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Peace Education and Sustainable Development of Society: The 21st Century Experience

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Abstract

This paper examines the place of peace and peace education as panacea to sustainable development of the societies. It has studied the inevitability of peace and peace education in resolution of conflicts for the development of society and the nation. The sustainable development goals sixteenth and seventeenth emphasize the place of peace, security, unity and partnership in achieving sustainable development in any society. It is therefore obvious that the society, business men and women, community and political leaders should embrace peace for development of any sort. There will be no meaningful development in the atmosphere of bitterness, acrimony, rancor and conflicts of various dimensions. In the 21st century, remarkable and sustainable developments are expected by all well organized societies, organizations, families, institutions and individuals. It is therefore recommended that peace and peace education should be integrated into the scheme of things for sustainable development to prevail in the society and that every person should put behind his/her mind all forms of conflicts and embrace peace.

Keywords: Peace, peace education, development, sustainable development and conflict resolution

The world is full of conflict and violent culture. Conflict apparently becomes intrinsic of human society and the individual persons. According to Rotimi (2005), some features of violence include military coups, state sponsored violence, political assassinations, activities of ethnic militia and communal clashes. Other features of violence are war, crisis due to unemployment, crisis due to social, political and economic injustices, religious conflict, secret cult activities and domestic violence. Consequently, during and after violence are features such as instability, abject poverty, hunger, diseases, and sicknesses, sins of various degrees, fear and corruptions. These features of violence plague the world, nations and individuals. In all these, communities

and individuals need "Peace", stability and unity (Osaat, 2009). What the entire world needs most is peace which is in most cases difficult to achieve. When Jesus Christ came for the church and mankind generally, he promises peace. The concept of peace has actually been the hope of the church. The Christians seem to have been working hard to achieve peace on earth. The word peace appears 401 times in the bible to show the level and purpose of God divine plan on earth.

In 2015, the International Communities met in Rio under the United Nations (UN) to discuss development agenda beyond 2015, to set up and achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs). This August meeting was billed to discuss how to establish developmental agenda globally; to have a world that is just, equitable and inclusive, where people are committed to work together to promote sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection. This was planned to benefit all, especially the children, youth and future generations of the world without discrimination of any kind on the basis of age, sex, disability, culture, race, ethnicity, origin/migratory status, religion, economic or any other status, (GRI UN, Global Compact and WBCSD, 2015:2). The Rio discussion came up with seventeen (17) sustainable development goals, alias SDGs which are:

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well being for all at all ages
Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
Goal9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11: Make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

In goal number 16, the promotion of peace, peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development seem to serve as the summary of all the development goals. It is therefore the place of this paper to emphasize peace and sustainable development goals numbers 16 and 17 as applicable to the 21st century society.

The Concept of Peace

Peace is simply defined as the absence of war, violence, hatred and hate speech. Peace is the absent of violence or hurt while the absent of peace generate fear, tension and different degrees of conflicts and distraction in the society as well as in the individual persons. Frankly, the concept of peace is ''beyond the traditional or simple definition of peace as absent of war or physical harm" (Osaat, 2009:1). But peace is the absent of war, other forms of physical violence and the presence of internal stability including many situations that bring about positive human conditions for uninterrupted development and growth.

Many countries and societies of the world are working assiduously to enthrone peace because of the centrality of peace to human existence, development and sustainable development. The primary objective of United Nations Organization is the promotion of world peace also identified in the SDGs. Peace can be viewed or described as a relative condition or situation of eliminating conflict. To Miall in Ibaba (2005), peace is described as justice and development, respect and tolerance between people, harmony with the ecosystem, tranquility or inner peace, wholeness and making whole and the absence of war. To Ibeanu (n.d. 10), peace is "a process involving activities that are linked to increasing development and reducing conflict". Peace involves activities that direct increase in development and reduction in conflicts. It leads to stability and unity for steady and sustainable development.

Sustainable Development

Development is seen in terms of capacity of a nation to apply technology for the exploitation of the resources of nature. The development and recent new global focus on issues of environmental protection and conservation as well as the need to integrate national growth and development with human needs and rights, brought to the fore the issue of sustainable development (Omordu in Osaat, 2011). This is a good reason for adjusting national actions and activities to satisfy the welfare of the society. Again, development can be a man-centered process directed to qualitative improvement of standards of living.

The indices for the measurements of development include: Infrastructural advancement, specialized training, enhanced and relevant education, affordable cost of living, adequate employment opportunities, self-reliance in food production, improved productivity in technology, a healthy population, probity and accountability in governance and political stability (Onuoha in Ibeanu, 2008). The sustainable development goals are the goals that must be sustained to demonstrate long term development. Among these goals are the promotion of peace, justice and strong

institutions. The promotion of goal number 16 promotes or gives rise to stability and unity. The atmosphere of peace and unity strengthens the means of implementation and revitalizes the global, societal and individual partnerships for sustainable development. To build the synergy for community or society development, there must be the existence of peace and unity.

Peace and Sustainable Development in the 21st Century Society
The 21st century is a period of unprecedented occurrences, events and activities for remarkable development. It is a period of cut-throat competitions that require building synergies for corporation, for image-making and outstanding achievements. Above all, in the 21st century, we must strive to achieve sustainability of development in the works done for the last 20 centuries. The truth is that the 21st century generation is harnessing the work done from the beginning of the earth about 13.8 billion years. This is actually enormous for any single man to handle, except people come together. In fact, the work of development in communities cannot be done by any powerful man alone but can be handled if all communities and political leaders, ladies and gentlemen, youth organizations, men and women organizations and institutions come together in an atmosphere of peace, stability and unity.

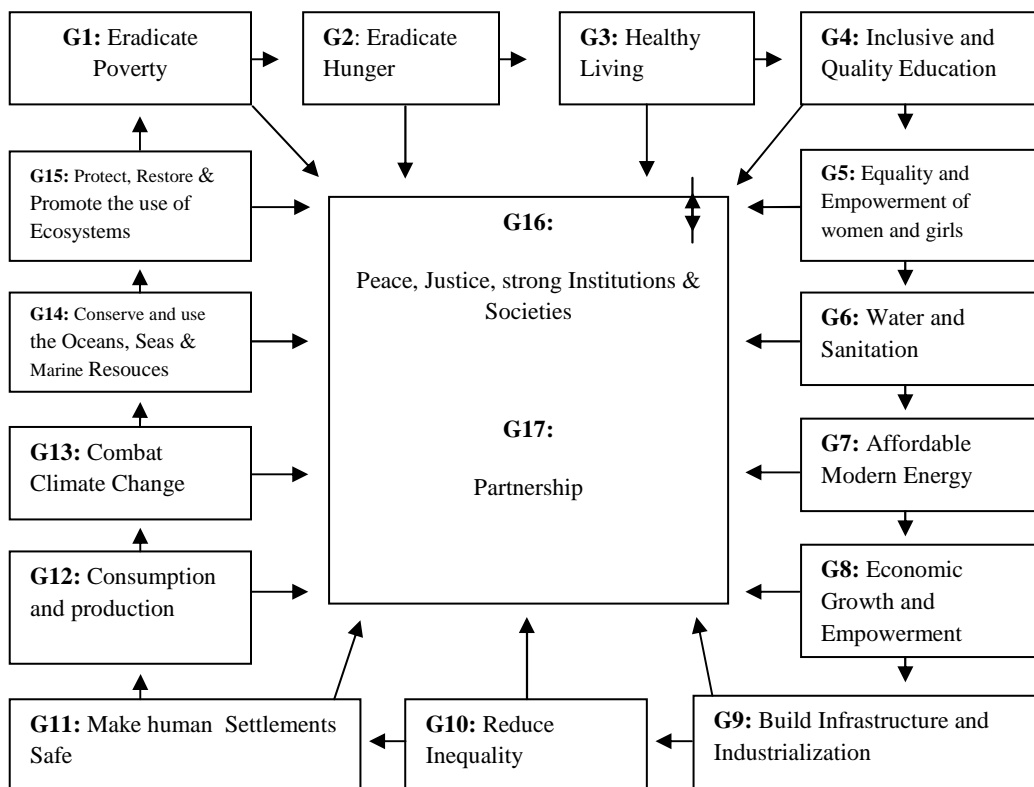Illustration of linkages of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to Peace

Figure 1: Illustration of links among Sustainable Development Goals to Peace

The illustration in figure 1 shows that the achievements of all the goals can be made possible when goals 16 and 17 are properly harnessed. The achievements will become possible through the atmosphere of peace, justice, stability and unity which will engender strong and workable partnerships. Partnerships and corporations for the purpose of development and sustainable development are made in an atmosphere of peace. The goals 16 and 17 constitute the foundation for achieving other goals.

The Peace Fulcrum for Development
Development has factors that induce conflicts, insecurity, poverty, unemployment, political instability and so on (Ibaba, 2008). Ibeanu (n.d: 12) demonstrates the development of peace thesis with peace fulcrum.
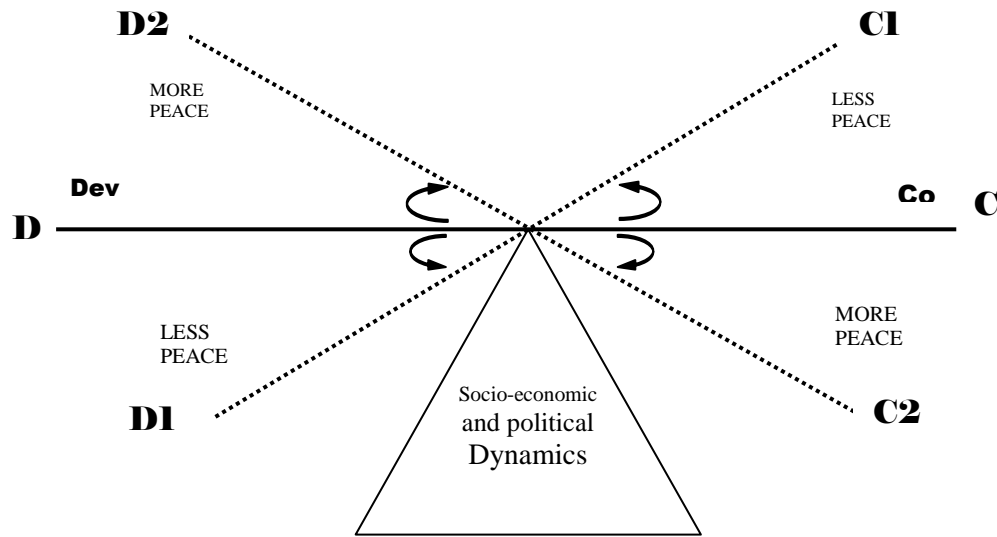
The Peace Fulcrum for Development

Figure 2: Uses Peace fulcrum to illustrate the level of Peace with Development
Source: Ibeanu in Ibaba (2008:200)(Emphasis mine)

The peace fulcrum shows that increase in conflicts from C to C1 reduces development from D to D1, while reduction in conflict from C to C2 increases development from D to D2 (Ibaba, 2008:201). In other words, less peace leads to increase in conflicts and reduction in development, while more peace leads to elimination/reduction in conflicts, and more development and sustainable development. The society through peace, achieves not only development but also sustainable development.

Types and Mechanical Application of Peace

There are three types of peace namely:
1.   Experimental peace
2.   Structural peace
3.   Positional peace

Experimental Peace: This is the presence of working conditions or stability that may or may not last as expected by the people concerned. It is experimental because the conditions on ground actually restore and maintain the peace for the meantime. Experimental peace may also mean absence of direct violence. The direct violence includes war, killing, beating, fighting, verbal and psychological abuse, terrorist's activities, kidnapping, etc. Joseph suffered direct violence in the hands of his brothers and in the prison but later released from prison to enjoy experimental peace (14 years) in the palace which later lasted for life (structural and positional peace). Experimental peace is divided into temporary and conditional peace. Temporary peace means that the absence of violence is just for a known period of time while conditional peace implies that the peace absolutely dependent on given conditions. The conditions if maintained, may help the sustenance of peace (Osaat, 2009).

Structural Peace: This is the absence of gradual eroding of human values through poverty, hunger/starvation, malnutrition, repression, uneven life chances, discrimination, etc. It can be defined as the presence of basic human values, needs including respect, honour, integrity, appropriate rewards, etc. Structural peace is the building of values in the very structure of society, institutions, churches and the individual persons. The regards and honour given to man makes him/her self-fulfilled. Good reward mechanism and relationship between individuals can bring about structural peace (Osaat, 2009). Structural peace is necessary in families, social organizations, departments/ministries, etc. Examples are the promotion of Joseph by Pharaoh of Egypt and Mordecai by King Ahasuerus in the Bible.

Positional Peace: This is the peace that has been made possible by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is justified by faith in Christ as Roman 5:1 says "therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ". This is positional aspect of peace not the experimental one. This peace is unchangeable and eternal given to mankind (the believers) on the merit of the Eternal Son of God, the Lord Jesus who was the same yesterday, is the same today and forever. Positional peace is given directly by Jesus Christ and is eternal; hence it can be called Eternal Peace (Osaat, 2009). This discussion shows and suggests that peace should be studied by all. To achieve peace in the society needs the atmosphere of peace to be created by instituting peace education as a course and as a special discipline.

The Need for Peace Education
Nigeria as a multi-ethnic nation needs peace education as a tool for conflict resolution and for peaceful co-existence.

Building the Society on Peace: The society should be built on peace by introducing Peace Education. Peace education is "the process of acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the attitudes, skills and behavours to live in harmony with oneself, with others and in the natural environment" (Okoro & Anyanwu in Osaat, 2015:33). Peace education is a series of "teaching encounters" that stimulate in people the desire for peace and non-violent alternatives for managing and resolving conflicts. In this dispensation, violence and various forms of conflicts are everywhere and peace education is the best global option for resolving global violence and other forms of crises.

Objectives of Peace Education in Nigeria: Peace Education empowers people with skills and expertise knowledge to build and maintain peace between and among people and societies. To Akinpelu in Okoro and Anyanwu (2015) peace education empowers people with skills, attitudes and knowledge to:
• build, maintain and restore relationships at all levels of human interaction;
• develop positive approaches towards dealing with conflicts;
• create safe environments;
• create safe world based on justice and human rights, and
• build a sustainable environment and protect it from exploitation and war.
According to Ogidi (2005), the objectives of peace education include to:
(a) understand the concept of peace and conflict at the personal, family, society, national and global levels;
(b) identify and provide insight to the nature and origin of violence and its consequences on both the victim and perpetrator;
(c) equip children and adults with necessary knowledge and skills needed to participate in conflict prevention, resolution, negotiation and post conflict reconstruction;
(d) prepare individuals to become peace educators and multipliers who can demonstrate a life of tolerance, create ethnic and religious harmony, and
(e) encourage the use of existing traditional frameworks to achieve peace, coexistence and the search for non-violent alternatives for resolving conflicts and building peace between individuals and groups/societies.

Types of Peace Education
Peace education is a participatory holistic approach of teaching about conflict settlement by using peaceful approaches. There are two types of peace education namely:
(a) Informal Peace Education and
(b) Formal Peace Education
Informal Peace Education: This type of peace education is being taught by leaders/elders and well experienced persons in the society. Informal peace education can take place in informal settings such as family, community/society and among individuals. The social interactions can take place at village squares, family halls, etc.

Formal Peace Education: Formal peace education is integrated into the school curriculum and taught within various school subjects. The skills, attitudes and knowledge of peace building are taught and learnt. The formal peace education can be organized in special schools/institutions and departments in well established higher educational institutions such as universities, colleges of education and polytechnics.

Strategies for Promoting or Installing Peace and Conflict Resolution
In this 21st century society, peace is highly required in order to settle all violence, war and all forms of crises. The following strategies should be applied to build a peaceful society.

A. To identify causes of the violence: The best way of handling any form of violence is to first of all, identify the remote and immediate causes of the violence. According to Osaat and Oyet (2014:217) "the causes of communal conflicts in Andoni are land disputes, struggle for chieftaincy stools and quarrels over family inheritance, unjust killing of any community members by another community". Generally, the major causes of communal conflicts can be traced to the following:

- Politically induced violence
- Uneven distribution of government amenities
- Traditional/ cultural ideological differences
- History of hostility between communities
- Land disputes
- Struggle for chieftaincy stools and rights
- Struggle for right over family inheritance
- Unjust killing or infringement on people's rights
- Hate speeches

The consequences of these conflicts are enormous and they include loss of lives, property and huge economic loss. In addition, there the adverse effects and dangers of internal and external displacement of persons. Whenever these causes are identified, the following approaches can be applied to address the conflicts.

B. Formation of Youth, Community/National Peace Movement: The spirit of peace initiatives should be gradually built into the youths through some regular activities. The family or the society can do this through the leaders' informal peace education or use formal peace training. Activities such as football and debates should be organized for youths.

C. Establishment of Peace Schools/ Institutions: This type of institution, specially designed for peace should offer programmes such as workshops, seminars, symposia and conferences for youth leaders, political or community leaders. These schools should admit qualified persons into OND, HND or degree programmes. These institutions should equally organize public lecture on peace and social activities for positive interactions between communities.

D. Conflict Resolution for Peace: Conflict, according to David in Okoro and Anyanwu (2015) is the pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by different groups. The management of conflict or application of peaceful non-violent method has been in existence for a long period of time for the resolution of conflicts. Most of the African

societies, especially Nigeria has preference for the peaceful settlement of disputes along the lives and values of the community.

E. Conflict Management: This applies to the long term management of intractable conflicts. The peaceful approach involves the process of reducing negative and destructive capacity of conflict through using a number of measures and promoting measures that build positive capacity to maximize peace. In this case, conflicts are minimized while peaceful activities are maximized by keeping watch over the activities of the youths.

F. Collaboration through Peace: This approach involves working with each other to find solution that is to an extent satisfactory to both parties.

G. Accommodation/ Yielding Approach: This is one of the most peaceful approaches of conflict resolution. The approach gives rise to a conscious attempt to neglect one's needs and focus on satisfying those of other party especially opponent.

H. Conciliation or Compromising: This involves taking a good/mutually acceptable ground which to an extent, satisfies both parties. This is a process of an interaction that permits give-and-take. In this case, the both parties may be so incompatible that may make reconciliation difficult without one party shifting ground or loosing something in the process of settlement.

I. Problem-Solving Peace Approach: This requires both parties listening to each other with the intention of gaining understanding of major facts in the conflict or and to deal with the issues through a better level of understanding.

J. Avoidance of Conflict: Here, conflict is avoided when one of the parties has no interest in dealing with the other party. The party avoiding may even deny the existence of such problem/issue. However, the avoider may be using the principle of "wait and see", only to revisit the case at a better opportunity. The worst relationship may result, so a peace approach may be used for final resolution by caution to avoid conflicting issues and keeping the parties involved apart.

K. Conflict Transformation: The people perceptions and attitudes are transformed through a better understanding of the issues for the building of better relationships. The parties end up beyond conflict resolution to building long lasting relationships.

L. Others Include:

(i). Competitive Approach: In this approach, peace is not applied at all. The parties involve lack understanding, so they continue until one fails or gains. This approach is characterized by violence and creates a lose/gain outcome or gain/gain outcome. This leads to difficulty in resolving a conflict.

(ii). Domination Approach: Here, conflict is resolved when one dominates the scene. Domination approach gives rise to selfish attitude with one party dominating with little or no interest of the other party/person. The primary motive in domination is the desire to win and make the other lose.

(iii). Conflict Suppression Approach: This approach demands an unwilling more powerful party/parties or stronger interveners to take decisive measures leading to the resolution of the conflict. In this approach the use of power/force is applied to impose solution that is often unsustainable/ unsatisfactory to the other party.

Conclusion
The society and political leaders should embrace peace first before planning for development of any sort. There will be no meaningful development in the atmosphere of bitterness, acrimony, rancour and conflicts of various dimensions. In the 21st century, remarkable and sustainable developments are expected by all well organized societies, organizations, institutions, families and individuals.

Recommendations
It is therefore recommended that people should accept peace and sustainable development to prevail in the various societies.
1. That people should put behind them all forms of conflicts and embrace peace.
2. In the event of unavoidable conflicts a means of peaceful resolution should be sought for and applied.
3. That peace movements and institutions be connected or consulted for a peaceful resolution of any form of conflict.
4. That Government should always be very proactive when it comes to the issues of violence and conflicts in order to avoid bitter consequences.

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