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## PROMOTING PEACE EDUCATION THROUGH THE ADULT IN THE COMMUNITY

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### ABSTRACT

This paper is an exposition of the subject "Promoting Peace Education through the Adult in the Community". In it the characteristics of Peace have been analyzed both from the definitional point of view and from the literature. Two keys words which revolve around peace, namely, peaceful and peaceable, have been analyzed and one may understand that it is not just enough for one to be peaceful but more importantly peaceable which connotes activity: one has to be a peacemaker. Looking at the various manifestations of lack of peace it has been indicated that these may be perceived from the cultural, ethnic, racial, political or religious problems which often results in conflicts, violence and wars. Other social problems have also resulted from lack of peace, including environmental problems and crime. The Adult in the Community is therefore, seen as the focus in any meaningful conflict resolution and therefore, in peace education in the community with the Adult in the family as a focal point. This has implications for the adult educators whose beliefs in the progressive perfectibility of the human nature and human condition should spur him to educate adults in peaceful and peaceable directions.

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## INTRODUCTION

Peace has eluded mankind throughout history. Ancient history is full of wars but punctuated with periods of peace negotiated on terms proffered by the conquistador. Families have lacked the peace necessary for children born into them to thrive. Communities have also lacked peace, as inter-community ramblings have marred development efforts and created animosity which has hindered progress. Where nation states have succeeded their progress has always been bedeviled by chaotic situations which have resulted in social disorganization and marred development. Inter-tribal wars, community clashes, land disputes and personal loss of peace, all echo the need for peace education. To Kobani and Nwakaire (2016) it is also important to note that, in order to sustain peace in a particular African Community, relevant adult education activities must be carried out in such endemic conflict zones. Those activities could be aimed at job creation or equipping the irate youth with self-employment skills to enable them fit into their world. According to Adepoju in Kobani and Nwakaire (2016) a hostile environment will result in low productivity, inefficiency, under-utilization and hostility. He also opined that where there are suspicions, aggressions, insecurity and restrictions arise. Such environment is also characterized by tension and apprehension. According to Amirize and Kobani (2020) the International Community fully realizes the supreme importance of the virtue of peace against the evils of war and

conflict. Thus, the nations of the world under the aegis of the United Nations Charter: International Peace and Security clearly stated their determination to pursue peace in all nations of the world and have already made commitments in various ways to save succeeding generations from the scourge of wars and conflicts. Where these entire variables exist, productivity tends to be low or even eliminated. He therefore, stressed the need to minimize the rate at which conflict and aggressive behaviour occurs. This discussion starts by highlighting the characteristics of Peace.

**Characteristics of Peace:** Peace has been defined from various perspectives. For example, the Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary defines peace as (1) a situation or a period of time in which there is no war or violence in a country or an area (2) the state of being calm or quiet and (3) the state of living in friendships with somebody without arguing. The International Bible Student's Association (1988) sees peace from the basic meaning conveyed by the dictionary. Referring to the Hebrew word Shalom, it says that peace refers to the state of being free from war or disturbance International Bible Students' Association. That Shalom can convey the idea of health, safety, soundness, welfare, friendship and entirety or completeness. Another root word for peace, the Greek term "eirene" has taken on the same broad connotation as the Hebrew word Shalom. The Association shows the Greek word as expressing the ideas of well-being, salvation and concord, in addition to the absence of conflict. It occurs in the farewell exclamation "go in peace", which somewhat corresponds to

the expression may it go well with you. Drawing from several scriptural conclusions the Insight indicates that peace may be interpreted from many contexts. For example, the book states that to be sent away in peace could signify being sent away amicably, with no fear in interference from the one granting permission to leave. To return in peace as from of battle, meant returning unharmed or victoriously. Asking concerning the peace of a person meant inquiring as how he was getting along. Working for the peace of someone denoted working for that one's welfare. For a person to die in peace could mean his dying a tranquil death after having enjoyed a full life or the realization of a cherished hope. From the scriptures too, the righteous one is depicted as entering into peace at death, thereby escaping calamity.

Peace has also been looked at from the cultural perspective too. Menu Tayi IDWA (2004: 8) refers to peace as a "magic name" calling it only the word for the sustenance and unity world-wide. Referring to the Ogu word "JI JOHO" he states that JI JOHO "unhesitatingly, unquestionably, unequivocally, stands for peace, perfect peace". He also, opines that the Ogu word JI JOHO (PEACE) goes beyond the literal meaning of peace. In his opinion, philosophically, it means prosperity, enduring, happiness, genuine understanding, togetherness, loyalty and also synonymous with love, happiness and purposeful and the phenomenal development.

Looking at peace from a cultural point of view, Ekwueme (2004), quoting UNESCO, says that a culture of peace,

Is all about the values, attitudes and forms of behaviour that reflect respect for life, for human beings and their dignity and for all human rights, the rejection of violence in all its forms and commitment to the principles of freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance and understanding between peoples, groups and individuals.

Peace may also be looked at from active and passive perspectives. In an active sense, it may be seen in peaceable activities, but in a passive sense it becomes restful and thereby, assumes the role of being peaceful. The Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary sees that attributes of being peaceable as not involving or causing argument, or violence, not liking to argue. But concerning the peaceful attribute the dictionary states that being peaceful connotes not involving a war, violence or argument, quiet and calm, not worried, trying to create peace or live in peace. The Watchtower (2001) sees peace as a state of tranquility or quiet indicating that it would cover a wide-range of situations in which there is an absence of strife. Even a dead person is said to be at peace. When it is in this state of inactivity, then it is a state of being peaceful. The expression peaceable, on the other hand, is seen to mean, peacemakers". The Watchtower therefore, shows that the Greek word for peaceable literally means: "peacemakers" and implies actively promoting peace, sometimes making peace where it was previously lacking. Therefore, a peaceful person is expected to be more active by being peaceable. It becomes necessary to find out what one may point to as the manifestations of lack of peace.

**Manifestation of Lack Peace:** There are several manifestations of lack of peace which plague humanity. Ekwueme (2004) has indicated that the world today is engrossed with burden of propagating a culture of peace among and within nations. But the attainment of peace is more or less, the dream of individuals, peoples, and nations, which appears impossible to achieve. The reason, she opines, is because there is hardly any nation in the world today that is free from cultural, ethnic, racial, political, or religious problems, which often lead to war. The problem of conflicts, violence, and wars and their devastating effects on innocent citizens have been the concern of many nations for a long time.

Owhotu (2001: 18 states that:

Mankind is at no other time in its history more equipped and disposed to self-destruct; unfortunately, it is the third world or

developing/poor nations that constitute the theatres of war, devastations and misery. In fact, it is generally held, that the 20<sup>th</sup> century, for both advanced and developing countries, has proved to be the most disastrous. First, for the former during the world wars of 1914 and 1945, then for the latter in Vietnam, Middle East, Algeria, Cambodia, Biafra, Rwanda, Congo and Sierra Leone, etc.

The situation of chaos may best be captured by using Nigeria as an instance. Prior to our independence in 1960, the scramble for regional power became intensified and the concept of ethnicity began to come to the fore to the extent that antipathies developed among the ethnic groups. Ekwueme (2004) regrets that since independence, ethnicity became irrepressible and thrived even deeper under the military regimes. It escalates that spread to all sectors of government, government agencies, parastatals and other major institutions. The enormity of ethnic strife and restlessness culminated in the civil war between 1967-1970 and is still shaking the foundation of our fragile nation. Osanyin (2001: 132) observes:

Mutual distrust breeds discontent. It is as if Nigeria herself is sitting on gunpowder with our communal existence ticking away like a time bomb. Fears of lording it over the rest of the country, fears of the revolt of the weaker majority against the stronger minority, fears of the rebellion of the cheated ethnic minorities, fears of social injustice, fears of misplaced faith in Nigeria, the Nigeria, that lets the vast majority down, these and many other fears do render Nigeria prostrate.

Ekwueme (2004) lists other manifestations of lack of peace. She indicated that in Nigeria the period between 1990 and 1991 witnessed animosity among various ethnic groups. For example, the animosity between Tiv and Jukun in Benue State over local elections which resulted in over, 5000 deaths. There have been the Kaduna religious riots, Ife-Modakeke riots, Aguleri-Umleri riots, Nassarawa Tiv clashes, Hausa-Igbo clashes, and Hausa-Yoruba clashes. Other ethnic clashes include: Ijaw-Urhobo, Sharia States versus Christians, and the Bauchi crises, youth violence and war. The following militia and youth organizations, known as Arewa People Congress (APC) in the North, Bakassi Boys in the south East, EGBESU Boys in the South South zone, movement for the Actualization of the sovereign state of Biafra (MASSOB) in the south eastern zone and the Oodua people congress (OPC) in the south western zone, etc, were formed to protect their respective ethnic groups.

The International Bible Students' Association (1986) cited other manifestations of lack of peace by quoting other authorities. Quoting a Canadian report the Association stated that there is no such thing as a winnable nuclear war because its aftermath would be so appealing that the survivors would envy the dead. The Association stated that there are now more than 50,000 nuclear weapons enough to obliterate a million Hiroshima's. There is little question that our global civilizations would be destroy?.

Other areas which the Association highlighted as indicators of lack of peace included pollution of land, air and water. Others included are population explosion with its associated hunger, diseases and unrest. It also stated that today's international situation is characterized by a profound crisis pervading almost all spheres of human activity, economic and social, political and military, spiritual and moral. Violence is on the increase and the use of force as an instrument of policy and diplomacy has become widespread. The balance between peace and war is becoming ever more precarious. Regrettably, the Association indicated that historically, there have been only a few scattered years when this earth was totally free from war. In this 20<sup>th</sup> century alone, about 100 million people have been killed in war. Neither yesterday's League of Nations nor today's United Nations has been able to stop this slaughter.

Other manifestations of lack of peace include what the International Bible Students Association calls the population bomb with its

attendant problems manifested in diverse forms and attested to by many authorities as quoted by the association (1986: 14):

The New York Times comments: "it is possible that large portions of the earth will be turned into desert by the pressures of unmanageable populations and poverty as by a nuclear holocaust". Time magazine said, "The hunger problems today is vastly different from that of the past... now there is so little food in so many parts of the world, year after year, that fully 25% of the globe's population is hungry or under nourished. At least one person in five is trapped in absolute poverty, a state of destitution so complete that it is a silent genocide. A Toronto star headline declared: pollution puts earth in danger and said planet earth is under a deadly assault. And the aggressor is man. Scientists considered the degradation of the environment every bit as serious as the threats of nuclear war. Discover magazine says: "Hazardous chemicals and metals seeping into the earth threaten the nations buried reserves of water. Some hydrologists fear that it may already be too late to save a quarter of them". Rising crime is not limited to just a few nations. It is everywhere. Headlines from around the world indicate crime increase. Brazil: soaring crime rate, "Canada: "female crime rate soaring' England: "ever-rising child crime," India' "Organized crime a Growth Industry", Soviet Union: Soviet Alarm at increasing crime".

All these manifestations of lack of peace challenge the intellect and call for peace education. The situation is not better for Nigeria anyway as already highlighted by Ekwueme (2004). Perhaps it may be necessary to include rising incidence of land disputes among communities as manifestations of lack of peace. In a particular land located at Onuiyi link Road Nsukka these two sign posts may be read by any passerby.

**Public Notice:** The public is hereby warned to note that the piece and parcel of land situate at Onuiyi Nsukka and Demarcated by licensed surveyor's Beacon NOs. ES 1302, ES 1310-12 is the Bonafide property of Mrs. Cinderella A. Ofano and their children of No.4 Nyui close Uwari Enugu. Anybody who trespasses on the said land or tries to deface the said property in anyway whatsoever does so at his or her own risk (SAN) Mariogha D.D. N/Marlanliarry Street New Heaven, Enugu.

Below is a counter notice

Notice

This land belongs to Nwoke family Number 22b, Onuiyi road, Nsukka. The land case is in high court of appeal. Trespassers are warned to keep off.

**The Adult and His Potentialities for Peace:** This is not the forum to go into the rubrics of who the adult is but it is necessary to use two parameters for drawing our conclusion on the matter and thereafter go into the crucial role of the adult in peace education in the community. Okedara (1981) sees the adult from legal age perspective of 21 years now lowered to 18 years in many countries, including Nigeria and from the prevailing circumstance of particular culture. However, this, according to Kobani and Alozie (2016) maybe an inaccurate determinant for defining the term as there are other determinants which should be present in an individual before he or she could qualify to be regarded as an adult because even when a certain age has been chosen, the mental and physical development of persons are not the same. Sometimes, a highly precocious person of about 12 years old may act above his age and by his actions qualify to be an adult while his older counterpart of 18 to 21 years, may still act like a 10 year old. Arising from these definitional perspectives our form on the adult in peace education stems from the philosophical assumptions behind the practice of Adult Education as expounded the literature. Akinpelu (1981) sees one of the assumptions as tied the belief by the adult educators in the "progressive perfectibility human nature and human condition". In which case, one who engaged in the

act of peace education does not need to be passive. According to Akinpelu the adult educators must believe in progress as in the possibility of man winning this battle against all odds, and the main weapon for the battle is more education, which aims not just increasing his material civilization but also at combating the ill-effects his technological advancement and at humanizing his civilization generally.

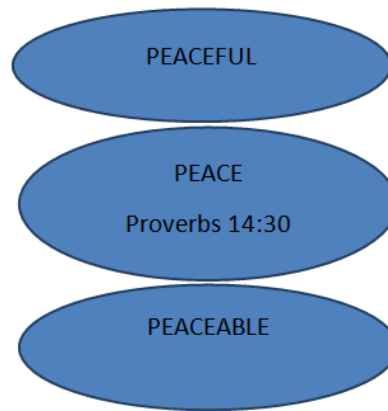
In recent times, emphases appear, to have been shifted to God and Jesus, religiously speaking. This presupposes a consistent recall to the fact that paying mere lip-service to piety is in itself impiety and irreverence of the highest order. So the stepping stone to peace education has been seen as primarily that of seeking reconciliation with the God of peace and author of all man stands for and benefits from in all ramifications. Such realization is the only way to add quiddity to any meaningful peace education. Thus, the International Bible Students Association (1991) indicated that the most important thing is peaceful relations with Jehovah, without which any other peace is at best, only temporary and limited. Other preconditions for peace are imbedded in the state of one's mind (the adult in perspective), of the needs to realize that a calm heart promotes health and longevity. The Bible states in the Book of Proverbs that "A Calm heart is the life of the fleshly organisms but jealously is rottenness to the bones". This has been acknowledged by Psychologists who now speak of mastery of oneself which will prevent one from acting irrationally and therefore, it becomes necessary under the present circumstances to proffer a curriculum for peace education in the community.

**Curriculum for Peace Education in the Community:** No meaningful progression can take place in an atmosphere replete with anarchy. No development can take place without peace. Infact, the first point of call in our quest for peace is our relationship with the author of peace the almighty Jehovah himself. The effort to conciliate with him will engender a peaceful atmosphere in the family, the communities, the local government Area, in the state and the nation large. Concerning the family and its importance in peace education, the International Bible Students Association (1978) observed, quoting the world book Encyclopedia:

Family is the oldest human Institution. In many ways it is the most important. It is society's most basic unit. Entire civilizations have survived or disappeared, depending on whether family life was strong or weak".

Underscoring the importance of family in peace education in the community, the Association, (1978) quoting historian Will Durant in part of the story of civilization stated that the essential cause of Roman conquest of Greece was the disintegration of Greek civilization from within. At the same time the strength of Rome was the family, but when the family arrangement broke down because of sexual immorality, the empire went into decline. So it may be accepted that the family, the adult in the family is an essential tool for conflict resolution and peace education for, it is first in the family that the embers of anarchy are fanned and start to glow. To Kobani (2021) women, in their roles as mothers and wives are known to be endowed with the quality of inner sensing or empathy which is necessary as stabilising and motivating elements in human well-being. This quality of empathy in women is meant to serve as a taming and stabilising force in human settings. Uzoaku (2004: 143) gave some principles for peace education in a conflict situation stating:

1. Do not fan the flames of tension. This is the time to stop acrimony and recriminations.
2. Allow some distance. This is not the time for what authors call the "in your face interactions".
3. Keep dancing with the date you took to the dance.
4. Be diplomatic in your use of language.
5. Adopt the language of industrial relations.
6. Have a good understanding of language of legalities.
7. Avoid tendentious language that portrays master-servant relationship as this inflames passion on the other side.



**Curriculum for Adult Peace Education in the Community**

OBJECTIVES	CONTENT	ACTIVITIES/ STRATEGIES	EVALUATION STRATEGIES	INSTRUCTIONAL MATREIALS
1) To help adults understand why peace may elude people	Situations indicating lack of peace	1) Discussion led by adult educators. 2) brainstorming	Rubrics to be determined by class	Pictures which depict conflict situations.
2) To help adults understand the various causes of lack of peace	-conflicts within the home -community conflict - wars	- Discussion led by adult educators - Talks - Drama - Discussions	To be determined by adult educators	Pictures which show wife beating, war’s effects.
3) To teach adults the need to avoid conflict	Effects of family conflict Effects of land disputes Effects of war	- Talks - Brainstorming - Debates	To be determined by adult educators	Videos, Films, Pictures.

Uzoaku went ahead to quote Coventry who indicated that in resolving conflicts one has to remember that negotiation is about ongoing relationship. To preserve the relationship, one needs to be ethical in current negotiation situation. This presupposes that one has to know those things one may say the best way to put across ones message. Once when this writer was called upon to teach students the value of peace he developed the subject under two main sub-headings. This is replicated above. Drawing from all that has been stated one may try to proffer the following as a curriculum for peace education for the adult in the community.

**Implications for Adult Education:** This curriculum above lays emphases on the role of the adult educator as a facilitator in peace advocacy. It must be acknowledged that there can be no meaningful development without peace. But the adult educator who is engaged in the art of peace education, must of necessity, be an advocate of peace, a self- actualized individual perceived as a man or woman of God in all ramifications. That means that the bickering, which engender conflict situations both in communities and elsewhere must not be seen among the adult educators - nor in their departments. As peace advocates, belief in what Akinpelu (1981) sees as one of the philosophical assumptions behind adult education practice, that is, the belief in the “progressive perfectibility of the human nature and human condition”, should prove to be a goal toward which the educators must strive. Though attainable through only an act of God, the adult educators must never lose sight of this philosophical assumption behind the practice of adult education. Expression such as “for God’s sake” may prove to be his/her watchword. The curriculum which has been proffered above may be developed for possible use in the practice of peace education.

**CONCLUSION**

This paper has looked at the subject “Promoting Peace Education through the Adult in the Community”. In it, the characteristics of peace have been analyzed both from definitional points of view and from the literature. Manifestations of lack of peace have also been expounded, including conflicts in all their ramifications, global wars, ethnic conflicts, poverty, misery, crime, violence, political problems

and other aspects of animosity, including environmental problems. That the adult has the potentialities for promoting peace has also been explicated. Also, the religious fervor which appears to be the order of the day, manifest in all emphases of God and Christ, has been analyzed with the possibility that if some seriousness could be attached to such piety, then peace may be attainable, especially, given the premise that people’s desire is to be reconciled with God. That development predicated on peace education can be fostered have been highlighted starting from the family unit, a micro-unit of the largest world community and especially through women in their roles as mothers and wives, to global peace which the United Nations has advocated but dismally failed to achieve. But an attempt has been made to provide a curriculum for adult peace education predicated on participatory learning strategy. It is hoped that, though ultimate success in achieving peace lies with the Creator of man, yet it is possible for man to contribute his little quota through adult peace education.

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