TEACHING PEACE EDUCATION IN NIGERIAN SCHOOLS: A PANACEA FOR NATIONAL REBIRTH.

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ABSTRACT.

Jesus Christ is the author of peace in the Bible. Every idea of peace is based upon the teaching of the church as handed down by Jesus Christ.

Christians approach the issue of war and peace as moralists, teachers, and followers of Jesus Christ . Some Christians try to live up to Christ's teachings.

The Catholic Church incorporates the teachings of Jesus Christ in order to prepare man for where he will enjoy everlasting joy, happiness and peace.

The church has been the architect and bearer of charity, justice, and peace to mankind.

Islam according to the Quran teaches love and compassion for every human being no matter their religion.

The word "Islam" is derived from the word meaning "peace" in Arabic. Islam is a religion revealed to mankind with the intention of presenting a peaceful life where the infinite compassion and mercy of God manifests on earth.

A culture of peace and non – violence goes to the substance of fundamental human rights, social justice, democracy, literacy, respect and dignity for all, international solidarity, respect for worker's rights, children's rights, equality between men and women, cultural identity and diversity, indigenous peoples and minorities rights, and the preservation of the natural environment.

God calls all people to live by the moral values . He sets so that compassion, mercy, peace and love will prevail.

KEY WORDS.

Peace, War, Justice, Charity, Love.

INTRODUCTION:

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines peace as a situation or a period of time in which there is no war or violence in a country of an area.

The Western view of peace is an absence of dissention, violence, or war, a meaning found in the New Testament and possibly an original meaning of the Greek word for peace, Irene. Pacifists have adopted this interpretation for to them all, violence is bad.

Peace, however, is also seen as concord, or harmony and tranquility. It is viewed as peace of mind or serenity, especially in the East. It is defined as a state of law or civil government, a state of justice or goodness, a balance of equilibrium of powers. Such meanings of peace function at different levels.

Peace may be opposed to or an opposite of antagonistic conflict, violence or war. It may refer to an internal state of mind, or of nations or to external relations. Or it may be narrow in conception, referring to specific relations in a particular situation, (like a peace treaty), or overarching, covering a whole society (as in a world peace).

The Hebrew word for peace, Salom, translated in the Septuagint most often by the Greek word, eirene, has a wide semantic range including the notions of totality or completeness, success, fulfillment, wholeness, harmony, security, and well being. Peace in its fullness is possible because Yahweh is its source and the giver of peace to others. (Ps. 29:11).

 The Catechism of the Catholic Church (2304) holds that peace is not merely the absence of war, and it is not limited to maintaining a balance of powers between adversaries. Peace cannot be attained on earth without safeguarding the goods of persons, free communication among men, respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, and the assiduous practice of fraternity.

In the Bible, Jesus Christ is the author of peace. Every idea of peace is based upon the teaching of the church as handed down by Jesus Christ. Oforchukwu J.I. (2015) says that war and peace are two of the oldest philosophical, political, and religious experiences in our society. War is a strong and powerful instrument that has been used to partition our society into many segments. From time immemorial, both the state and the church, and mosque have been champions of war and peace programs.

The Quran calls its way…"The way of peace…" (Quran 5:16). It describes reconciliation as the best policy (4: 128) and states that God abhors any disturbance of peace. (2:205). The first verse of the Quran breathes the spirit of peace, it reads: "in the name of God, the most Merciful, The Most Compassionate. One of God's names according to the Quran is As – Salaam, which means peace.

Moreover, the Quran states that the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) was sent to the world as a mercy to mankind (Quran 21:107). Most verses of the Quran are based on peace and kindness, either directly or indirectly. The ideal society, according to the Quran is Dar As – Salaam, that is, the house of peace (Quran 10: 25).

Christians and Muslims approach the issue of war and peace as moralists, teachers, and followers of Jesus Christ and Mohammed. They try to live up to Christ's and Mohammed's teachings. The Catholic Church incorporates the teachings of Jesus Christ in order to prepare man for where he will enjoy everlasting joy, happiness and peace. The church and mosque have been the architect and bearer of charity, justice and peace to mankind.

Even Islam according to the Quran teaches love, and compassion for every human being no matter their religion, says Author Oktar whose television show is watched by millions in Turkey and the Arab world.

He believes that the problem of the majority of Muslims is that some groups are following traditions and superstitions invented centuries after the Quran was first sent and the prophet lived, and these have gotten more radical over time.

After the attacks of September, 11, 2001, Oktar published a book, "Islam Denounces Terrorism." He argues that violent and intolerant beliefs about Islam go against the teachings of the Quran. Here he presents many quotes to support his claim, but we shall only look at one for lack of time.

PEACE IS THE CORNERSTONE:-

The word "Islam" is derived from the word meaning "peace" in Arabic. Islam is a religion revealed to mankind with the intention of presenting a peaceful life where the infinite compassion and mercy of God manifests on earth. God calls all people to live by the moral values. He sets so that compassion, mercy, peace and love can be experienced all over the world.

Ikejiani & Ani, (2009); says that peace is one of humanity's highest values and there are many definitions of what peace is. Its meaning is multi – lateral and multi – disciplinary, depending on which notion is central in the determination of peace as a concept. The most common use of the concept of peace is the absence of dissention, violence or war.

The notion of peace starts with the individual through the family, school, church, mosque, and to the larger society. Peace is therefore a state of mind in concourse with serenity; a state of harmony, tranquility, concord and a balance of equilibrium of powers. Peace is the opposite of

conflict; it abhors violence and war. Peace is also a state of justice, goodness and civil government. Peace can be empirical or abstract, normative or descriptive, active or passive.

PEACE EDUCATION:-

Education is the key to uniting nations, bringing human beings closely together. In many parts of the world, civil society suffers because of situation of violent conflicts and war. An example is the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria, Farmers/Fulani Herdsmen clashes, the clamour for self – determination by the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB), Movement For The Actualization For The Sovereign State Of Biafra (MASSOB), and many other ongoing humanitarian crises worldwide, including many that impact African countries such as Libya, Somalia, Mali, The Central African Republic, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan.

Far in the Middle East, there is the Syrian war, Saudi Arabia/Yemen war, Israeli/Palestinian crises, and even the competition between North Korea and Iran on their Intercontinental Ballistic And Scud Missile Programs. It is important to recognize the crucial role of education in contributing to building a culture of peace and condemning instances in which education is undermined in order to attack democracy and tolerance.

Peace education is the process of acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the attitudes, skills, and behaviours to live in harmony with oneself, with others, and with the natural environment.

A culture of peace and non – violence goes to the substance of fundamental human rights, social justice, democracy, literacy, respect and dignity for all, international solidarity, respect for worker's rights, children's rights, equality between men and women, cultural identity and diversity, indigenous peoples and minorities rights, the preservation of the natural environment to name some of the more obvious thematic.

STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING PEACE:-

Strategies for achieving peace fall under three basic categories:-

PEACEKEEPING, PEACEMAKING AND PEACEBUILDING.

PEACEKEEPING:- Generally involves police or military action and strives to achieve peace through strength and force.

PEACEMAKING:- Involves communication skills like conflict resolution and mediation strategies for interacting non – violently with others. Both of these categories are reactive approaches that kick in after a violent incident has occurred.

PEACEBUILDING:- On the other hand, is a more proactive approach that uses peace education as a means of creating a more stable and peaceful culture, thereby preventing violent incidents

from occurring. Peace education is critical to creating a culture that reduces the need for peacemaking and peacekeeping by developing a comprehensive program that teaches people how to interact with others and avoid unnecessary aggression.

Let's look at the objectives typically found in peace education.

OBJECTIVES:-

There are seven objectives of peacebuilding, or peace education. These goals rely on the assumption that while violent conflict is unavoidable, there is a process by which we can address conflict and minimize violence. Peace education seeks to reduce violence and promote peace building using the following objectives to inform the instruction.

1. **APPRECIATE THE CONCEPT OF PEACE:-**

   This objective is met by studying the arts and humanities as they relate to peace. Literature such as novels and religious texts, films, and documentaries; fine art such as paintings and photography; and even performance art such as theatre and music all provide a rich backdrop for understanding the concept of peace and appreciating the art created in its honour.

2. **ADDRESS FEARS:-**

   It is in the nature of warmongers to incite fear among people to generate support for their genocide. Dismantling this deeply ingrained fear is one of the goals of peace education. Peace educators are to allay the fears their students have about both major world conflict and war, as well as their own interpersonal conflicts.

3. **PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT SECURITY**

   Peace education and students need to understand the way national security systems work so they can begin to conceptualize alternatives to war that will keep the nation safer in the future. Peace educators teach about the implications of the arms race and international policy, the nature of the military, the militarization of the police, and the prison industrial complex.

4. **UNDERSTAND WAR BEHAVIOUR:-**
   Another objective of peace education is to understand the behavior of war and the conditions under which a group will seek organized violence as answer to conflict. Peace education students gain exposure to several peaceful societies as well as the role of individuals like Hitler, Saddam Hussein, and Napoleon in historical conflicts.

5. DEVELOP INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING:-

War is often a direct result of otherness, so developing a deep understanding and respect of other cultures is critical to promoting peace. War profiteers who make money from perpetuating destruction have billions of dollars invested in keeping up with the 'us' vs. 'them' mentality, which prevents people from demanding peace and encourages them to support war.

6. EXPLORE THE LONG RANGE VIEW:-

It is important that peace education students see the potential for a future without violence. Peace educators help to promote a hopeful optimism by showing students that it is possible to affect the future based on what we do today.

7. RE – DEFINITION OF NIGERIA:-

NIGERIA SHOULD MEAN TO US THESE:-

N – NEVER SHALL WE BE DIVIDED.

I – IN UNITY, WE STAND.

G – GREAT AND GOD FEARING PEOPLE.

E – EVER FORWARD WE MOVE.

R – RIVERS FROM MOTHER NATURE WE ABOUND.

I – INDUSTRIOUS AND BLESSED PEOPLE.

A – A POTENTIAL WORLD POWER.

With this definition of Nigeria imbibed by everyone, we would have future peace in Nigeria.

TECHNIQUES FOR PEACE EDUCATION:-

INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY:-

The mission of the United Nations is to save succeeding generation from the scourge of war which was the main motivation for creating the United Nations, whose founders lived through the devastation of two world wars . Since its creation, the UN has often been called upon to prevent disputes from escalating into war, or to help restore peace when armed conflict does braek out, and to promote lasting peace in societies emerging from wars.

SECURITY COUNCIL:-

Over the decades, the UN has helped to end numerous conflicts, often through actions of the Security Council – the organ with the primary responsibility, under the United Nations Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security. When a complaint concerning a threat to peace is brought before it, the Council's first action is usually to recommend to the parties to try to reach agreement by peaceful means. In some cases, the Council itself undertakes investigation and mediation. It may appoint special representatives or request the Secretary – General to do so or to use his good offices. It may set forth principles for a peaceful settlement.

When a dispute leads to fighting, the Council's first concern is to bring it to an end as soon as possible. On many occasions, the Council has issued ceasefire directives which have been instrumental in preventing wider hostilities. It also deploys United Nations Peacekeeping operations to help reduce tensions in troubled areas, keep opposing forces apart and create conditions for sustainable peace after settlements have been reached. The Council may decide on enforcement measures, economic sanctions (such as trade embargoes) or collective military action.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY:-

According to the Charter, The General Assembly can make recommendations on the general principles of cooperation for maintaining international peace and security, including disarmament, and for the peaceful settlement of any situation that might impair friendly relations among nations. The General Assembly can also discuss question relating to international peace and security and make recommendations, if the issue is not currently being discussed by the Security Council.

Pursuant to its "Uniting For Peace" resolution of November 1950 (resolution 377(V), the General Assembly may also take action if the Security Council fails to act, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member, in a case where there appears to be a threat to or breach of the peace, or act of aggression. The Assembly can consider the matter immediately with a view to making recommendations to members for collective measures to maintain or restore international peace and security.

SECRETARY – GENERAL:-

The Charter empowers the Secretary – General to 'bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security." One of the most vital roles played by the Secretary – General is the use of his "good offices" – steps taken publicly and in private that draw upon his

independence, impartiality and integrity to prevent international disputes from arising, escalating or spreading.

CONFLICT PREVENTION:-

The main strategies for preventing disputes from escalating into conflict, and for preventing the recurrence of conflict, are preventive diplomacy and preventive disarmament. Preventive diplomacy refers to action taken to prevent disputes from arising or from escalating into conflicts, and to limit the spread of conflicts when they occur. It may take the form of mediation, conciliation or negotiation.

PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY:-

Early warning is an essential component of prevention, and the United nations carefully monitors developments around the world to detect threats to international peace and security, thereby enabling the Security Council and the Secretary – General to carry out preventive action.

Envoys and special representatives of the Secretary – General are engaged in mediation and preventive diplomacy throughout the world. In some trouble spots, the mere presence of a skilled envoy can prevent the escalation of tension. This work is often undertaken in cooperation with regional organizations.

PREVENTIVE DISARMAMENT:-

Complementing preventive diplomacy is preventive disarmament, which seeks to reduce the number of small arms in conflict – prone regions. In El Salvador, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Timor – Leste and elsewhere this has entailed demobilizing combat forces, as well as collecting and destroying their weapons as part of an overall peace agreement. Destroying yesterday's weapons prevents their being used in tomorrow's wars.

There are numerous United nations declarations on the importance of peace education. Ban Ki Moon, the former United Nations Secretary General, dedicated the International Day of Peace 2013 to Peace Education in and effort to refocus minds and financing on the pre – eminence of peace education as the means to bring about a culture of peace. Koichiro Matsuura, the immediate past Director – General of UNESCO, has written of peace education as being of "Fundamental importance to the mission of UNESCO and the United Nations."

Each year the International Day of peace is observed around the world on 21st September. The General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples.

The United Nations Member states adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 because they understood that it would not be possible to build a peaceful world if steps were not taken to achieve economic and social development for all people everywhere, and ensure that their rights were protected.

The Sustainable Goals cover a broad range of issues, including poverty, hunger, health, education, climate change, gender equality, water, sanitation, energy, environment and social justice.

Sustainable Development Goal 16, "Peace, Justice and strong institutions," calls for promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

A peaceful society is one where there is justice and equality for everyone. Peace will enable a sustainable environment to take shape and a sutainable environment will help promote peace.

The Secretary – General of the United Nations states that the 2018 theme is "The Right to Peace – The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights at 70." The theme celebrates the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He says, "It is time all nations and all peoples live up to the words of the Universal declaration of Human Rights, which recognizes the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human race. This years marks the 70th anniversary of that landmark document," – Secretary General, Antonio Guterres.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states in Article 3 – "Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person." These elements build the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

PEACE EDUCATION:-

Peace education can be thought as encouraging a commitment to peace as a settled disposition and enhancing the confidence of the individual as an individual agent of peace; as informing the student on the consequences of war and social injustice; as informing the student on the value of peaceful and just social structures and working to uphold or develop such social structures; as encouraging the student to love the world and to imagine a peaceful future; and as caring for the student and encouraging the student to care for others.

Since the early decades of the 20th century, peace education programs around the world have represented a spectrum of focal themes, including anti – nuclearism, international understanding, environmental responsibility, communication skills, nonviolence, conflict resolution techniques, democracy, human rights awareness, tolerance of diversity, coexistence and gender equality, among others.

Academic discourse on the subject has increasingly recognized the need for a broader, more holistic approach to peace education, a review of field – based projects reveals that three variations of peace education are most common ; Conflict resolution training, democracy education, and human rights education.

PEACE EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM:

Adams Lori posits;-

1. Education lays the foundation of society;
-    As a general rule, the more educated we are, the more civilized is our society and the richer the quality of life.
2. Children are the key to the future.
-    What children learn determines quality of life as time goes on.
-    In particular, the values children develop and later adopt as adults have direct bearing on our quality of life.
3. Schools are not isolated entities – they reflect their local community;
-    Key elements of local and global communities are; how equitable and just living conditions are, how caring are its members?
-    If we don't know what we value, we can't protect it.
4. Education plays a vital role in raising our awareness of social issues – political, economic, health, education – of issues that affect our personal lives but also issues that impact on the global village.
5. In some way children and adults must take action to do something to make a DIFFERENCE in building a more peaceful world.
6. Laying the foundation of a peaceful world is one of the greatest challenges for families, schools, communities, governments.
-    Peace starts at home, spreads to school activities and recess school yard, extends to community, (protect environment; volunteer time and help to others) becomes part of workplace (amount of team work, cooperation; job satisfaction) leads to involvement in activities that address global iniquities and injustices.

     It is also sharing belief and vision that we live together on this planet, no matter what peace, situation or circumstance each of us may find ourselves in as individuals, we each have a special role to play through our own daily lives to create peaceful lives, schools, communities and countries.

One of the most important missions of humanity in the 21st century is to bring people together as one with the shared goal of creating world peace.

Peace education should be made an integral part of primary, secondary, and tertiary curriculum throughout the states in Nigeria.

TEACHING PEACE EDUCATION AT GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY UGWU – OMU NIKE, ENUGU:-

As a well acclaimed school in Enugu State of Nigeria, we shall strive to create a school environment in which students and staff excel, parents and community care. A strong learning partnership founded in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation between all stakeholders is the key. Standards of academic excellence enhanced by a character education program provided the framework for each student achieving to his/her full potential as a learner and caring citizen both local and globally.

Our vision shall be to build a peaceful school community which should lie at the heart of our academic and co – curricular programs. We should initiate peace programs like GO UNI Peacemakers Symposiums, and International Peace Pat Exchanges. Projects will help to develop responsible citizenship.

Through doing something, we can make a difference in creating families, schools and communities that are non – violent, peaceful and environmentally responsive.

Our emphasis is to meet standards of academic excellence and to develop valuable life skills of good character. Understanding the relationship between school discipline and student achievement, we will strive to provide an international holistic education in which all students find success academically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

Character development, being a primary focus begin and is nurtured in the home. When home and school support one another through consistent expectations of student behavior, consistent modeling of positive character traits and consistent rules and routines, children grow to be happy, healthy productive citizens.

EXPECTATIONS FOR GLOBAL STUDENTS:-

In such a world class school, you enter the building and see students engaged in their learning. The students are happy and ready to work. They love school and so they are seldom sick. They hate to miss school. The students respect each other and are on task.

WHAT ARE THEIR QUALITIES?

- **VALUE AND RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING.**

Learning is essential to our existence. Lifelong learning is an indispensable tool for every career and organization. Today, continuous learning forms a necessary part in acquiring critical thinking skills and discovering new ways of relating to people from different cultures.

- **DEMONSTRATE SELF DISCIPLINE IN LEARNING AND BEHAVIOR.**

Self - discipline is a learned behavior that not every student has. The ability for a student to be able to monitor and control her own behavior is a concept that many teachers would love their students to have, but unfortunately not all of them do. For the students that do have a strong sense of self – discipline, studies show that they outrank their peers in terms of academic performance. Self – discipline is also related to student's academic success.

- **SHOW PRIDE AND RESPECT FOR SELF, OTHERS AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**.
Pride is a feeling of satisfaction derived from accomplishment or acknowledgement of valued characteristics associated with the self. Self – respect (self – esteem) encompasses and accords the self honour and dignity. Being "down to earth" is an expression of a humble and practical orientation to life.

- **ARE PUNCTUAL AND ATTEND SCHOOL DAILY**.
Punctuality is a habit of attending a task on time. In a wider sense, it's a habit of doing things at the right time. A student who is punctual always get success in his studies. In school time, punctuality ensures that you will arrive to class on time and so will not miss any part of the lesson.

ARE ORGANIZED AND PREPARED TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS.
In active learning, students engage with the material, participate in the class, and collaborate with each other. As an Educator, you don't expect your students simply to listen and memorize; instead, have them help demonstrate a process, analyze an argument, or apply a concept to a real – world situation.

- **RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF READING AND READ DAILY**.
Evidence suggests that students who read for enjoyment everyday not only perform better in reading tests than those who don't, but also develop a broader vocabulary, increased general knowledge and a better understanding of other cultures.

ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR ACTIONS.
What this means is for students to own up to their wrong doing, take responsibility for their actions and be able to apologize for what they have done wrong. For some students, this is not an easy task. For students who live in uncertain family situations or communities, this may seem asking them to fly to the sun. Learning to take responsibility for our own actions can be a lifelong process and teachers are well placed to provide support and guidance for students.

- **RECOGNIZE AND UNDERSTAND THEIR ROLE IN THE LOCAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITIES**.
    Peace education activities promote the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help people either to prevent the occurrence of conflict, resolve conflicts peacefully, or create social conditions conducive to peace. Core values of non – violence and social justice are central to peace education.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:-

Educating for peace will help students to be aware of interdependence, compassion, and sensitivity for the needs of others and to encourage them to help in building a nation and not in destroying it. The practice of peace education is an opportunity to promote the total welfare of students, advocate for their justice and equitable treatment of youths and promote individual and social responsibility, for both educators and learners. To know and live by international standards of human rights, gender and racial equality.

Peace education activities will promote the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help people either to prevent the occurrence of conflict, resolve conflicts peacefully, or create social condition conducive to peace. Core values of nonviolence and social justice are central to peace education. Peace works teaches students skills such as positive communication, anger management, stress management, conflict resolution and goal setting. These skills have real – world applications, including solving conflicts with peers, making positive contributions in the community and setting personal learning goals.

Nonviolence is the personal practice of being harmless to self and others under every condition. It comes from the belief that hurting people, animals or the environment is unnecessary to achieve an outcome and refers to a general philosophy of abstention from violence. Nonviolence can be a safe, effective and lasting way to defeat injustice but like any other science it takes knowledge, courage and determination. The six principles of nonviolence are; Respect everyone including yourself, Always include constructive alternatives, Be aware of the long term, Look for win – win solutions, Use power carefully, and Claim positive legacy Nonviolence is manifested through values such as

respect for human rights, freedom and trust. Social justice is realized by principles of equality, responsibility and solidarity.

In order to achieve these ideals, peace education programs across the world address a wide range of themes. These include nonviolence, conflict resolution techniques, democracy, disarmament, gender equality, human rights, environmental responsibility, history, communication skills, coexistence, and international understanding and tolerance of diversity.

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