

# Promoting Peace Education for Behaviourial Changes in Public Secondary Schools in Calabar Municipality Council Area, Cross River State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the promotion of peace education for behavioural changes in public secondary schools in Calabar Municipal Council Area of Cross River State. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. A set of questionnaire items were validated and used for the collection of data involving 310 respondents, selected from a total population of 773 teachers and 10 principals representing 39.5% of the total population of 783. The questionnaire was titled: Promoting Peace Education For Behaviourial Changes In Secondary Schools Questionnaire (PPEFBCISSQ). The reliability of the instrument was determined by using the split-half method which involved 31 teachers outside the study sample. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to analyze the data. The reliability estimate was between  $r=0.60$  and  $r=0.70$ . The result of the analysis showed a positive significant relationship between promotion of peace education and behavioural changes in curbing violence fighting, aggressiveness and conflict among students when tested at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance. It was therefore recommended that Teachers who implementers of the National policy on Education and school curriculum through civic education should promote peace education by inculcating in students good value system, that can aid the curbing of aggressiveness, fighting violence and conflicts in school system.

**Keywords:** promoting, peace, education, behavioural, changes, secondary, schools.

## Introduction

The UNESCO constitution in reference to peace stated that “since wars begin in the minds of men it is in the minds of men that the defense of peace must be constructed, (UNESCO, 2001). From the above assertion, promoting of peace education programmes for behavioural changes in curbing aggression, violence and conflicts in secondary schools is the right direction. The basic education such as secondary school level is where young minds are nurtured for the good of the society. As the scripture says: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6 NKJV, (2008)). The early stage of learning in life has an impact on behavioural pattern of individuals within the society.

Peace education according to the UNESCO (2001) teachers’ guide to peace education emphasized that peace education is more effective and meaningful when it is adopted according to the social and cultural context and the needs of a country. The body further stated that there is no universally acceptable definition of peace education, however, globally relevant and good definitions were given thus:

“Peace education is an attempt to respond to problems of conflict and violence as scales ranging from the global and national to local and personal. It is about exploring ways of creating more just and sustainable futures” (Laing, cited in UNESCO, 2001).

Another view is that by Schmidt and Friedman (1988) cited in UNESCO (2001) that:

“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 teachers love, compassion, trust, fairness, cooperation and revenue for the human family and all life on our beautiful planet”.

Promoting peace education should consider the above definitions as a baseline, and a peace loving teacher naturally would want to integrate it into all aspects of school curriculum as enunciated by the UNESCO in six or seven major media of integration (UNESCO, 2001:xiii-xiv):

1. **Subject context:** Here we take language, social studies, religion, physical education, arts, and science as the core curricular subjects, which can be used to infuse peace.

2. **Subject perspectives:** These are for teachers making a subject meaningful. A subject is not learned merely for the subject's sake. It has to be interpreted in such a manner so as to contribute to learner's social, emotional, intellectual and moral self-development. Peace education attempts to humanize subjects through bringing in human perspectives and dominion into learning.
3. **Teaching methods:** In education both what is taught and how it is taught are equally important. A good teacher adopts the child-centred education approach, especially in the primary and secondary levels. Instead of routine lecturing, she uses interesting learning activities. She is not only concerned with imparting knowledge but also concerned with developing socializing skills, moral attitudes and learning skills of children in parallel.
4. **Co-curricular activities:** These are activities done outside the classroom to achieve the goals of the formal subject learning. Here we include extracurricular activities as well. Extracurricular activities are complementary in the sense that they do not directly relate to subjects or formal curriculum, but are helpful in achieving the goals of education.
5. **Staff development:** To successfully implement any innovation, first of all the teachers need to develop by raising awareness and training. This can be done through in-service seminars and school-based sessions.
6. **Classroom management:** Classroom management includes maintenance of discipline, organizing learning, character building, conflict resolution, counseling, etc.
7. **School management:** This is the administrative, structural, policy-making and policy implementation level at the school level principal as the Head. Teachers who implement peace education at the classroom level need the support of the whole school. Peace education provides important insights into management development of the school.

The promotion of peace education for behavioural changes in public secondary schools cannot be addressed than our present circumstances in our nation, Nigeria where aggression violence and conflicts have become the order of the day. The education system is in a position to address this situation by promoting peace education for behavioural changes in curbing aggression, fighting, violence and conflicts. This can only be done with a view to engaging our educational system from the basic, hence the promotion of peace education for behavioural changes should be made paramount in secondary schools.

Peace education is an old idea, but has been relegated to the background because the teaching and learning of peace is left to the religious bodies and moral instructors. Yet the United Nations peace keeping force is a body of army for war against insurgency and terrorism. However, UNICEF (1999) on peace education gave a definition thus: "peace education refers to the process of promoting knowledge, skills, attitude and values needed to bring about behavioural changes that will enable children, youths and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural, to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive for peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level."

This definition succinctly captured what peace education is about, where individuals who are exposed to the above highlights of the definition can become an all round worthwhile person in the society. And at school peace education is an integral part of the UNICEF vision of quality basic education. The school is a subsystem of the community or society, therefore a proper education to address the prevention and resolution of all forms of threat to peace is considered in the teaching learning process.

The school has always been a major support for students, according to Coombs-Richardson and Meisgeier (2001). Teachers assume the role of influencing agents for many students who require it. Educators bear a tremendous responsibility as role models to distinguish between the "do as I say" and "do as I do" teachers. To guide this study, the researchers adopted the reinforcement theory which comprise of three forms of reinforcement or S-R theory of classical conditioning, connectionism and operant conditioning, however with emphasis on operant conditioning by B.F. Skinner cited in Moore (2001) to ascertain teachers methods in the promotion of peace education for behavioural changes towards curbing aggressiveness', violence and conflicts. According to Moore (2001) Skinner introduced the term operant response to distinguish the response in operant conditioning. An operant is a response that has effect on the world, it is a response that has some effect on the world, it is a response that operates on the environment for example, when a student says "Mrs. Jones, I can't work this problem." And is then helped, the student has made an operant response that determines when help will appear". In the same vein, molding young characters towards a positive response would occur while applying this premise of theory.

Therefore promoting peace education for behavioural changes requires students to respond with the behavioural changes required as a result of learning process. This teaching-learning process is based on the

national policy of education; its philosophy and the school curriculum in the areas of civic and moral instruction National Policy on Education (FRN 2004).

There are two main strategies for reinforcing behaviours; primary reinforcers which are unlearned, natural and unconditioned, and the other is the secondary reinforcers -which are conditional reinforcers, an acquire value that is learned by pairing a secondary reinforcer with a primary reinforcer that the students already values, we eventually teach the student to be motivated only by the second reinforcer. Secondary reinforcers are of four categories:

- i. Social, reinforcers (smiles, thumps-up sign, praise and feedback)
- ii. Tangible reinforcers (stickers, stamps, certificates)
- iii. Activity reinforcers (homework pass, class line leader, computer time, access to music and
- iv. Generalized reinforcers (Points, tokens). (Coombs-Richards et al, 2001).

Peace education connotes two ideas; peace, which does not merely imply the absence of violence, but the gift of good relationship to each other. Peace education should form an integral part of students' curriculum. A formal and official of the peace education programme should be supported by ministry of education. From this premise it would be integrated in the secondary school curriculum- while the teachers assigned to handle peace-education should be trained so as to guide students as required in the programme guidelines.

### **Statement of the problem**

Promoting peace education for behavioural changes in public secondary schools is a programme that is required toward promoting knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavioural changes that will enable children, youth and adult to prevent conflict and violence. It is a programme that covers basic education to social justice. In secondary schools today, among students there are cases of individual differences as it applies to other climes. How to get along and tolerate others are causes of conflicts and friction in our society. As a result of this, peace is threatened or is not encouraged as self protection in whatever means create avenues for vice to thrive. Peace education is an attempt to change people's behaviours. Does it really work out? It is a way to make a reality of human rights through the methodology of rights-based learning of this study is to ask what relationship exists between promoting peace education and behavioural changes in public secondary schools ?

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to find out the relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing aggressiveness, violence and conflicts in secondary schools in Calabar Municipality Local Government Area in Cross River State. It is specifically to investigate:

1. The relationship that exists between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing aggressiveness.
2. The relationship that exists between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing violence.
3. The relationship that exists between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing conflicts.

### **Hypotheses**

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing aggressiveness in public secondary schools.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing violence in public secondary schools.

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing conflicts in public secondary schools.

### **Methodology**

The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey. The study comprised teachers and principals of ten (10) out the fifteen existing secondary schools in Calabar Municipality Local Government Area of Cross River State, the total population used for the study was 783 teachers (Principals inclusive). A simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 310 teachers representing 39.5% of the total population with 31 respondents from each of ten (10) schools. The questionnaire titled: Promoting Peace Education For Behavioural Changes In Secondary Schools Questionnaires (PPEFBCISSQ), was the instrument used for data collection, containing 30 item statements; ten statements for each variable were raised for three null hypotheses.

The four (4) point Likert scale of Strongly Disagree (SD), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) was used in the study. The reliability of the instrument was determined by using a split-half method involving 31 teachers outside the study sample. A reliability index of 0.60 and 0.70 was obtained using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient method.

## Findings

### Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing aggressiveness in public secondary schools.

**Table 1: Pearson product moment correlation analysis on the relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing aggressiveness in public secondary schools:**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-val.	Sig. lev.
Promoting peace education programmes	310	12.21	2.20	0.70	0.05
Behavioural changes in aggressiveness.		13.16	3.04		

$P < 0.05$ ,  $r(308) = 0.70$

The result of table 1 revealed that there is a significant relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing aggressiveness in public secondary schools.  $r(308) = 0.70$ ,  $P < 0.05$ .

### Hypothesis two

There is no significant relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing violence in public secondary schools.

**Table 2: Pearson product moment correlation analysis on the relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing violence in public secondary schools:**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-val.	Sig. lev.
Promoting peace education programmes	310	12.16	3.10	0.67	0.05
Behavioural changes in curbing violence		13.30	4.16		

$P < 0.05$ ;  $r(308) = 0.67$

The result of table 2 revealed that there is significant relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing violence in secondary schools.  $r(308) = 0.67$ ,  $P < 0.05$ .

### Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing conflicts in public secondary schools.

**Table 3: Pearson product movement correlation analysis on the relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing conflicts in public secondary schools:**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-val.	Sig. lev.
Promoting peace education programmes	310	12.16	3.11	0.68	0.05
Behavioural changes in curbing conflicts.		13.16	3.04		

$P < 0.05$ ;  $r(308) = 0.68$

The result of table 3 revealed that there is significant relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing conflicts in secondary schools  $r(308) = 0.68, P < 0.05$ .

### **Discussion of findings**

The findings of this study revealed that there is significant relationship between promoting peace education programmes and behavioural changes in curbing aggressiveness, violence and conflicts in secondary schools in Calabar Municipality Local Government Area of Cross River State. The findings agreed with Laing (1978) cited in UNESCO (2001) that peace education is an attempt to respond to problems of conflict and violence on the scale ranging from global and national to local and personal. It is about exploring ways of creating more just and sustainable futures. It is always said that children are leaders of tomorrow, and to have a sustainable future, it is pertinent to promote peace education programme for behavioural changes in curbing aggressiveness, violence and conflict for a better society. In the aspect of supporting this findings, the introduction of the UNESCO teachers guide for peace education related an interview of a student in Sri Lanka that peace education programme “strongly influence my mind, I was enlightened on how to lead a contented life, to live a conflict-free life in schools, to build up mutual cooperation and make our future happy and successful and most of all to live as a peaceful citizen (National Institution of Education (2000) Bulletin on Education for conflict Resolution Programme).

Therefore, it is in the researchers’ opinion that promoting peace education programme for behavioural changes in curbing aggressiveness, violence and conflict in secondary schools is very important as a nation that would require the succeeding generations to be leaders of impeccable character devoid of vices and making the society an environment conducive for development and growth. And the impact of peace education in Nigeria school system if religiously adhered to would go a long way in making students to peacefully handle critical issues that can lead to conflict, making the activities of the curriculum to empower student to become agent of peace and change, create a peaceful environment where students can freely ask questions and discuss public issues that often lead to violence amongst others.

### **Conclusion**

According to Baxter and Ikobwa (Retrieved 2014) “Peace is everyone’s responsibility within any given community. Instead of focusing training on selected group of individuals. (Those considered opinion leaders) it is preferable to target all school children and to involve self-selected participants in the community programme. Thus enabling a “bottom-up” approach”. The above observation is in line with promoting peace education in schools for behavioural changes. Hence, the training of teaches in secondary schools with a view to formulating programme, curriculum or formal curriculum structure where concepts are gradually built on one another and where the human rights base learning is the key principle. And the principle of human rights are translated into the methodology of how a programme is taught (Baxter and Ikobwa, 2001 and the methods to be employed is to see that the curriculum structure within the formal school system programme is designed to respond to the psychological and ethical development of the child. The activities required to promote peace education in schools include activities centered and participatory, based on games and activities and the resulting discussions. It has to be an explanatory learning approach of activities based on a “what happens when/if...” as these activities enable children to “do peace” through tangible indoor and outdoor classroom experiences (Baxter and Ikobwa, 2014). Promoting peace education programme for behavioural changes in curbing aggressiveness, violence and conflicts could no longer be under-rated in the midst of different challenges; ranging from cultural background to political tension and conflicts. It is therefore noteworthy to address these challenges during the early stages of development by promoting peace education programmes at the basic level of education that comprise the primary and secondary schools. It is at this early learning stage that the tenets of peace can be inculcated and nips in the bud traits of aggression, conflict in order to avert violence, and children would behave well for the good of the society.

### **Recommendations**

From the study the following recommendations were made:

1. That teachers who are the implementers of the National policy on education and school curriculum in civil and moral instruction should inculcate in students value system can aid the curbing of aggressiveness, violence and conflicts.
2. That the various organs and agents of education at Federal and State levels should encourage through the ministry of Education; teachers as key facilitators through training to promote peace education at the basic primary and secondary levels.

3. That a new curriculum as peace education with the infusion of civic and moral instruction should serve as a tool in promoting peace education for moral rearmament.
4. That peace education programme must take into consideration all cultural views, and uphold the healthy elements of culture.
5. That school administrators and teachers be encouraged to develop interest in peace education as curriculum takes into consideration the interest of the community.
6. That the entire community should be encouraged by the relevant government authority on the need to involve school administrators, teachers, parents and communities to support the implementation and promotion of peace education in order for the programme to be effective.

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