

## Review

# Peace Education for Sustainable Peace and Development: A Case of Kenya

Maiyo K. Julius, Gladys Ngao, Mulwa David and Mugambi Paul

Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Department of Educational Planning and Management,  
P.O Box 190, Code 50100 Kakamega, Kenya

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**A culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems; have the skills to resolve conflicts constructively, know and live by international standards of human rights, gender and racial equality, appreciate cultural diversity and respect the integrity of the Earth. Such learning cannot be achieved without intentional, sustained and systematic education for peace. Education is the single most important means for empowerment and sustained improvement in all well being. Sustainable development is a basic Human Right and unless this target is reached with the potent tool of Education the purpose of Education would remain unfulfilled. Building a culture of peace and learning to live together is the responsibility of everyone, and education is the principal means by which this goal can be achieved. For this to become reality, nations must develop social-emotional and ethical values, attitudes and skills that sustain social coexistence in which everyone participates, shares and develops fully. Africa as continent has featured continuously in the world news due to frequent conflict and violence where several lives and properties have been destroyed, most recent is Sudan, Congo, Zimbabwe Kenya, Ivory Coast and Egypt among others. The present paper articulates peace education as the soul of education that can create the shield for human survival and development, discussed also is the role of teachers in peace education. The study concludes that Peace education is an essential component of quality basic education in Kenya, Economic and social development is linked with peace and cannot be achieved in a country where there is violence and social instability. Peace Education is thus urgently needed as a way of finding new solutions and improving the living conditions of millions of people. The study recommends that government should promote the training of Teachers and Administrators towards peace education and democratic interactions.**

**Keywords:** Peace education, peace, sustainable development.

## INTRODUCTION

The state of peace and security on the Africa continent remains a pre-occupying phenomenon to the rest of world continents. The continent has remained volatile and vulnerable, the number of conflict is still overwhelming, as are the consequences for civilian population. In his address to the 37<sup>th</sup> summit of the organization of Africa unity (OAU) in Lusaka (Zambia) in 2001, the secretary-General of United Union, warned that Africa is confronted with persistent conflicts and crisis of governance and security that threaten to derail hopes for an Africa union

of peace and prosperity(United nation,2001). Tribal violence is still rife in a number of regions stretching from West Africa through to central Africa and all the way down to the south, most recent is Sudan, Congo, Zimbabwe, Somalia Kenya, ivory coast and Egypt among others.

The experience that Kenya has gone through, and especially since independence, suggests that Kenya has long way in achieving peace. In the rural and urban areas, the country has experienced intermittent conflicts arising, in the case of the former, out of the struggle over grazing land by neighbouring communities whose life is based on livestock rearing. The conflict between the Maasai and her neighbours is a case in point. So is the

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\*Corresponding Author E-mail: [maiyojulius@yahoo.com](mailto:maiyojulius@yahoo.com)

conflict in northwestern Kenya where there have been intermittent conflicts between the Marakwet and the Pokot on the one hand, and the Pokot and Karamojong on the other. In the latter case, urban violence has become a permanent feature in most of the major urban areas, notably Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa, between especially the hawkers and the civic authorities and also between slum dwellers and the so-called developers who instigate their eviction following "acquisition" of land (Oyugi, 2002).

In the recent past, a serious land feud over land rights in the Mount Elgon region has also been experienced. The land feuds have their background in the history of land distribution in the region since the colonial era (UNICEF, 2007). However, the 2006 allegations of unfair land allocation between the Soy and Mosop sub-ethnicities of the Sabaot ethnic group escalated the last feud with the emergence of the Sabaot Land Defense Force (SLDF) which killed many people in the region (Achoka and Okoth, 2007). The SLDF was a guerilla militia operating in Mt. Elgon. It took up arms to defend land seized during the controversial Chebyuk Settlement Scheme where the government plan to resettle landless people was marred by corruption and arbitrary land grabbing (ACTS, 2008). The effects of the violence in Mt. Elgon were enormous. For instance, many people were forced to flee from their homes. Also strained were health facilities. The affected persons also suffered from food shortage. Displaced persons were traumatized. Schools were closed, and in the areas where the communities received the displaced persons schools were over enrolled (Kenya, Red Cross Society, 2007).

Kenya also experienced Post-election violence in 2007/2008 that was responsible for the deaths of approximately 1500. Fighting between supporters of Mwai Kibaki and the Party of National Unity – mainly members of the Kikuyu tribe – and supporters of Raila Odinga's Orange Democratic Movement Party – mainly members of the Luo and the Kalenjin tribes – occurred both in Nairobi and the Rift Valley Province. Following nearly two months of violent turmoil, a power-sharing deal between re-elected president Mwai Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga was signed in February 2008. However, the agreement does not address ethnic rivalries that will continue to plague any prospects for Kenyan stability. Where violent conflicts have been experienced in Kenya, inhabitants' lives and livelihoods have been disrupted, and as well, their economic lives, basic services such as health and education are reduced. These affect the psyche of the inhabitants hindering the social and economic progress. Thus, Kenya desires human societies to move from violent and destructive patterns toward the potential for creative, constructive and non-violent capacities to deal with her current issues, this is only achievable if the government can embrace the role of peace education as a strategy in achieving a

sustainable peace and development. It's out of this background that the present study was developed.

### **Concept of Peace**

"Peace is more than the absence of war." "Peace is living in harmony and not fighting with others." "Peace is a calm and relaxed state of mind." Galtung (1996) describes peace in terms of the conditions that hold when a peaceful state is maintained and promoted "Peace consists of positive thoughts, pure feelings, and good wishes." "To stay peaceful requires strength and compassion." "World peace grows through non-violence, acceptance, fairness and communication." "Peace is the main characteristic of a civilized society" (Boulding, 1996).

Peace is not just the absence of war; it is the practice of love. In a peaceful society people would work together to resolve conflicts, develop morally, treat each other with justice, satisfy basic needs, and respect each other. In essence, they would live in unity.

Peace can take place within the individual. Some believe this inner peace can be strengthened through our relationship with the Divine. Inner peace involves peace of mind and absence of fear. Outer peace is peace in society. The focus of the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to achieve holistic inner-outer peace which has both spiritual and material dimensions.

### **Sustainable Development**

Education is a basic component of human development, it's the single most important means for empowerment and sustained improvement in all well being. Sustainable development is 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (United Nations, 1987). Sustainable development is seeking to meet the needs of the present without compromising those of future generations. We have to learn our way out of current social and environmental problems and learn to live sustainably. Sustainable development is a vision of development that encompasses populations, animal and plant species, ecosystems, natural resources and that integrates concerns such as the fight against poverty, gender equality, human rights, education for all, health, human security, intercultural dialogue, etc(Adams, 2006).

Education for sustainable development aims to help people to develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge to make informed decisions for the benefit of themselves and others, now and in the future, and to act upon these decisions. Education seeks to integrate the principles, values, and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning, in order to address the

social, economic, cultural and environmental problems we face in the 21st century. Peace and security are fundamental to human dignity and development. The sustainable development of any culture is always endangered insecurity and conflict. Human tragedies result in overwhelmed health systems, the destruction of homes, schools and often whole communities, and increased numbers of displaced people and refugees. Peace Education for sustainable development plays a key role in promoting values for peace.

## Peace Education

Peace education is a unifying and comprehensive concept that seeks to promote a holistic view of education. However, its relevance is inextricably part of and is highly dependent on contextual specificity (Bloomfield, 1986). UNESCO (2001) states that Peace Education is more effective and meaningful when adopted according to the social and cultural context and the needs of a country. It should be enriched by its cultural and spiritual values together with the universal human values. It should also be globally relevant. Given such a framework, it is hard to find a universally accepted definition. Peace Education is characterized by its many definitions:

*“Peace education is an attempt to respond to problems of conflict and violence on scales ranging from the global and national to the local and personal. It is about exploring ways of creating more just and sustainable futures” Laing (1978)*

*“Peace education is holistic. It embraces the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social growth of children within a framework deeply rooted in traditional human values. It is based on philosophy that teaches love, compassion, trust, fairness, co-operation and reverence for the human family and all life on our beautiful planet” - Schmidt and Friedman (1988)*

*“Peace education is skill building. It empowers children to be creative and adopt non destructive ways to settle conflicts and to live in harmony with themselves, others, and their world . . . Peace building is the task of every human being and the challenge of the human family” - Fran Schmidt and Alice Friedman (1988)*

Peace Education thus can be envisage as the process of developing knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors and values that enable learners to: identify and understand sources of local and global issues and acquire positive and appropriate sensitivities to these problems; resolve conflicts and to attain justice in a non-violent way; live by universal standards of human rights and equity by appreciating cultural diversity, respect for the earth and for each other (Kumar, 2010).

Peace education is coherent, critical and capable of dealing with different concepts of peace among others and also able to implement them through various means .Teaching peace education is considered as the necessary instrument for promotion of democracy, progress, development and civilized society without which peace may be a mirage (Kumar, 2010). Accordingly teaching peace education is critical to the promotion of democracy, nonviolence and compassion that is nascent.

Establishing a strategy to promote peace through education can be accomplished through the incorporation of the universal values of peace, non-violence, tolerance and respect for human rights into all education curriculum where the content and the methodology are equally important and where a holistic view of education is entrenched to ensure the acquisition of specific knowledge, skills, behavior and attitudes (Bloomfield, 1986). This means that the schools and other educational institutions can effectively become social arenas, which model how the ideal world ought to be.

## Peace Education in Kenya

Components of Peace Education have always existed in the Kenyan curriculum. Subjects such as Civic Education, Social Ethics, Agriculture, Health Science, Religious Education and lately Environmental Education have always featured, both in the upper Primary and Secondary sections of the Kenyan School curricula. However, in the teaching of the other subjects in the schools especially in the secondary schools, there is little time provided for teaching peace education (Achoka, 2009). Achoka observes that a close look at the five objectives of secondary school education shows that only one objective is related to peace education though in a remote manner. A further observation is that not all students get to interact with peace education because the subjects of Christian Religious Education (CRE) and History that address peace education in the secondary syllabus are optional in forms three and four not to mention that those subjects have only one topic in each class addressing peace related issues (Achoka, 2009). The school system in Kenya also gives a lot of emphasis on extra-curricular activities, which involves culture, sports and all types of creative arts. However these subjects have often been taught in isolation from each other. They lack the proper focus and have been dogged by the use of inappropriate methodologies. Sometimes, their contents have been censored and distorted to serve the interests of the government of the day. Even in cases of no state interference, Kenyan education system with its heavy emphasis on examinations, do not give the schools and teachers enough room to appreciate the value of life skill education. Besides, Kenya has always

wrongly assumed that because they have never had a full blown state of war, like most other countries within the continent, Peace Education is not a priority as such.

### Justification for a Peace Education

Peace education is the soul of education that can create the shield for human survival on the planet earth. It is only through peace education that peace can be installed in human mind as an antidote to “war is in the mind of men” (Kumar, 2010). Peace education plays a dual role in not only attempting to analyze and reduce conflict and violence in its many forms, but to purposefully and actively create the conditions for achievement of a positive peace for individuals, groups and nations. Other rationale for peace education includes:

- Countries in Africa and other continents are either in states of structural/overt conflict, post conflict, reconciliation process and/or are experiencing political/social and economic instability. The general need for cultures of peace therefore constitutes a most urgent need in almost all the countries.
- Education has been recognized in many continental/international arenas as being one most important tool to be used in the prevention of conflicts and through which sustainable development process may be assured.
- Through education, it is possible that peace programmes that target a wide population can be elaborated and implemented, with a long term perspective to achieve such goals as cultivating inclusive citizenship, ‘de-segregating the mind’ and building a culture of tolerance. In short, education can be a tool to respond to states of oppression through a process that nurtures and sustains peaceful co-existence.
- Colonial education that has hitherto continued to be the system of education in vogue in Kenya, did not focus on the development of the local population, but rather was largely geared towards the production of manpower that could continue to respond to and serve imperial interests. Peace Education will finally add value to the different education systems in Africa, so that they are more responsive to the local needs.
- Language and ethnic differences have been sources of conflicts because people do not have the skills to deal with intercultural differences. By giving the children the necessary skills to solve inter cultural conflicts, Peace Education will finally respond to the language and cultural problems that have for a long time, undermined and deterred development initiatives in Africa.

### Role of Teachers

Teachers fall in between local and state actors in the

search for sustainable peace. In as much as they are state agents as government employees, they operate in communities from where most times they are local. Though local, teachers are also professionals. This puts them in a dilemma; do they conform to the local community standards on the event of conflict so that they can belong or do they behave the professionals they are in the conflict cycle.

A critical area where teachers can contribute in search for peace is through implementing peace education curriculum among other teacher activities. Education for peace is the 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, to resolve conflict peacefully and to create the conditions conducive to peace. Education for peace is not a distinct 'subject' in the curriculum (UNESCO, 2006) but a process to be mainstreamed into all quality educational experiences. Education for peace should be seen as a cross cutting issue to be addressed in all fields of education from pre-school to primary, secondary and tertiary education (GTZ,2004). According to Galtung (2000) UNESCO's resolve is to have education for peace implemented through the school system. However, little has been realized through the school system yet, peace education has long term preventive effect as it increases everybody's conflict transforming capacity through knowledge and skills, empathy, non-violence and creativity.

Though peace education can be implemented through various educational programmes, the school system is the most formidable owing to the persons in charge; the teachers. Further, due to the nature of professional training, teachers can address peace issues in the society effectively. This is because; teachers have a potential to have a great impact in the moulding of the next generation (Okumbe, 2001; Wawire, 2006) in that their business is to help students to achieve higher standards of knowledge, ability, skills, and moral character. A teacher is expected to teach and evaluate the students; socialize them into responsible members of the society by instilling the appropriate values, skills and attitudes in a bid to achieve the national goals of education. Under this role, teachers play sub roles of disciplinarians, judges, parent substitutes and role models. Teachers also serve the welfare of their children. In the formative stages in the schooling system, the teacher performs tasks like toilet training, feeding the younger children and guiding and counseling the older ones.

Teachers plays pivotal role in developing skills in: empathetic listening, democratic leadership, developing children's self esteem and conflict resolution. They also integrate concepts relating to peace education such as national harmony, democratic principles and non-violent conflict resolution skills into their regular classes using a

child centered approach.

Teachers also create intergroup relationships through sports events art competitions and language camps designed to create opportunities for children of different backgrounds and schools to mix and meet. They teach non-violent attitudes and skills in class rooms and stimulate children's creativity and play through extra-curricular activities of drama, painting, songs, poems and sporting events. Creativity humour and play form essential elements of any peace education programme where children learn how to be team players, how to cooperate and how to be creative thereby training non-violent patterns of communication and behaviour. In addition, exercises for inner peace are sometimes included and said to help develop non-violent attitudes. Students are also stimulated to practice democratic values and attitudes through creation of a peaceful school environment which includes democratically organized schools and friendly relationships among students and staff and cooperative relationships with parents and community (Cardozo and May, 2009). Other roles of teachers may include:

- To ensure student learn by supporting them. To ensure this, they should build on students' prior knowledge, life experience, and interests to achieve learning goals for all students. They should use a variety of instructional strategies and resources that respond to students' diverse needs. Teachers are required to facilitate challenging learning experiences for all students in environments that promote autonomy, interaction and choice (California Department of Education, 1997; Consortium-Thailand, 2003).
- Create physical environments that engage all students in purposeful learning activities and encourage constructive interactions among students. To realize this they should maintain safe learning environments in which all students are treated fairly and respectfully as they assume responsibility for themselves and one another. Such interactions enhance students to appreciate and understand that differences and diversities are opportunities to know each other and thus learn the importance of peace for harmonious existence (California Department of Education, 1997; UNESCO, 2006).
- Organize subject matter for students learning. They are required to exhibit strong working knowledge of subject matter and student development. Through dissemination of knowledge the learners must learn to respect and protect their relationship which is important to promote the frame work for appropriate behaviour (California Department of Education, 1997).
- Teachers are the best 'Role models' to the learning community and through their attitudes, behaviour, democratic administration and interactions would build the desirable and congenial ambience to learn to live together.

## Challenges

Although education system is seen to be the backbone for achieving peace and sustainable development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, education system in Kenya is still encumbered by a number of factors; such as the rigidity of its system, low access and enrolment rate, low quality of teaching, a high attrition rate, content based methodologies, inadaptability of curricula to the learners' needs and environment and to new technologies imposed by globalization. Indeed, Kenya is still one of the countries where literacy rates are very low. According to a GOK (2008) report, only 71.8% of its population aged 15 years and above were literate. The cumulative dropout rates in primary education have been as high as 37 percent and repetition rates of 15.4 percent between standard 1 and 7. The survival rate at the primary level has been low at 40 percent. Only 47% of those who complete primary education proceed to the 4 years secondary education (MOEST, 2004). Although the average pupil teacher ratio (PTR) nationwide appears slightly adequate (MOEST, 2003). Teachers are often distributed unevenly, resulting in teacher shortage in many schools. Such problems also influence the implementation and achievement of the goals of peace education in Kenya. Other challenges include:

- The fact that peace education programmes is not an examinable subject, may often mean that it does not receive due weight within the school/college setting. And on the other hand, if made to be an examinable subject, it may mean that the learning will focus more on the theoretical aspects than the practical ones and encourage all the negative methodologies that are not compatible with Peace Education
- The methodologies currently used in formal learning situations found in the schools under consideration, conflict with the Peace education methodology. Whereas in traditional learning settings, competition among learners is encouraged, through grading, Peace Education methodology puts more emphasis in cooperative learning, critical inquiry, discovery method, etc. Lack of an appropriate and comprehensive Peace Education Curriculum that is well adapted to the local needs, different regions in the country face diversity of peace issues which may not be related. i.e cattle rustling, clan conflict, land issues, Unemployment, injustice, tribalism, struggle for basic resources among others.
- Inadequate financial resources to fully implement the proposed programmes.
- Lack of proper understanding and interest in Peace Education by all the stakeholders.
- Inadequate reference and relevant research materials for teaching purposes.
- Poor coordination and collaboration between dif-

ferent initiators of Peace Education programmes.

## CONCLUSION

The United nation's action plan for 21<sup>st</sup> century" Agenda 21"states that "education is crucial for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of all people to address environment and development issues". Together with the students and teachers education sector is a powerful force, a communication channel for disseminating knowledge and skills. Therefore education institutions in general, teachers and other education stakeholders in particular shoulders the responsibility to increase awareness, knowledge, skills and human values needed to create a sustainable peace and development in the present society and future.

## RECOMMENDATION

- It is from the Institutions that learners learn to behave in appropriate ways. The government should promote the training of Teachers and Administrators towards peace education and democratic interactions as one of the leading agenda of Teacher education programs.
- The government should enhance the quality of education by expanding access to education, enrollment, and reduction in education wastage.
- The role of Peace Education must be activated by the government, awareness strategies to be adopted and proper strategies for coordinating and collaborating all the initiators of peace education to be enhanced.

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