

PEACE EDUCATION- A PANACEA FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

To ensure that quality assurance is achieved in higher education goes beyond the provision of human and material resources. This is because the environment in which higher institutions of learning are operating are characterised by various intensities of conflicts. This development has made the achievement of quality and quality assurance in higher education a mere official-dream in Africa. Based on this, peace education is advocated as a means through which these challenges can be surmounted. Peace education is holistic in nature and it possesses the capacity to positively influence the physical and spiritual lives of people for the cultivation of peaceful behaviour in a society. Peace education is anchored on the philosophy that teaches non-violence, equity, trust, compassion, cooperation, justice, love and respect for people. It is a social practice that reorients and modifies unacceptable behaviour through the impartation of skills, knowledge and attitudes needed for effective empowerment of people for constructive social change. The operations of peace education in tertiary institutions will foster a serene climate where institutional administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff including students will compatibly work together to achieve set goals. Therefore, the effective propagation of peace education programmes in higher institutions of learning will aid in achieving quality and its sustenance in Africa. To achieve the objective of the study, the following thematic areas were explored: goals of higher education and quality assurance issue; nature, causes and effects of conflict in higher education; peace education and its potency to transform higher education and peace education and quality assurance in higher education in Africa.

Keywords: Conflict, Higher Education, Peace, Peace education, Quality Assurance

INTRODUCTION

The dilemma confronting higher education in Africa is often explained within the ambit of human and material nexus, while the environment in which these factors are operating are often ignored. The pervasiveness of conflicts in school climate as well as those emanating from external environment are factors that are partly but largely responsible for the inability of higher education in Africa to advance and apply knowledge “which has become the most important factor for economic development in the 21st century” (Saint, Hartnett and Strasser, 2003). Conflicts of various intensities are often witnessed in tertiary institutions in Africa. The scenario has explanation in the recurring conflict incidence in a country, deleterious nature of the long period of military rule in most African states and conflict dynamic in individual campuses. Studies have shown that the historical development of the post colonial African states is smeared with the record of violent conflicts (Birgit-Utne, 2001; Alimba, 2004; and Williams, 2005). The crisis is “on all forms: economic, social, environmental, political and religious; and there is hardly any sub region that is not suffering from the aftermath of social instability, economic crisis, war or conflict (Mohamedbhai, 2003). Education in general and higher education in particular manifest a fair share of the consequences of the crisis because it is linked with developments in the society. Schonfeld and Newgass (2003) stressed that episodes of violence at our schools remind us that schools are an integral part of their communities and therefore are vulnerable to the influences and factors that are present in the larger communities. This is an indicator that the “current crisis in higher education in Africa is part and parcel of a larger education sector crisis, which is in itself a subset of an overall

societal crisis (Obanya, 2004). The share of higher education in societal crisis is much greater than those manifesting at the other levels of education. This is because of the make-up of the system; its link with other sectors and the society in general.

Apart from this, the long period of military interregnum experienced in most African states contributed greatly to the anomalies inhabiting higher institutions of learning in Africa. It culminated in the “use of military-style teaching methods” (Finley, 2003) and gun-control method of interaction. Otite (1995) rightly posited that gun-based and gun-controlled styles of social relationships have become part of the Nigerian society (and Africa in general). This ugly development manifested in tertiary institutions by way of arrogant display of military behaviours, resulting in unwarranted drive for weapons and its abnormal usage. The level of intimidation, fear, crime, maiming and insecurity that characterized African tertiary institutions made Agekameh (2001) to call them “theatres of war” and stated further that the orgy of violence often witnessed on university campuses and other higher institutions is due to the way students freely brandish pistols or revolvers and use them to unleash terror on fellow students. Equally, Alimba and Awodoyin (2008) posited that the abnormal use of small arms in schools brings about the problems of insecurity, fear, and tension which deprive the system of the opportunity of being effectively and efficiently managed, to optimally contribute to the developmental prospect of the continent. These events are bound to limit the delivery capabilities of higher institutions of learning in any continent.

The conflict dynamics in tertiary institutions in Africa, with its negative outcomes such as dissension, anger, hostility, mistrust, opposition and animosity, have contributed in large measures to the problems of attaining quality and quality assurance in the system. Higher institutions of learning are facing various forms of conflicts which manifest dysfunctionally on the students, staff, the system, and the society in general. Imhabekhai (2001) indicated that these conflicts and consequent disruptions of activities in institutions of higher learning have negative effects on the quality of the products of the system. It is imperative to note that conflict causative phenomena in higher education can be classified into internal and external sources. The magnitudes of poorly perceived and mismanaged conflicts existing in tertiary institutions of learning have generally deprive the systems of the opportunity of being effectively and efficiently managed to guarantee quality assurance, which is essential for knowledge creation in Africa. Based on this, peace education is proposed because it is holistic in nature and it possesses the capacity to empower people for peace and harmonious living in a society. To reduce the phenomenal impact of internal and external conflict dynamics in higher education, demands a peace building approach. Peace building is an art of repairing relationships, institutions and social facilities and putting in place schemes that can help the disputing communities to be united once again (Albert, 2001). Peace education has the propensity to function as a peace building strategy in a place. The core aim of peace education is all about building peace by empowering people to be peace inclined. Brahm (2006) surmised that peace education is relevant for a range of conflict stages from latent hostility to the height of violent conflict to peace building efforts. Therefore, when implemented in a system or country, it can function as a framework for peace building.

The militaristic stereotypes, sentiments and behavioural tendencies which exist in tertiary institutions as a result of the long period of military in politics in most African states can be corrected by peace education. This is because peace education radiates values that are capable of bringing about behavioural changes in people. The propagation of peace education in all facets of higher education will create room for the promotion of trust, honesty, justice, equity, self-respect, compassion, cooperation, and respect for people which are essential ingredients in organizational development. The existence of these values will aid in curbing corruption, embezzlement of funds, hatred, crimes, marginalization, injustice, greediness, and bad governance which are poignantly responsible for the crises in higher education in Africa. Based on this preliminary information, this study revolves round the underscored thematic areas:

- goals of higher education and quality assurance issue
- nature, causes and effects of conflict in higher education
- peace education and its potency to transform higher education in Africa
- peace education and quality assurance in higher education in Africa

GOALS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE ISSUE

The importance of higher education cannot be overemphasized. It is linked to national development (Fabunmi, 2007) because of its “potential for the construction of a knowledge economy and society in all nations”(World Bank, 1999). Overtime, there has been a policy shift in higher education in Africa to make it more responsive and efficient in knowledge creation and propagation. Babalola (2008) submitted that the policies on higher education in most African countries have once again started focusing on higher education especially university education because of its unique mandate in the area of knowledge creation. The core activities which tertiary institutions should fulfil to create knowledge, preserve it and propagate it for public consumption are “teaching, research, dissemination of existing and new information, pursuit of service to the community and a storehouse of knowledge”(Fabunmi, 2005). These activities are essential for achieving the goals of higher education in Africa, which are:

- developing and inculcating proper values for the survival of the individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
- developing the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
- developing physical and intellectual skills of individuals;
- promoting and encouraging scholarship and community service;
- promoting national and international understanding and interaction; and
- promoting national development through relevant high level manpower training (Osokoya, 2004).

Therefore, central to the achievement of these goals are the need for the provision of resources, creation of enabling environment and existence of good governance in tertiary institutions in Africa. Quality assurance in higher education cannot be achieved if the aforementioned areas of need are not adequately attended to. To fully comprehend quality assurance, it is essential to start with the understanding of what quality is all about. The issue of quality assurance can be fully comprehended when approached from the perspective of first interpreting it. Quality is a popular concept to both producers and consumers. It is a concept that is more popularly used in the business sector before now. Defining it has become elusive because its usage has gone beyond the bounds of business. The contradictions surrounding the definition of quality made Pirsig(1974) to lament that “ what the hell is quality”. Quality is derived from a Latin word “quails” which means “what kind of”. One can deduce from the Latin connotation that quality is a distinguishable fact that characterises something for its accurate measurement and consequent capability. Griffin (1990) indicated that the American Society for Quality Control has accepted and defined quality as the totality of the features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. Webster’s Seventh Collegiate Dictionary defined quality as a peculiar and essential character of an inherent feature; a degree of excellence; a distinguishing attribute. Cole (1996) posited that quality is something everyone considers good and wants to have, that is, quality has to do with whether something is good or bad; it is about the standard of something when compared with other things. Quality connoting different things to different people can be approached from the following perspective; quality:

- in terms of exceptional (exceeding high standards and passing a required standard);
- in terms of consistency (exhibited through “zero defects” and “getting right the first time”, making quality a culture);
- as fitness for purpose (meaning the product or service meets the stated purpose, customer specifications and satisfaction);
- as value for money(through efficiency and effectiveness); and
- as transformative (in term of qualitative change) (Green and Harvey, 1993)

The above perspectives revealed that quality is ambiguous. However, it is a social construct that symbolises the ability of something to fulfil stated criteria and meet implied needs. The description of quality revolves round the following elements: quality as absolute, quality as a process, quality as culture and quality as relative. Quality, as absolute, means that quality is an indication of the highest possible standard. Quality as a process entails that quality passes through series of stages before it can be attained. Quality as culture implies the consistency in retaining a high standard by an organization in the production process. Finally, quality as relative indicates that quality is set against certain specifications

or criteria. Therefore, for something to be adjudged as qualitative, it should be guided by certain criteria which meet prescribed standards and consequently the needs of the people. Having described quality, Woodhouse (1999) posited that quality assurance is policies, attitudes, actions, and procedures necessary to ensure that quality is being maintained and enhanced. The Commonwealth of Learning (1999) defined quality assurance as an approach to organizing work that sets in place systems to check that everything is working according to plan. Quality assurance is a satisfactory state whereby confidence is reposed on certain product or service for maintaining specified standards and satisfying the needs of people. There are three basic steps in quality assurance process: a specification of what is to be done; documenting of instruction on how it is to be done and evaluating how it has been done (Durosaro and Akinsolu, 2007). The worldwide parameters in which quality assurance is measured are:

- self evaluation;
- peer review by a panel of experts, usually including at least some external panel members and one or more site visits;
- analysis of statistical information and/or use of performance indicators or the best practices of bench marking;
- surveys of students, graduates, employers, professional bodies and
- testing the knowledge, skills and competencies of students (Harman,1998).

Quality assurance is an ongoing and continuous process through which quality in education is achieved and sustained. Quality assurance can generally be classified into internal and external. Internal quality assurance can also be referred to as institutional quality assurance. It is an academic community's recognition and acceptance of the need to set and attain defined levels of performance and scholastic achievement within the context of a university's vision and mission (Omoriege, 2005). Internal quality assurance is made up of policies and regulations set out in an organization to ensure that its aims are achieved according to the required standards and also to maintain it. External quality assurance refers to several quality related assessments provided by different bodies or individuals outside higher education (Parri, 2006). The whole essence of quality assurance is to ensure that specified policies are adhered to so as to achieve set standards and equally maintain them in order to consistently meet the needs of people. Quality assurance is based on three main elements, namely: "control, accountability and improvement" (Harvey, 1999). These elements are measures that will ensure that the expected possible standards are attained and also maintained. In fact, how the standards can be enhanced is also an important issue that falls within the boundary of quality assurance. Quality assurance in higher education is a process by which an institution is evaluated at least in part by an external body for a level of quality in its educational offering (Lenn, 1992). Also, quality assurance in higher education is the activity that aims at maintaining and raising quality (Wahlen, 1998). These descriptions are indications that quality assurance in higher education is to ensure that a qualitative higher education is provided for consumers and the subsequent sustenance of such. Lomas (2002) stressed that the aim of quality assurance in higher education is to guarantee the improvement of standards and quality in higher education in order to make higher education meet the needs of students, employers and financiers. For tertiary institutions in Africa to be fit for the purpose for which they are established, there is need for absolute adherence to the practices of internal and external quality assurance measures, which are centered on: benchmark, peer review, evaluation, monitoring, supervision, external moderation, visitation, accreditation etc. The quality of higher education depend largely on how these parameters are observed and implemented without sentiments and biases to achieve set goals.

NATURE, CAUSES, AND EFFECTS OF CONFLICT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Conflict is an ever present phenomenon in social institutions. Where two or more are gathered conflict is inevitable. The inevitability of conflict in social organizations has given rise to varieties of its definition. However, the existing definitions follow a thought pattern that clearly depicts conflict as: a state of incompatibility, a behaviour, an opposition, an interaction of interdependent parties, a bad omen and a positive or constructive outcome. As a state of incompatibility, Wilmot and Hocker (2011) averred that conflict is a felt struggle between two or more independent individuals over perceived incompatible differences in beliefs, values, and goals or differences in desires for esteem, control and connectedness. Lebedun (1998) asserted that conflict is a struggle between two parties who perceived their goals as incompatible. The existence of incompatibility presupposes that individuals or groups of people cannot

cooperate, function or work together to achieve set objectives. Whenever incompatibility exists in a relationship, conflict will emerge. As a behaviour, Gray and Starke (1984) defined conflict as the behaviour by a person or group intended to inhibit the attainment of goals by another person or group. Conflict as an opposition is the demonstration of discord, antagonism, disagreement, hostility, argument, or animosity in social relations. Hellriegel and Slocum (1996) described conflict as an opposition arising from disagreement about goals, thoughts, or emotions with or among individuals, teams, departments or organizations. Conflict can as well be defined in terms of interaction of interdependent parties. For instance, Alimba (2014) posited that conflict is an inescapable element in social relations, which occurs when the interactions of people are marked with differences in goals, perceptions, attitudes, views, beliefs, values or needs. Those who see conflict as a bad omen are of the view that conflict is negative, harmful, damaging, frustrating, and destructive in nature. For instance, Nwolise (2003) viewed conflict as a clash, confrontation, battle or struggle. As a positive or constructive outcome, the European Centre for Conflict Prevention (2000) defined conflict as an inherent part of living which can be used as an opportunity for learning and growth.

Conflict is a basic constituent part of interpersonal or intergroup relations. It is derived from a Latin word “confligere” which means “to strike together”. It is a process in which human interactions is marked with differences in goals, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, values and needs. In higher institutions of learning, conflicts of various magnitudes and intensities exist and are experienced on daily basis in the system. The nature of conflicts that manifest in tertiary institutions ranges from intrapersonal conflict, interpersonal conflict, intragroup conflict to intergroup conflict. These conflicts occur in different ways and leave much to be desired when wrongly perceived and managed in institutions of higher learning. While intrapersonal conflict is conflict that it occurs within individuals, interpersonal conflict is apparent and occurs in tertiary institutions in the forms of student to student conflict (SSC), lecturer to student conflict (LSC), lecturer to lecturer conflict (LLC), lecturer to non-teaching staff conflict (LNSC), non-teaching staff to student conflict (NSSC), non-teaching staff to management conflict (NSMC) and lecturer to management conflict (LMC). The most frequently experienced interpersonal conflict in tertiary institutions are lecturer to student conflict, lecturer to lecturer conflict, lecturer-management conflict and lecturer to non-teaching staff conflict. There are divergent groups operating in tertiary institutions. These groups are stakeholders in the system and the welfare and wellbeing of their members are paramount to their leaders. These groups often heat up the academic environment to attract the attentions of their respective authorities, when the welfare of their members are jeopardised. Jega(1996) pointed out that some of these groups in Nigerian tertiary institutions are the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Senior Staff Association of Universities, Teaching Hospitals, Research and Affiliated Institutions(SSAUTHRAI), and the Non Academic Staff Union(NASU), Administrative Staff Union of Nigerian Universities(ASUNU), Association of University of Technologists of Nigeria(ASUTON), Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU) and Association of Staff in Academic Research Institutes(ASARI). Each of these unions and many more are scattered all over tertiary institutions in Africa. These unions and their leaders are perceived as the incorrigible trouble makers, hell-bent on causing mischief and in giving perpetual headache to the administrators of their respective institutions as well as the government, the funder of these institutions (Jega, 1996).

Sometimes within the groups, conflict may crop up as a result of goal achievement, procedure for implementing a project, decision making pattern etc. This is referred to as intragroup conflict. The various departments existing in tertiary institutions are equally considered as a group in the system. The intragroup conflict is rather prominent in the departmental level. The department harbours different groups of which the informal ones are conspicuously noticeable. All these groups including the students' union can create a serene atmosphere for smooth operations or provoke conflict in the system, thereby making it unbearable for effective productivity. Intragroup and intergroup conflicts can occur within and between groups and they have the capacity to adversely affect the system. The conflict causative factors are as multifarious as the groups in tertiary institutions. The causes range from the behaviours and attitudes of students, their unions, school authorities to the government.

For instance, students' unrest is a constant phenomenon in higher education in Africa. I have argued elsewhere that the most worrisome aspect of students' unrest in recent times is the incessant manner in which they occur and their inherent violent nature (Alimba, 2008). The causes were identified as:

increase in tuition fees, inadequate facilities for teaching and learning, communication breakdown between school authorities and students' representatives, poor leadership style of school authority, rustication and expulsion of union leaders, accommodation and security problems on campus (Alimba, 2008). The various unions operating in tertiary institutions including students' union attract conflict regularly in the system. Imhabekhai (2001) argued that the multiplicity of labour unions on campus breed conflicts in tertiary institutions. They often breed intra-union conflicts, rivalry as well as conflict engineered between various unions and government and/or the management of the institutions (Imhabekhai, 2001). The school authorities have equally been found to fuel conflict in higher institutions of learning. They do this in various ways, such as:

- delay in paying salaries or non payment of entitlements or bonuses of staff;
- collection of special levies from students without providing such facilities;
- use of autocratic, rigid, and repressive regimes of governance and
- exhibition of poor conflict management behaviour.

Imhabekhai (2001) submitted that the behaviour and activities of some vice chancellors, Rectors of Polytechnics, and Provosts of Colleges of Education engender conflict in their institutions. Some of them turn themselves into enemies of the system or structures that produced them, wage war on labour unions and labour activities in the institutions and display nonchalant attitude towards the needs and interests of their workers (Imhabekhai, 2001). The conflict management behaviours of institutional administrators are in doubt. In most cases, the approaches they employ often results in escalation of conflict. Onyeonoru (1996) asserted that a frustrating aspect of the conflicts resulting in students' unrest in Nigeria is that the measures adopted by the management of the conflict have proved ineffective, and hence inappropriate.

The ineffectiveness and inappropriateness of conflict management measures lead to escalation of conflict. Hence, school authorities' management approaches make conflict to intensify rather than deescalating it. Governments' attitude of neglect to education in general and higher education in particular breeds conflict. Poor funding of education and shortage of facilities for teaching and learning often provoke conflicts. The resultant effects of conflict emanating from higher education often manifest in the destruction of property, loss of lives, development of strained relationship, disruption of academic calendar, closing down of schools, looting of school resources, and generally, this will lead to poor academic performance and fall in the quality of education in the country. Imhabekhai (2001) reported that conflict that degenerate into strikes are highly injurious to any organization and the economy in general. In tertiary educational institutions, academic activities are frequently disrupted by conflict. These conflicts and consequent disruption of activities in institutions of higher learning have negative effects on the quality of the product of the system. There is no denying the fact that a conflict ridden educational system will not offer good quality education to students (Imhabekhai, 2001). Conflicts in tertiary institutions when mismanaged will thwart the attainment of quality and quality assurance at all levels. This is the main problem of higher education in Africa. The volume of conflicts emanating from the system prevents it from achieving set goals because these conflicts they wrongly perceived and managed.

PEACE EDUCATION AND ITS POTENCY TO TRANSFORM HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Peace education has been interpreted in various ways. This is because it is slippery and flexible in nature. It is a concept that can be employed based on development in a particular context. Hence, it assumes a regional based approach in its definition and application. This implies that its definition and application depend on the nature of problems to be solved in a society. For instance in North America and Europe, peace education is defined within the border line of conflict resolution education or conflict management education. In Japan, peace education is considered within the context of mitigating the miseries of the A-bomb. Hence, anti-nuclear bomb education becomes the theme that guides the definition of peace education. In Korea, peace education is centred on how to reunite the North and South Korea. Consequently, reunification education becomes the yardstick for the interpretation of peace education in the region. In Nigeria, as I have argued elsewhere, peace education should be considered as education for promoting tolerance and mutual understanding. This is essential in order to encourage unity in diversity

in the country (Alimba, 2010). The specific regional variation in peace education profile is an indication that peace education reacts to the respective prevailing diverse forms of violence (Harris, 2000 and Bar-Tal, 2000). However, peace education is defined as a process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behaviour changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to solve conflict peacefully and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, intergroup, national or international level (Fountain, 1999). Peace education can also be described as a process which encompasses different approaches that are capable of transforming the behavioural pattern of people, through the inculcation of desired knowledge, attitudes, and skills for effective contribution to the cultural, social, economic and political development of their countries (Alimba, 2007). Going by these definitions, peace education is a problem-solving education that attempts to build in people values that are essential to positively change their behaviours and to ensure that they develop conflict resolution skills which will aid in ensuring a commitment to the attainment of a culture of peace in a society. Peace education is both a philosophy and a process inclusive of skills, attitudes and knowledge to create a safe world, to build a sustainable environment and to bring social change (Harris and Morrison, 2003). Hoeppe (2002) described peace education as the principles and practices of teaching and learning to promote personal well-being, convivial relationships, socially just practices, democratic processes and ecological sustainable livelihoods in local, national and global contexts. Peace education is all about empowering people with the skills, attitudes and knowledge needed:

- to build, maintain and restore relationships at all levels of human interaction;
- to develop positive approaches towards dealing with conflicts from the personal to the international;
- to create safe environments, both physical and emotionally, that nurture each individual;
- to create a safe world based on justice and human rights; and
- to build a sustainable environment and protect it from exploitation and war (Harris, 1998).

Reardon (1988) stressed that the general purpose of peace education is to promote the development of authentic planetary consciousness that will enable us to function as global citizens and to transform the present human condition by changing social structures and the patterns of thought that have created it. Johnson and Johnson (n.d) proposed ways by which peace education can achieve these broad purposes by:

- establishing a cooperative, not a competitive, relationship among all relevant parties;
- ensuring that all relevant parties are skilled in engaging in political discourse and creative decision making that includes an open-minded discussion of diverse views;
- ensuring that relevant parties seek agreements that are mutually beneficial and that maximize joint outcomes; and
- inculcating into all relevant parties the values underlying consensual peace (Johnson and Johnson, n.d).

The degree of success of peace education is a function of a society's capability to meticulously implement its programmes after the core problems to be tackled have been identified. This development will motivate the determination of the type of channel through which peace education values will be propagated to achieve set targets. There are three main channels through which peace education can be dispensed. We have informal, formal and non-formal channels. The informal channel of propagating peace education involves development at home and family settings which have bearing on how peaceful behaviours are nested and promoted by their members. The informal channel is characterised by systematic approaches that border on role model, imitation and other means that encourage the practices of peaceful ethics, mode of interaction and operations in homes, families and around ones environment. The formal channel for propagating peace education entails the use of schools to educate people for peace. It involves the incorporation of peace education values into the school curriculum so that people can be taught how to pursue peace with others in the environment. Non-formal channel of spreading peace education involves training people through workshops, seminars and conferences at the local level,

so that they can be aware of the patterns and approaches of resolving conflicts constructively and living harmoniously with others.

These channels are essential outlets through which peace education programmes can be dispensed to specific wider audiences to promote the inculcation of a culture of peace. Harris (2004) identified five types of peace education which are: conflict resolution education, human rights education, environmental education, international education and development education. Any of the channels can be used to educate people about any problem relating to the types of peace education. It is paramount to emphasise that **spiritual education** is the sixth type of peace education. Peace education has a spiritual component, hence, Quisumbing (2000) asserted that peace education is a fact wholesome and holistic education, which takes into consideration the whole body and soul, mind, heart and will. Also, it was pointed out that peace education, whichever angle it is perceived, “has the tendency to change the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual abilities of people within the context of their cultural, political and social milieus for peaceful and harmonious living. It is an essential instrument for changing the behaviour and perception of people for positive thinking and creativity” (Alimba, 2008). The spiritual aspect of peace education is less emphasised by peace educators in their discussions. It is a very important component part of peace education. Peace education promotes skills, attitudes and knowledge which are germane for the inculcation of peaceful behaviour and promotion of a culture of peace in a society. These values can be designed to suite the problems to be solved in a place. Table 1 show some of the skills, attitudes and knowledge that peace education radiates.

Table 1: Basic Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes of Peace Education

Skill	Knowledge	Attitude
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking • Problem solving • Self solving • Self awareness/reflecti on • Assertiveness • Reading • Orderliness • Perseverance • Cooperation • Cheerfulness • Self control /self reliance • Sensitivity • Compassion active listening • Patience • Mediation • Negotiation • Conflict resolution 	Knowledge on issues relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self awareness • Peace and conflict • Justice and power • Human rights • Globalization • Duties and rights of citizens • Environment/ecology • Social justice and power • Non violence • Conflict resolution and transformation • Culture and race • Gender and religion • Health care and AIDS • Arms proliferation and drug trade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self respect • Honesty • Open-mindedness • Fair play • Obedience • Caring • Empathy • Tolerance • Adaptation to change • Sense of solidarity • Respect for differences • Gender equity • Sense of justice • Sense of equality • Reconciliation • Bias awareness • Appreciation • Transparency

Source: Alimba (2010)

Table 1 revealed the skills, knowledge and attitudes that can be acquired by people through peace education. The acquisition of these values will empower people to develop the required behaviour for overcoming the problems affecting them directly or indirectly in a society. The transformative power of peace education is well attested to by peace educators. The potency of peace education to change situations, conditions and behaviours is well captured by scholars. For instance, Fountain (1999) reported that peace education has been used to develop a life skills education in Zimbabwe for handling AIDS; in

Angola for creating landmines awareness; in Croatia for school-based programme for psychosocial healing; in Tanzania for enhancing knowledge of community mechanisms for building peace and resolving conflict and in Lebanon for understanding interdependence between individuals and societies. Salomon (2003) revealed that a series of peace education quasi-experimental studies carried out with Israeli-Jewish and Palestinian youngsters revealed that despite the ongoing violence, participation in various programs yield positive attitudinal, perceptual and relational changes manifested in, for example, more positive views of “peace”, better ability to see the other side’s perspective, and greater willingness for contact.

Salomon (2003) argued further that these changes depend on participants’ initial political views. Going by this, Gavriel Salomon has justified the fact that peace education can directly or indirectly cause a positive change in the behaviour of people. Ohanyan and Lewis (2005) assessed the impact of peace education on shaping the attitudes of people in an interethnic contact and they showed that “feelings for the other side have changed since taking part in the (peace education) programme. The analysis of the relationship between interethnic contact showed statistically significant outcomes, meaning that “specifically interethnic contact has made students more tolerant and open minded of the other side (Ohanyan and Lewis, 2005). They also found out that peace education makes students more responsive and inclined toward cooperation in joint projects with the other side (Ohanyan and Lewis, 2005). Bar-Tal (2002) revealed that peace education “changed attitudes, increased tolerance, reduced prejudices, weakened stereotypes, changed conceptions of self and of “other” and reinforced sense of collective identity”.

Peace education therefore, has the capacity to inculcate the awareness of global consciousness and to awaken the transformational potential of people. To make higher education productive in Africa, “education for peace should permeate all aspects of school life, with implications for learners, teachers and administrators” (Evans, et al 1999). It is important to note that the problems of higher education are artificially created and to revitalise the system, it is fundamental that a mechanism that will provoke attitudinal and behavioural reorientation in people should be put in place as fast as possible.

PEACE EDUCATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA

To achieve quality assurance, peace education should be made relevant in higher education in Africa, and the starting point will be the evaluation of quality assurance mechanisms to determine the problems affecting higher education in order to understand the scope of peace education programmes that will be designed and administered. Quality assurance structures vary from country to country. For instance, we have Commission for Higher Education (CHE) in Kenya; Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC) in Tanzania; National Universities Commission (NUC) in Nigeria; Ghana has National Accreditation Board (NAB); National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) in Zimbabwe and Liberia has National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) and so on. The point is that the structures and frameworks for ensuring quality assurance in higher education exist in Africa, but challenges hindering the efficient performance of higher education are ineffective utilisation of the structures and poor implementations of its policies and guidelines. Apart from this, a greater number of other problems have been articulated by researchers. For instance, Materu (2007) identified rapidly rising enrolment; insufficient numbers of qualified academic staff in higher education institutions as a result of brain drain, retirements and HIV/AIDs; low internal and external efficiency; and poor governance. Yizengaw (2008) stressed that higher education sector in Africa faces challenges related to shortage of quality faculty; limited capacity of governance, leadership and management; inadequate financial support and problems of diversify funding; inadequate facilities and infrastructures; problems of quality and relevance of teaching and research; limited capacity of research, knowledge generation and adaptation capabilities; and problems in meeting increasing demand for equitable access.

Using Pareto Analysis as a reference point, one will discover that 80% of the problems affecting higher education stem from 20% of its causes in Africa. Therefore, determining these problems will motivate the understanding of the nature of peace education programmes that will be mounted to tackle them. Greediness, indiscipline and poor supervision are considered as the major problems, which gave birth to the manifestations of the other problems highlighted above. The later identified problems are associated

with the attitudes of those sponsoring and operating the systems in Africa. Generally, these problems are a reflection of attitudinal decay in tertiary institutions in Africa. Peace education therefore, should be framed in such a way that values that can tackle attitudinal decay be made operational to improve the condition of higher education in Africa. I have argued elsewhere that peace education being a multifaceted concept; can be tailored towards arresting conflict situations which involve the demonstration of physical violence, decadence in societal system, perception problems, and environmental issues e.t.c. That is, peace education is a useful tool for solving human problems that generally negate the values and norms of a society (Alimba, 2007). This underscored the fact that peace education does not only develop in people the knowledge and skills for peaceful resolution of conflict, it also has the capacity to tackle decadence in a society. Therefore, peace education programmes that will focus on values such as honesty, hard work, accountability, tolerance, obedience, self-respect, transparency, integrity, just to mention a few, should form the core elements of the activities to be dispensed. This is necessary to achieve attitudinal transformation which will give room for the demonstration of behaviours such as self-respect, accountability, integrity, honesty, and transparency in the system. Materu (2007) surmised that an effective quality assurance system that promotes transparency and accountability as institutions are required to open up to external scrutiny by peers, professional associations and national quality assurance agencies where they exist.

To promote internal efficiency in tertiary institutions in Africa, peace education should be included in their curricula and the content of in-service training which staff often undergo should also contain peace education activities. This is highly necessary to arm school personnel with values that will empower them to change their attitudes as well as motivating them to constructively resolve conflicts that may emerge in the system. It has been argued that conflict is an inseparable component of academic life and administrators spend more than 40% of their time on the management of conflicts in the universities (Stanley and Algert, 2007). Also, Kelso (2005) observed that universities are the perfect vessel for brewing conflict. This shows that the system is saturated with various forms of conflict. Also, conflicts emanating from the external environment can equally be linked to conflict dynamics in tertiary institutions. Alimba and Awodoyin (2008) posited that education and the society are inextricably interwoven. Hence, developments in the society impact considerably on the educational system and likewise the educational system on the society. Overtime, the violent conflicts that occurred and are reoccurring in Africa have manifested adversely, in various ways, on the educational system (Alimba and Awodoyin, 2008). The internal conflicts and those emanating from the external sources can easily be managed through the teaching and practice of peace education in higher institutions of learning in Africa. Peace education content that will deal with the exploration of root causes of conflict, knowing international humanitarian and human rights law, envisioning alternative structures of security, and learning skills for managing micro/macro conflicts without resorting to violence (Kester, n.d), should be designed and integrated into the daily activities of tertiary institutions to promote the attainment of a culture of peace. The UN Declaration for a culture of peace contains eight action plans. The first plan indicates the universal establishment of peace education. This is necessary because of the transformative power of peace education. Peace education programmes that will facilitate the formation of new values, which will reorientate people and empower them to develop positive attitudes which are required to curb the excesses preventing the achievement of quality assurance in higher education, should be put in place in Africa.

CONCLUSION

Peace education has transformative elements that can bring about behavioural and attitudinal change in people. The state of higher education in Africa calls for a change in the attitudes of governments and those operating the system in their respective countries in Africa. This transformative power of peace education is needed to improve the condition and to speed up the attainment of quality assurance in higher education in Africa. There are various approaches that can be adopted to propagate peace education in a place. However, the important factors that should be considered before adopting them are the identification of underlying problems to be tackled, the context, and culture in which the problems are manifesting. The context and culture showcase the political, social and economic milieus in which the problems exist. In a formal setting, most especially in tertiary institutions, peace education can effectively be administered by including it as a theme in a subject and can equally be taught as a subject.

It can be integrated into the daily activities of an institution. This methodology of administering peace education will create opportunity for the entire system to embrace it. By implication, a larger percentage of people will be exposed to the programme which will influence them positively to develop the right attitude and behaviour which will be built into the system for its revitalisation. The transformative power of peace education is not in contest because of the real life experiences that have been accomplished from its implementation in both developed and developing nations. This study therefore, examined the issues of peace education and quality assurance in higher education in Africa. It posited that the adoption of peace education in higher education in Africa will promote the inculcation of knowledge, attitudes and skills which are needed to curb the behavioural and attitudinal problems that have rendered the system unproductive. It was pointed out that peace education should be infused into the curricula of tertiary institutions, so that the level of attitudinal change that is required to revolutionise higher education in Africa will be developed in people. The attitude so formed will equally help in constructive handling of conflicts and working compatibly with people in the system. This development will help to stimulate the level of energy required in terms of positive behaviour and attitude needed to promote quality education and achieve quality assurance in higher education in Africa.

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