 'zones of peace', where children are safe from violent conflict.
- 2) Upheld children's basic rights as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).
- 3) Develop climate that models peaceful and respectful behaviour among all members of the learning community.
- 4) Demonstrate the principles of equality and non-discrimination in administrative policies and practices.
- 5) Draw the knowledge of peace building that exist in the community including means of dealing with conflicts that are effective, non-violent, and rooted in the local culture.

The Objectives of Peace Education

Peace education contributes towards changing the world. Indeed, peace education reduces the willingness of individuals to resort to violence, and uncover and between states.

According to Lin and Stichwort (1999), the objectives of peace education can be summarized thus:

- 1) Use teaching and learning methods that stress participation, problem solving and respect for differences.
- 2) Enable children to put peace making into practice in the educational setting as well as in the wider community.
- 3) Generate opportunities for continuous reflection and professional development of all educators in relation to issues of peace, justice and rights.

Looking at the nature of peace education and its growth in emphasis as the instrument and process of building the culture of peace and sustaining it, one sees that in the 1980s, during the Cold War, peace education emphasis was on the preservation of the earth itself. This was because the focus on conflicts was not on intra-communal conflicts, but international dimension of conflicts, but the focus on the international dimension of conflicts, in itself, exacerbated a largely ignored conflicts within polities (Uwazie, 2003). Peace education in the Cold War context was therefore focused on the

nature of warfare, violence and conflict as well as the preservation of the earth, hence, the focus was on anti-nuclear movements and environmental responsibilities, even as people were encouraged to consider alternatives to violence and to embrace peaceful co-existence. The emphasis on non-violence grew into the 1990's. "Intra-communal conflicts which have been ignored during the Cold War became the new focus. How to resolve conflicts by non-violence methods became the concerns of peace education" (Brabeck, 2005). It was believed that non-violent methods of achieving peace could be achieved through mutual understanding and empathy with the intention of building a culture of peaceful co-existence, hence, the proliferation of programmes which focus on increasing knowledge about peace, both in the personal and intra-communal aspect, like respect for others and tolerance for 'those who are considered different. These became the dominant pre-occupation of both conflict prevention and management practitioner and scholars concerned with building peace through peace education.

Currently, peace education focus is to provide practical applications for peace and transformation of conflict resolution into modern life, hence, the need to teach conflict resolution skills, cooperation and inter-dependence, citizenship values, ecological responsibilities, mediation skills and development of peace agent culture in schools, while continually reflecting on better ways to ensure the cultivation, development and building of the culture of peace. These will ensure the sustainability of peace and peace education in itself not just in African States but in the world in general.

African Economy and Education

Most of Africa's population is rural. Africa produces three quarters of the world's cocoa, beans and about one third of its peanuts. Rare and precious minerals (including much of the world's diamonds) are abundant in the continent's ancient crystalline rocks which are found mostly to the south and east of a line from the Gulf of Guinea to the Sinai Peninsula; extensive oil, gas, and phosphate deposits occur in sedimentary rocks in the north and west of this general line. Manufacturing is concentrated in the Republic of South Africa and in North Africa (especially Egypt and Algeria). Despite Africa's enormous potential for hydroelectric power production, only a small percentage of it has been developed.

Obanya (2002) cited in Okam (2007) recorded that during the period, 1990-2000, which has been appropriately called the "Decade of world summit", fewer than nineteen world conferences/congresses and summits were held during that period. Most of these world summits emerged with recommendations, advantages and assets which bear on the relevance of the global perspective on education with particular reference to human survival and development. These summits generally endorsed a number of issues and challenges which must be confronted and overcome particularly in African

States; if these countries must explore and benefit from the dividends of educational development in this 21st century and that the summit recommends as follows:

- a) an acknowledgement that Africa is at the bottom of the world's educational league table, and of the fact that this should justify urgent, concerted, innovative responses;
- b) an affirmation that education is a fundamental human right;
- c) that the planning and pursuit of educational development **MUST** go hand in hand with the planning and pursuit of overall societal development, with a strong emphasis on sustainable human development;
- d) while basic education remains the priority, education should always be considered in its holistic sense, the ultimate goal of which is lifelong learning in a society;
- e) political will is the key to success in all educational endeavours;
- f) the unfolding world, and the magnitude of the problem call for enlarged and new visions of education;
- g) enlarged partnerships and alliances (among government agencies, between government and all sectors of the civil society) are needed to broaden participation and ensure a sense of ownership by the real people;
- h) while, **ACCESS** remains a prime goal, it must be accompanied by due considerations to Equity, Relevance and Efficiency;
- i) improved spending on Education and improved mobilization and management of educational resources;
- j) education reform to include concerted action on capacity building for planning/management/evaluation, curriculum development, teacher education, etc;
- k) international solidarity in strong support of Africa's internal efforts; and
- l) the **DEBT BURDEN** as a strong handicap to funding the development of education in the region (Obanya, 2002).

In spite of Africa's declining economic fortunes, in spite of its multitude of political and social problems, in spite of the wide "knowledge gap" (i.e. its relative lack of access to modern scientific and technical knowledge and information) between Africa and the rest of the world, the region has become part and parcel of today's global village. This globalization has also had its effects on the development of education on the continent (Obanya, 2004).

In the formal sector, Africa has not been able to catch up with new scientific and technological ideas and products needed to enrich school curricula. The result is that the promotion of real learning in African schools has become very difficult and frontal; teaching and memorization take the place of investigations, experimentation, discussion. Labels (i.e. mere "definitions" of concepts) are memorized in place of the real understanding of concepts themselves (Obanya, 2004). This situation makes the application of classroom learning to real life situations impossible.

The massive educational and societal reconstruction efforts that Africa needs cannot be undertaken without some form of external assistance. The emphasis here is on assistance, meaning that Africans themselves have to do the ground work and even do most of the work above the ground level (Belshaw, 2009). Africans will have to determine their own educational needs and chart the course of action needed for meeting such needs. They will have to commit their own energy to the massive efforts needed and should call on outside assistance mainly for the purpose of selectively borrowing new ideas and being up-to-date in knowledge, skills, approaches and obtaining the additional financial and technical support needed for the successful take-off and sustenance of the reconstruction programme.

In analyzing the current dilemma facing education in Africa, Obanya (2004) posited that an effort has been made to go into the contemporary history of the region, to situate education within the overall concern for socio-economic development and the promotion of democracy and human happiness in Africa. Education has to be regenerated to serve the cause of socio-economic development and human of happiness in Africa. At the same time, African societies have to promote genuine development efforts, which put the people first. Education has to be taken along with society, building on each society's cultural roots and harnessing first and foremost, Africa's own internal energies, resources and political will to forge genuine partnerships with the international community with which Africa should operate as equal cooperators into the 21st century.

Peace Education and Economic Development in Africa

Today, peace and security are problems in Africa. Violent conflicts have killed and displaced more people in Africa than in any other continent in recent decades. This has undermined growth and development and deprived many of their rights to life, liberty and security as enshrined in Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The common interest report of the commission for Africa (2010) posited that the developed world's trade, economic and development policies, and its participation in the trade in small arms and conflict resources have contributed to African's instability. The Congo Democratic Republic, Rwanda, Angola, Ivory Coast, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Uganda etc. have undergone and are undergoing civil wars, strife and violence. In Nigeria, today, many people lost their lives in ongoing localized violence and short-lived but vicious communal fightings.

Babalola (1996) posited that development is the process of "improving the total circumstance of man on this earth and granting his mastery of his environment, so that national development would mean that such fulfilled individuals should come together

to build a systematically organized, self-generating and technologically advanced society”. Adegbija and Fakomogbon (2011) in their own view, regarded development as the unfolding and realization of the creative potentials of man and enabling him to improve his material conditions of living through the use of resources available to him. A common underpinning assertion of both views is a process of increasing the skills and capabilities of man for improved standards of product and perfect means of production and better standards of living. From this conceptualization, development is taken to mean the process of increasing the skills and capabilities of man such that he is able to successfully tap the potentials of his environment and utilize same for the enhancement of better standards of living.

Thus, Ekwo (2006) reflected that many advanced and industrialized countries of the world have established a very positive relationship between economic growth and peace education. He considered that, amongst, the advanced countries of the world, the United States of America is seen as a centre for emulation where many programmes in many fields of human endeavour are working well because she places priority in the development of human capital and maintenance of peace in the world. Knezewich (2004) endorsed that, by evaluation, the United States of America produces 6% of the population. It was also established that the output of workers in the country improves with better tools and machines which largely derives from the ideals of American education. Knezewich (2004) emphasized that the ideals which are characteristic of American education have led to qualitative and quantitative changes in physical and human capital development. However, on the other hand, in the context of the present day education in Africa States, various governments are yet to recognize the symbolic relationship existing between education development and national stability; yet the former flourishes on national stability, the latter is the pivot around which the development of a nation revolves.

Belshaw (2009) defined economic development as “a social process which results in a cumulative increase in levels of consumption”. Todaro (2004) posited a dichotomic view in analyzing economic development. He posited that:

“in strictly economic terms, development in the past two decades has meant the capacity of a national economy, whose initial economic condition has been more or less static for a long time, to generate and sustain an annual increase in its gross national product at a rate of perhaps 5-7 percent or more”.

His several definitions were more contemporaneous and they were an outcropping of the clamour by policy makers and economists for the “dethronement of GNP” and the promotion of direct attacks on widespread absolute poverty, increasingly inequitable income distributions and the apparition of rising unemployment.

However, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) development should focus on human development, which, UNDP argued, should be seen in the light of how economic growth is managed and distributed for the benefit of the people. Central to this process of human development is the enlargement of people's choices, the most critical of which are live long, enjoy healthy life, and access to education and have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living (Usman, 2001).

Economic development generally refers to the sustained, concerted actions of policy makers and communities that promote the standard of living and the economic health of a specific area. Economic development can also be referred to as the quantitative changes in the economy. Such actions can involve multiple areas including development of human capital, critical infrastructure, regional competitiveness, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, health, safety, literacy and other initiatives. The scope of economic development includes the process and policies by which a nation improves the economic, political and social well-being of its people.

Progress in human development can also be gauged from the degree of political freedom, guaranteed human rights and personal self-respect. On the basis of this reasoning, UNDP has evolved the Human Development Index (HDI), including component variables such as standard of living (purchasing power based on real GDP), knowledge (adult literacy and more years of schooling) and longevity (life expectancy).

Due to lack of peace in African States, education has been considered practically non-existent in two groups of African countries; those in a State of economic ruin and those which have experienced prolonged political instability and civil strife. In the standard way of thinking as scholars, the proximate determinants of growth are labour, physical capital, human capital and productivity. Factor accumulation and productivity change are endogenous, depending on improvement in technology, allocative efficiency, and incentives which can themselves be shaped by institutions. These and many others can only be achieved through peace education. This is because Africa today suffer from two kinds of outflows. First, a sizeable proportion of the private sector wealth is held abroad. Collier (2000) in Soludo (2006) had estimated that about 40 percent of the non-land private African wealth is held outside of Africa. In addition, it may not be inappropriate to also surmise that at least 40 percent of Africa's most talented and skilled manpower reside outside the region-the brain drain.

The massive educational and societal reconstruction efforts that Africa needs cannot be undertaken without some form of external assistance. Indeed, a key aspect of economic reforms will be a radical adjustment in the management of all facets of

national life. Today, very unfortunately, many developed countries don't want to invest in Africa due to absence of peace. Peace is an important element in harmonious and comfortable living in any society. It forms the basis of all types of development - human; social; economic; technological etc.

Peace and peace education are important elements in the economic development of any country. No country can develop economically in the absence of peace. However, the purpose of a truly effective education programme should extend beyond mere acquisition of knowledge. A complete education programme ensures that its recipients not only understand the principles of life, but ensures that they are able to rightly apply such knowledge in solving the problems of life which are intricately tied to peace for the peaceful co-existence of individuals in the society vis-à-vis the development of the society politically, socially and economically.

Today, it is very unfortunate to say that the differences in the culture of the amalgamated people in Africa have been exploited by evil men on the continent. What different tribes really fear is domination such that what matters to them cease to count in the general scheme of things. In Africa, ordinary peasants and ordinary people were frightened with false stories of a grand plan to dominate their local economy, culture, education, religion and so on. It is this action that introduces the element of greed, envy, prejudice, hatred, injustice and jealousy on tribal lines and basis. All over Africa, civil wars, civil strife and violence which threaten peace and security start with one tribe being frightened of domination by the other. Indeed, this is not the first case (it happened in history). The Jews were targeted during the Second World War for fear that they were dominating the economy in Germany. This incidence has also undermined growth and development of African States.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has discussed the concept of peace and peace education. It dwelt on peace objective, African economy, education and the development of African economy. It further explained the need to emphasize and work for peace in order to progressively develop the economy of African States. Equally important, the paper discussed peace as an important element in harmonious and comfortable living in any society, race or any generation. It was generally surmised that with peace education in African States, Africa will come to be a place of peaceful people, an environment of economic enterprise, a territory of tremendous tolerance, an area of abundant advancement, a domain of democratic decisions and an institution of impressive independence.

Recommendations

The following recommendations will help greatly to ensure that the culture of peace is not only talked about but also adequately established through peace education in all sectors of the African economy for the economic development of African States:

1) Fostering Peace and National Unity in African States

It is incontestable fact that Africa today suffers from too much political unrest and violent conflict. Indeed, many African States today become synonymous with poverty, inequity and conflict. Unfortunately, this perception is not altogether false for it stems from the many sad realities that most African countries have endured during and since the end of the cold war. The inequities and bad governance from which these conflicts arose persist. These problems can be addressed when peace and National Unity in African States are fostered. Indeed, this will allow peace to prevail for economic development of African States.

2) Establishment of African Institute of Peace and Peace Education

This important institute should be established by African States for the purpose of conducting researches, consultations and organizing conferences on peace education. This will help greatly in creating a peaceful atmosphere for economic development of African States. Global Campaign for Peace Education was launched at the Hague Appeal for Peace Civil Society Conference. The conference adopted a set of fifty proposals directed towards achieving a culture of peace. Amongst these proposals, education was admitted to be essential to the achievement of all goals it set forth and called for 'education for peace, human rights and democracy'.

3) Teaching of Peace and Peace Education in Schools

The teaching of peace and peace education in African Schools becomes very necessary to allow peace prevail for economic development of African States. The focus of teaching peace education is to provide practical applications for peace and transformation of conflict resolution into modern life. Conflict resolution skills, cooperation and interdependence, citizenship values, ecological responsibilities, mediation skills and development should be taught so as to ensure the sustainability of peace for economic development not only in African States but in the world in general.

4) Enhancement of Human Rights and the Rule of Law

The question of human rights and the rule of law should be taken seriously in African States. This is because so long as gross violations of human rights and the rule of law are allowed to go unpunished in other sectors of the African life, it would amount to many problems that will derail the economy of African States.

5) Integration of Peace Education into Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship education, formal or non-formal, has been portrayed as having a unique capacity to equip its recipients with occupational skills for sustainable living. Therefore, African States should elevate the living conditions of their people through the establishment of Technical and Vocational Institutions/Centres. The teaching of Technical and Vocational Education will help greatly in occupation orientation to various sectors of the economy and social life. The socio-economic sector in this present dispensation is essential ingredient for attainment of peace and sustainable development in African States.

6) Adjustment in African Politics

There should be good ideas for genuine nation-building in Africa through peace education to encourage Africans to think, analyze their problems themselves and to examine alternative approaches together. In this regards, adjustment in African politics is necessary so as to have its impact on African economy. This can happen if development is re-conceptualized to involve building on the cultural roots of the people, achieving national consensus on developmental objectives and strategies and mobilizing the creative energies of the people for ideas and action that can promote development.

7) Economic Reform in African States

Economic reform in African States will help greatly in the management of all facets of national life. African States should do everything possible to live within their means, use their resources (human, financial, material) in areas where they are most likely to yield the best results. Cost consciousness should also be built into all activities of society. The concept of peace education should be enhanced and embraced by the Africans to allow the economic reform breakthrough in Africa for the economic development of African States.

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