

**ACHIEVING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PEACE EDUCATION IN
ENUGU STATE**

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Abstract

This paper examines how peace education can promote community development within our society. This is possible because peace education promotes economic growth, social co-existence, unity and social cohesion among the people. This results in achieving community development since all members of the community can work as a team with common spirit for the benefit of all in terms of development drive. This paper views peace education as a change agent to help engender awareness and conscientization in the citizenry and develop coping skills as well as a positive attitude towards achieving community development to alleviate the socio-economic statues of people. Peace education ultimately is meant to empower the marginalized, equip them with better surviving tools to fit in and to ensure better community development drive. This paper discusses conceptual clarifications of community development and peace education. It also discusses the benefits of peace education to community development, making peace education responsive to community development drive. The paper concludes with some recommendations that government should support the inclusion of peace

education into the curriculum of our educational system and also provide necessary funds to support education.

Keywords: *Peace, Education, Community and Development*

Introduction

The continuous rise in the number of violent conflicts between nations, within states, communities, industries and even at homes has been alarming as it remains a big threat to every living soul. Nwozor (2013) in his view examined the Nigerian State as caught in the crossfire of insecurity arising from the insurgence of various rogue groups, most prominent of them are the herdsmen killings and Boko Haram sect. Communities in Nigerian nation like others in some developing countries are grossly lagging behind with regards to development, especially, in infrastructure. They lack the basic facilities that make for development. A look at a typical community in Nigeria, presents clear evidence of poor roads network and infrastructural decay; poor health facilities, lack of clean water and electricity, among others. In some communities in Nigeria, there is high rate of poverty and illiteracy, among others. The implication of this is that these communities are unduly exposed to all sorts of disease, sickness and low standard of living when compared to developed nations.

The situation of communities in Enugu State has been exacerbated by incessant ethnic violent clashes and conflicts, gross human right violation, inequalities, injustices and recent herdsmen killings that exposed these communities to acute hardship. The herdsmen have taken over many farm lands after displaying these farmers from their home land. These have exposed these communities to diverse harsh condition of

living. In Enugu State, agriculture accounts for substantial source of income and means of livelihood to community members. These attacks have resulted in main source of livelihood of these farmers being cut off; thereby exposing them to hunger, poverty, foreigners in their own father's land, and gross under development as well as making it increasingly difficult for them to achieve sustainable economic growth and development.

The objective of this paper is to determine how peace education can promote peaceful and inclusive community development in Enugu State. Peace education enhances good behavioural concept, respect for individual differences, respect for elders, rule of law and also build social cohesion, religious tolerance, social co-existence which are indicators to community development. As a tool, it can help in realizing the social co-existence of people with individual differences, so as to cooperate as a team towards achieving community development drive in Enugu State. This study begins by examining the concepts of community development, peace education, benefits of peace education to community development and peace education and community development.

Conceptual Clarification

Community Development

Community development has gone beyond its traditional boundaries of developing the community and the physical, economic and social conditions of the people to include

emotional and psychological development of the people. Thus, community development can be described as a process by which the efforts of members of a community are united with those of government and non-governmental bodies for a gradual but positive reconditioning process with much reliance on local initiative, leadership and resources for improvement in the physical structure of the community and general well being of the inhabitants. Community development as a practice often set out specific and nonspecific goals to achieve economic growth and better living condition for the people. To achieve these goals, it has developed various tools often used or adopted as situation demands. One of such tools of community development is participatory initiatives (Anyanwu, 2002). Paul and Alice (2001) described community development as the economic, physical and social revitalization of communities led by the people who live in that community. Community development can be seen as planned and organized efforts of people to help themselves (Marius, 2006). One indicator that runs through the above definition is the people's initiative to find lasting solutions to their individual and common problems, relying on their own resources as much as possible and assistance from outside the community, if possible. United Nations defines community members as people who come together to take collective action and generate solutions to their common problems. It is a broad term given to the practices of civic leaders, activists, citizens and professionals to improve various aspects of their communities, typically aiming to build stronger and more resilient communities. Community development practitioners work alongside with people in the communities to

help rebuild relationships with key people and organizations and to identify common concerns. They create opportunity for the community to learn new skills and by enabling people to get together as a team. Community development practitioners help to foster social inclusion and equality (Samuel, 2012).

Community development is defined as a process whereby people are enabled to mobilize and manage forces and resources in a community by creating opportunity for democratic decision-making processes, active participation, co-operation, self-help, development of leaders and utilization of education opportunities to promote the intrinsic potentials and forces in the community as a whole (Samuel, 2012). Community development is a method which brings about a desired change, a process in which a community could take the initiative to formulate objectives which involve development. It requires the involvement and participation of local residents in identifying the strategies they wish to use to improve their quality of life.

Community development has to be viewed as involving the improvement of the system of values in a community, its structure as well as the usage through which it functions and is maintained. This still brings out the fact that the central idea of community development is that it implies change. That is, it involves social change. Its primary purpose is to bring about change for better living within the community. Community development is a tool for involving people in their communities to help their own economic and social conditions and to become effective working groups in project development for their growth.

Involving people in community development activities is necessary. Marius (2006) posited that community development means better living, both materially and socially. Community development is a process where people are taught how to improve themselves, not only by doing things together, but also by planning together with a view to providing the actual techniques for doing the job or finding suitable solution to their problems.

Community development could be seen as development process embracing the efforts of individuals, self-help groups, non-governmental organizations, collective thinking group, collective action and participation of each unit or body, identifying with different roles towards increasing the social and economic well-being of the people toward national growth (Samuel, 2012).

Samuel (2012) summarized the objectives of community development as:

- Improvement of life at community level as much as our human and material resources can carry us.
- To develop all aspects of community living equitably so as to avoid imbalance or neglect of any area.
- To achieve a self generating breakthrough of producing the human and physical process of change.
- To minimize poverty and unemployment in the community as well as provide government services, explore and use technical assistance available outside the community.
- It aims at agricultural extension and development, rural industrial development, rural sanitation, diseases control and health projects, rural education planning, planning for rural

finance cooperation, development of communication and other recreational facilities

- It is noted that for a community to develop their infrastructure and other facilities, they must be involved fully in the development activities.

Peace Education

Peace is not the absence of war but the inclusion of many situations that guarantee positive human conditions. Peace is obtained by changing social structures that are responsible for untimely death, poverty and malnutrition in our society. It can be either positive or negative peace. Negative peace can be brought about through various ways. Peace through negotiation or mediation rather than through physical force in order to eliminate or manifest violence is a negative peace. Positive peace means the removal of structural violence beyond the absence of direct violence. Khan (2013) mentioned that positive peace would not be obtained without the development of just and equitable conditions associated with equalitarian social structures.

The creation of peace culture without ignoring the culture of violence calls for proper understanding of peace education. The importance of peace education is to educate people to recognize the conditions, under which violence is done to human beings without specific human intention. This will help in restructuring social norms required for a more peaceful world to live in. Peace education is a process of equipping people with knowledge, skills, attitude and behavioural competencies needed to resolve conflict without violence and to build and maintain mutually beneficial and harmonious relationship (Johnson and Johnson, 2006). Peace education entails

transformation of peoples' behavioral pattern by inculcating desired knowledge, attitude and skills to enable them contribute to social, cultural, economic and political development of their society (Alimba, 2007). Peace education does encourage the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude among community members so as to promote community development and also sustain it for the interest of all.

Peace education according to Alimba (2007) aims to:

- explore concepts of peace as a state of being and as an active process;
- enquire into the obstacles to peace and the causes of lack of peace.
- resolve conflicts in ways that will lead toward a less violent and a more just world and
- explore a range of different alternative futures in particular ways of building a more just and sustainable society.

From the above discussion, it could be adduced that peace education is a process which involves acquisition of skills, knowledge, and values that empowers people to develop desired behaviour for communal living and for resolving day to day conflict in a non-violent and sustainable manner. Peace education fosters tolerance, respect for others and peaceful co-existence in sharing and caring for others in a harmonious way. Peace education helps to promote community development drive which on the long run alleviates poverty in our society. Peace education promotes cooperation and mutual understanding of cultural diversity, ability to appreciate others and enhancement of communal spirit toward development (Khan, 2013).

Peace education plays a vital role in community development. The success of peace education in achieving community development is to promote peaceful co-existence among people of different minds and cultural diversity. This, therefore, brings to the fore some pertinent questions of how peace education is delivered in Enugu State and also the best way this peace education will be delivered in order to achieve community development drive to grow the economy and promote high standard of living for the benefit of all citizens. Peace education under non-governmental organizations and faith based organizations in Enugu State is often delivered through poor method of community group meetings which is said to be ineffective in inculcating the values, attitudes and skills required to build the citizens. This is because community members are not carried along due to poor awareness creation by community leaders.

In Enugu State and many States in Nigeria, peace education is still not given the rightful position in the basic school curriculum. This has resulted in the state of insecurity and instability, especially, in rural communities. This poor attention to peace education has militating effects on the achievement of community development in many States of the country. This calls for restructuring of the curriculum content and methodology for the delivery of peace education in Enugu State to promote community development. Oyekanmi (2011) argued that for peace education to achieve community development drive, it requires citizens' behavioural transformation through acquisition of appropriate values, skills, knowledge and attitudes to empower them maintain peace in the society. Peace education should be delivered using

andragogy way for it to address and achieve community development drive.

The content of peace education for community development should embrace development education, human rights, environmental education, conflicts resolution, health education, political education, civic education among others for the development of community members so as to enhance peaceful co-existence. Peace education should equip people (citizenry) with skills for dialogue, tolerance, justice, cooperation, open mindedness among others (Khan, 2013). It should embrace social engineering, equitable distribution of resources, skills to overcome misconception about other culture, religion, and stereotype among others. It should be people oriented, participatory and allows people to express their opinion freely. Peace education must be participatory, to empower citizens to change their behaviour and take action necessary to achieve community development. Under this perspective, it becomes imperative to adopt peace education that sensitizes and mobilizes people to take actions that will address these problems. Peace education helps to increase security, cooperation, food production, increase in earning and importance of good nutrition which will enhance community development drive for the interest of all.

Benefit of peace education to community development drive

Education promotes critical thinking and collaborative decision making needed for human development. Education is vital in improving people's quality of life. It raises the economic status of individuals as well as improves their conditions and standard of living and hence vital for community development. Ezema and Ezema (2012) observed that peace is essential in attaining lasting development because whatever

height a nation is able to attain or achieve in making life better for her citizens can easily be destroyed when there is violence. By equipping people with skills and knowledge to deal with intercultural violence, reduce and prevent conflict, peace education does not only deal with forces that deter development but plays vital role in fostering community development drive. Kumar (2010) postulated that peace education does not only analyze and reduce conflict and violence, it also creates the condition for achievements of a positive peace for individuals, groups and nation. It leads to reduction of crime and tribal disunity within the country, militancy, cultism, political crisis, rape, killing and pride (Enaigbe, 2016).

The goals of peace education is to stop conflicts in a non violent way, to share limited resources equitably and live within the limits of sustaining development for the people within and outside the country (Khan, 2013). By empowering people with skills, attitude and knowledge, peace education helps to build, maintain and restore relationship at all levels of human interaction; develop positive approaches towards dealing with conflicts, create safe environment both physically and emotionally that nurture each individual and group, create a safe world based on justice and human rights and to build a sustainable environment and protect it from exploitation and war (Monisha and Belinda, 2009).

Peace education empowers community members to understand global issues of peace, development and environmental sustainability. It brings about a change of behaviour that creates more sustainable community to promote economic growth and a just society. Monisha and Belinda (2009) observed that education at all levels and in all forms constitute a vital tool

for addressing virtually all global problems relevant for development and in particular, peace and stability, knowledge transformation, community development and changes in production and consumption patterns. Peace education brings about the following benefits: improved security, dignity of labour, peaceful co-existence and respect for individual differences. It is capable of building and enhancing economic growth and output. It can also bring about social, political and cultural development among community members.

Peace education should be seen as a conflict mediation and resolution strategy to solve community crises. This approach focuses on analysis of conflict and on ways of resolving such conflict. As a helping profession, peace education should be seen as a problem solving approach where knowledge and skills to resolve conflict non-violently are learnt. This suggests that a curriculum should be designed to incorporate issues like, diversity, appreciation, prejudices and tolerance, critical thinking communication and listening skills, problem solving, peaceful alternative to social and political injustice within the society. This will result in achieving community development for the benefit of all (Mercie and Aderinoye, 2008).

Ezema and Ezema, (2012) postulated that peace is essential in attaining lasting development efforts because whatever height a county is able to attain or achieve in making life better for her citizens can easily be destroyed when there is violence. That is, there can never be any meaningful development without an enabling peaceful environment. Building a culture of peace, learning to live together without conflict or violence have been found to be vital for any nation to achieve development (Maiyo,

2012). Peace education helps people to appreciate the importance of peaceful co-existence to resolve and manage conflict situations. Peace education promotes social integration, social justice, respect, inclusiveness and equity which are necessary ingredients for community development. Peace education equips people with skills and knowledge to deal with intercultural violence, reduce and prevent conflict, so as to foster community development. Peace education does not only analyze and reduce conflict and violence, it also creates the conditions for achieving of a positive peace for individuals, groups and nations. It leads to reduction of crime such as tribal or religious disunity within our society (Enaigbe, 2016).

Peace education in Enugu State should be able to stop violence by resolving conflicts in a nonviolent manner. It is noted that when peace is in place, development and particularly community development is imperative. Peace education enhances people to acquire civic values and develop necessary sense of responsibility to contribute to the societal development (Johnson and Johnson, 2014). Peace education is beneficial in that it brings about the following:

- Improved security,
- Improved quality of life,
- Improve dignity of labour,
- Improved higher life expectancy, and
- Improved employment opportunities (Dimkpa, 2014)

Peace education is capable of building and enhancing economic growth and output production due to cordial existing environment in place. It can also bring social, political and cultural development within communities to ensure maximum development since investors will be attracted

to grow the economy for improved standard of living for all.

Making peace education responsive to community development drive

The relevance of peace education to community development cannot be overemphasized. This is due to the facts that communities in developing nations are lagging behind with respect to development, economic growth and peaceful co-existence. Some of these communities, especially, in Enugu State are still grappling with issues such as hunger, abject poverty, lack of basic needs, high rate of illiteracy and unemployment, among others. Some communities in Enugu State are still far from achieving sustaining development drive necessary for human survival. According to Nwozor (2013), rural communities are still far from sustaining development as poverty, widening gaps between the rich and the poor, violence, conflicts and all forms of political and social instability have remained widespread and pervasive in major communities. Peace education helps in promoting mutual co-existence among people in local communities (Akinyemi, 2011).

According to Enaigbe (2016), the state of insecurity in Enugu State includes inadequate knowledge of peace education, poverty, crime, lack of political will by the present government to address the issue of community policing, lack of appropriate and oriented peace education curriculum, inappropriate teaching method concerning the purpose of peace education in achieving community development for all.

In Enugu State, Peace education is often delivered through poor learning method of teaching which is ineffective in developing skills required to promote peaceful co-existence for all. It does not

promote group roles and good mechanism needed to develop the required culture of peace in the learners (Falade, Adeyemi and Olowo, 2011). Oyekanmi (2011) observed that peace education for development does not constitute adding another subject but requires mind and behaviour transformation through acquisition of appropriate values, skills, knowledge and attitudes that will empower learners to seek and maintain peace in their society. This implies that the content, method of delivery and clientele of peace education should be restructured to address issues of development in communities. In Enugu State, for peace education to be responsive to community development drive, the content of peace education must reflect all the indices and ingredients of community development. Peace education content should be integrated into adult education programmes and other out of school programmes that cater for and give priority to adults and youths outside the main educational setting, who constitute critical actors in community development drive.

To achieve community development drive in Enugu State, peace education should be delivered through non-formal education setting because non-formal education is comprehensive in terms of outreach, content and clientele. For peace education to be effective in controlling crime, conflicts and violence to achieve community development drive in Enugu State, its content should embrace, human rights education, health education, political education, civic education and conflict resolution, among others. This will equip the citizens with skills for dialogue, empathy, tolerance, justice, equitable distribution of resources and open mindedness. Peace education should be learner-oriented, participatory and

allows the citizens to express their opinion freely without being criticized. Community development cannot be achieved without addressing issues of poverty, malnutrition and food scarcity. To achieve community development, peace education should sensitize and mobilize people to take actions that will address these problems. There is a need for restructuring of the curriculum and method of developing peace education that will result in achieving community development drive.

Conclusion

Peaceful co-existence is fundamental to human existence and development. The development of any community is always endangered by conflict and insecurity. Meaningful development drive cannot take place in an area replete with anarchy. In Enugu State, none of the communities can develop without peaceful co-existence of the community members working as a team. Thus, peace education is imperative in maintaining a lasting peace and also promoting co-existence among people. Youths, elders, community leaders, political and religious leaders should stop generating conflict in the name of ethnicity or religious difference, instead they should learn to be conflict preventers and managers in order to help re-establish mutual trust among diverse people to enhance development. These vital objectives imbibe in peace education should be allowed to thrive among our people in order to develop a mind of non-violence, respect for one another, solidarity, tolerance, appreciating cultural differences and total respect for human dignity. Peace education is a real integral part of every societal

activity since it is a vital instrument for changing people's mind to prevent violence. This favourable alternative resolution initiative (peace education) helps both educated and illiterate citizens to manage conflicts successfully and non-violently within and outside their community. It will enable citizen to have the opportunity to learn and grow, to increase participation in community matters and cultural understanding, value diversity and preventing prejudice by focusing on intergroup relations and create win-win situation. Peace education equips people with skills, knowledge and attitude to appreciate, protect and preserve the environment, appreciate each other's differences so as to create stable violent free society. The re-orientation that is required for community development, can only be achieved by using a comprehensive and all-encompassing teaching methods that are flexible, participatory and learner-oriented which are embedded in the principle of peace education an integral part of adult and non-formal education.

Recommendations

Government should support the inclusion and funding of peace education in the curriculum of educational system.

Peace education and conflict resolution should be made a compulsory course at all levels of our educational setting.

Peace education should be supported by community members, elders, NGOs and community based organizations since it is participatory, comprehensive and all encompassing in the society.

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