ADULT EDUCATION STRATEGIES FOR AMELIORATING COMMUNAL CLASHES IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined adult education strategies for ameliorating communal clashes in Enugu State. Specifically, the study identified: peace education, sensitization methods and youth empowerment strategies, as strategies for resolving communal clashes. The study was a descriptive survey research design. Three research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population comprised 4030 respondents, comprising 4012 registered members of community based youths organizations and eighteen (18) community leaders of the eighteen communities in Nsukka Local Government Area. The sample for the study was 382 respondents. The questionnaire was face validated by three experts. Cronbach alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.88. Data collected were analyzed using percentage, mean and t-test. The study found that multicultural education, use of local knowledge to educate members on conflict management, integration of peace principles into every subject in schools, the use of teaching and learning methods that promote participation, cooperation, problem solving and respect for differences were identified as peace education strategies for resolving communal clashes. The study also found sensitization in the form of the organization of multicultural promotion gathering, workshops and conferences at the community level, use of hand bills, seminars and talk shows, liaising with community leaders, NGO's and churches, mass and local media as strategies for resolving communal clashes. Furthermore, instituting programmes that will train and empower youth with leadership skills, personal, social, conflict management skills, peace-building knowledge as well as livelihood skills were identified as youth empowerment strategies for ameliorating communal clashes. T-test analysis of the mean response of youths and community leaders on youth empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes indicated a significant difference (P < 0.05). However, mean response of youths and community leaders on peace education strategies for resolving communal clashes indicated a no significant difference (P > 005). Thus hypotheses one was rejected while hypothesis two was retained. The study recommends that peace education should be made compulsory in schools right from nursery school.

Keywords: Communal conflict, Adult education, Peace education, Youth empowerment

Introduction

As humans, interaction is inevitable. That is, individuals and community members cannot avoid interacting with one another. In as much as interaction is unavoidable, same is applicable to conflict. Conflict is therefore a natural human phenomenon which may occur when persons or groups come together. Based on this understanding, Hanachor and Okanezi (2018) pointed out that one of the results of social interaction according to sociologists is conflict. The term is as old as human existence, and has received considerable attention in education literature and continues to be a theme of concern to scholars. It has been defined as disagreement and struggle between parties.

Conflicts as defined by Bloisi (2007) is a disagreement between two or more parties who perceive that they have incompatible concerns. To Bloisi (2007), individuals, groups, organization, countries do experience conflicts whenever an action by one party is perceived as preventing or interfering with the goals, needs or actions of another. Similarly, Nonyelu (2009) defined conflict as all manners of disagreements or dissenting opinions or interests on issues or matters affecting two or more people. According to Olorunda (2018) conflict is an express struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scare resources, and interference from others in achieving personal goals. Going by their definitions, conflict can be defined as a clash over social issues, beliefs, ideologies, resources etc. When conflict occurs within an individual, it is called intra-conflict when it occurs between persons or group of persons; it is called interpersonal or inter-group conflict. When this scenario is between communities, it is communal conflict etc.

Communal conflict is defined as a conflict between non-state groups that are organized along a shared communal identity (Brosché & Elfversson, 2012). Conflict, on this definition, refers to a social situation in which a minimum of two actors strive to acquire at the same moment in time an available set of scarce resources. According to Brosché and Elfversson (2012) the actors may be villages, ethnic groups, religious groups or self-defense militias. The common factor is that they are organized according to an identity. This definition does not necessarily exclude conflicts between supporters of different political candidates, as it is common for politics and ethnicity in Africa, which means that political support is often mobilized through communal identity (Eifert, Miguel & Posner, 2010).

Communal conflicts are often shorter and less destructive in terms of fatalities than state-based conflicts. Communal conflicts are typically between groups within a society, like different ethnic groups, religious groups or social classes. These groups may have a long history of conflicts which may be caused by things like competition for resources or identity politics. State based conflicts on the other hand are between states or nations. These conflicts may be motivated by things like territorial disputes, political ideologies, or economic interest. Communal conflicts tend to be more localized in a smaller geographical scope with less sophisticated weapon. State based conflict can involve an entire state or nation, be more methodological and strategic. Notwithstanding the gravity associated with communal conflict, the presence of conflict in community means that there is no peace and when peace is absent in a place, there will be no development. For example, communal conflict between the nomadic herdsmen from northern Nigeria and the agrarian communities of Benue, Taraba, and Plateau States has escalated in recent times and is spreading across boundaries, threatening the country's security, food security and stability.

Where peace thrives, the members of such community will come together to plan and find solution to their common problems or the developmental needs of the community. This is only possible if the approach of reaching a consensus between parties will not result to reoccurrence in the future. This is because resolution of one conflict in some cases may give rise to another. Therefore, methods employed in resolving conflict is important and should be carefully thought out if sustainable peaceful communities are to be achieved.

Conflict resolution strategy according to Miller (2003) is variety of approaches adopted for settling conflicts through the utilization of amicable and constructive ideas cutting across many

areas of human endeavor which include Guidance and counseling, philosophy, history, psychology, sociology and adult education. However, attention is given to adult education.

Adult education is human oriented and has proven to be a worthy tool used specifically to solve the perpetual global problems and challenges ravaging societies as a result of conflict. Through its numerous programmes, Adult education prepares and equips citizens with necessary skills, knowledge and attitude for all situations and circumstances. With respect to conflict resolution, a number of literatures have indicated that adult education strategies have enormous roles to play in resolving conflicts in Nigeria. Some of the strategies are peace education, dialogue, conscientization, advocacy, negotiation, mediation, peace education, sensitization etc. (Madu & Ewelum, 2014). For the purpose of this study, the researcher focused on peace education, sensitization and youth empowerment.

Peace education is seen as educational activities which is given to individuals to promote and encourage peace in the areas or situations of conflict and crisis. According to Dupuy (2011) there is no uniform concept of peace education. Peace education basically develop in the individual's skills, attitudes and knowledge which produces tolerance, care and respect. It is considered key because it inculcate the necessary skills, knowledge and attitude to all irrespective of age, gender, religion and socio-economic status. In schools, peace education is integrated into all aspects of the curriculum at all levels as enunciated by the UNESCO (UNESCO, 2001). In the views of Schmidt (2006) peace education result to empowering people with skills, attitude and knowledge to build, maintain and restore relationships at all levels of human interaction. Resulting in the creation of a safe world based on justice and human rights and build sustainable environment and protect it from exploitation and war.

Sensitization is another adult education strategy for ameliorating communal conflict. According to Terry Fiona (2016), sensitization is defined as a process of gaining knowledge and understanding of the context of conflict in other to ensure that programming is informed by a nuanced understanding of the reality on ground. Furthermore, it is the process of learning to see a context in a way that is alert to the nuances of politics of conflict. In other words, it is about learning to see the context of a conflict through the lens of social, political and economic factors that are at play. Operationally, It is an act of creating awareness or making somebody or members of a community to be aware of something, especially a problem. Adult education as a discipline is concerned with creating opportunity for individuals to be aware of some burning issues confronting them. One of these burning issues is that of conflict. Through sensitization as an adult education strategy, individuals can be made aware of the need for tolerance and peaceful coexistence. Adult education aims at organizing a peace or conflict awareness programmes for people on how to handle conflict.

Community sensitization and mobilization can be organized through community outreach where information on peace is disseminated to people either through interpersonal contact, mass and local media channels. In sensitizing communities, trusted authorities and community members can be engaged to disseminate information to create credibility to the programme. These trusted individuals may be teachers to act as educators in educating families, community leaders among others. Individuals may be sensitized through workshops, seminars, conferences etc. Posters or pictures on those affected by conflicts could serve as a means of creating awareness.

Most of the times sensitization are carried out majorly by the youths for proper out reach. Around the world, youth are driving change and claiming respect for fundamental freedoms and rights. More than ever, are at the forefront of global social, economic and political developments. Young people, as members of a dynamic group in society, play a crucial role in positively transforming conflict situations and in building the foundations of democratic and peaceful societies. They are pro-active agents in their communities, in their schools, work places, sports teams, youth groups and universities. With improved conditions for the youths and their communities, together with opportunities to learn, work and participate in decisions that affect them, there is more to what they can achieve when it comes to peace building and conflict resolution. Therefore, youth empowerment is a necessity.

Youth empowerment is a process where children and young people are encouraged to take charge of their lives. They do this by addressing their situation and then take action in order to improve their access to resources and transform their consciousness through their beliefs, values, and attitudes (Kar, Pascual & Chickering, 1999) Youth empowerment aims to improve quality of life. Youth empowerment is achieved through participation in youth empowerment programmes. These programmes can be through non-profit organizations, government organizations, schools or private organizations. Youth empowerment is often addressed as a gateway to intergenerational equity, civic engagement and democracy building. Activities may focus on youth-led media, youth rights, youth councils, youth activism, youth involvement in community decision-making, and other methods (Sazama & Young, 2006).

Communal conflicts are a widespread problem in various parts of Nigeria which have devastated human security through loss of life, loss of livelihood and large-scale displacement. In addition, the majority of the leader's acts in manner that makes one wonder if there are still some conscience and moral values left in them. The youths appear to be lacking the social support and economic opportunities, and seize every opportunity to get into violent activities. As a response in ameliorating communal conflict in Nigeria, several studies were embarked. Madu and Ewelum (2014); discussed on the causes and consequences of communal clashes in Nigeria, Ebe (2014) examined adult education strategies in resolving conflict in Nigeria. Some focused on the youth empowerment strategies for resolving conflict in Nigeria (Dike & Dike, 2017; Ofem & Ajayi, 2008; Mecha, 2013). Indeed, there is very little if any evidence-based research on adult education strategies for ameliorating communal clashes in Enugu State. Hence, the present study.

Purpose of the Study

The study examined adult education strategies for ameliorating communal clashes in Nsukka LGA of Enugu State. Specifically, the study identified:

1. Peace education strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA
2. Sensitization methods for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA; and
3. Youth empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA;

Research Questions

1. What are the peace education strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA?
2. What are the sensitization methods for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA?

3. What are the youth empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA?

Hypothesis
1. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of youths and community leaders on sensitization methods for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA

2. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of youths and community leaders on youth empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA

Methodology

Research Design
The study adopted the descriptive survey research design.

Area of the Study
The study was carried out in Nsukka Local Government Area (LGA), Enugu State.

Population and Sampling Technique for the Study
The population comprised 4030 respondents, comprising 4012 registered members of community based youths organizations and eighteen (18) community leaders of the eighteen communities in Nsukka Local Government Area. The sample for the study was 382 respondents comprising 364 registered youth members of community based youth organizations which were sampled randomly and the entire 18 traditional community leaders.

Instruments for Data Collection
A structured questionnaire designed by the researcher was the instrument used for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of two sections; I and II. Section I provided personal information of the respondents while section II was made up of three clusters addressing the three specific objectives/research questions. Responses to the items in the questionnaire were based on a four-point Likert rating scale, ranging from Strongly agree (SA) (4 points), Agree (A) (3 points), Disagree (D) (2 points), Strongly disagree (SD) (1 points). The instrument was duly validated by three experts. It was subjected to a reliability analysis using Cronbach Alpha which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.88.

Data Collection
Direct method was used by the researcher with the assistant of one researcher in distributing and collection of the questionnaire from the respondents. The research assistant was briefed on the modalities for distributing and collecting the questionnaire from the respondents on the spot. This ensured that the respondents appropriately completed the questionnaire. Thus, there was 100% return rate of the questionnaire, and these were duly used for data analysis.

Data Analysis
Data collected for this study were subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentages, mean and standard deviation) were used to answer the research questions. A mean of 2.50 was used as the benchmark for decision making for each item, since a four-point rating scale was used for the study. Thus any item with a mean of 2.50 and above was considered as accepted by the respondents, while any item with a mean below 2.50 was considered as unaccepted by the respondents. Inferential statistics was used to

test the differences between the mean responses of the youths and community leaders at $P < 0.05$.

Results

Three hundred and eighty two respondents completed the questionnaire. The responses of the respondents on each of the items in the questionnaire were computed. The results are presented on the Tables according to the three research questions and two hypotheses that guided the study.

Research Question 1: *What are the peace education strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA?*

Table 1: Mean responses of the respondents on peace education strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA

S/N	Peace education strategies for resolving communal clashes	X	SD	Decision
1	Multicultural education	3.14	0.76	Accepted
2	The use of local knowledge to educate members on conflict management	2.78	0.78	Accepted
3	Integration of peace principles into every subjects in schools	3.06	0.75	Accepted
4	The use of dialogue methods in schools and communities	2.62	0.80	Accepted
5	The use of teaching and learning methods that promote participation, cooperation, problem solving and respect for differences	2.93	0.98	Accepted

N= 382, X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

Result on Table 1, reveals that multicultural education, the use of local knowledge to educate members on conflict management, integration of peace principles into every subjects in schools, dialogue methods in schools and communities and the use of teaching and learning methods that promote participation, cooperation, problem solving and respect for differences were peace education strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA (X>2.50).

Research Question 2: *What are the sensitization methods for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA?*

Table 2: Mean responses of respondents on the sensitization methods for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA

S/N	Sensitization methods for resolving communal clashes	X	SD	Decision
1	Organizing multicultural promotion gathering	2.80	0.87	Accepted
2	Organizing workshops at community level	2.67	0.89	Accepted
3	Organizing conferences at community level	2.55	0.96	Accepted
4	Through seminars and talk shows	2.76	0.95	Accepted
5	Use of hand bills	2.84	0.86	Accepted
6	Liaising with community leaders, NGO's and churches	2.71	0.76	Accepted
7	Mass and local media	3.16	0.73	Accepted

N= 382, X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

Result on Table 2, shows that items 1-7 were identified as the sensitization strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka Local Government Area (X > 2.50).

Research Question 3 *What are the youth empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA?*

Table 3: Mean responses of respondents on the youth empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA

S/N	Youths empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes	X	SD	Decision
1	Peer education	3.32	0.62	Accepted
2	Organization of youth clubs with peace development activities	3.10	0.65	Accepted
3	Institute leadership training programmes for youths	3.15	0.74	Accepted
4	Empower youths with self-reliant skills	3.13	0.69	Accepted
5	Empower youths with personal, social and conflict management skills	2.51	0.97	Accepted
6	Enhanced the peace-building knowledge of young people	2.87	0.92	Accepted

N= 382, X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

From Table 3, it can be seen that all items had mean scores above 2.50 indicating that all the items were identified as youth empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes.

Hypothesis 1: *There is no significant difference in the mean responses of youths and community leaders on sensitization strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA*

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the mean responses of youths and community leaders on sensitization strategies for resolving communal clashes

Groups	N	X	SD	df	t_{cal}	P-value	Decision
Youths	364	2.81	0.46	380	0.70	0.48	Not Rejected
Community Leaders	18	2.73	0.37				
Total	382						

N = Sample, X = Mean, SD = Standard deviation, df= Degrees of freedom, t-cal. = t-calculated, P-value = Probability value

The results of the t-test analysis on Table 4 indicated that youth respondents had higher mean response (2.81) relative to the mean response of community leaders (2.73). The differences in the mean response was not significant at 0.05 level of significance (P-value = 0.48 > 0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Hypothesis 2: *There is no significant difference in the mean responses of youths and community leaders on youth empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes in Nsukka LGA.*

Table 5: t-test Analysis of the mean responses of youths and community leaders on youth empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes

Groups	N	X	SD	df	t_{cal}	P-value	Decision
Youths	364	3.03	0.59	380	2.38	0.02	Rejected
Community Leaders	18	2.69	0.43				
Total	382						

N = Sample, X = Mean, SD = Standard deviation, df= Degrees of freedom, t-cal. = t-calculated, P-value = Probability value

The mean response for youth respondents is 3.03 greater than the mean response for the community leaders' (2.69) (Table 5). The differences in mean responses between youths and community leader respondents was significant because the P-value (0.02) is less than 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there was a significant difference in the mean response of youth and community leaders on youth's empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

The study found out that multicultural education, use of local knowledge to educate members on conflict management, integration of peace principles into every subject in schools, the use of teaching and learning methods that promote participation, cooperation, problem solving and respect for differences were identified as peace education strategies for resolving communal clashes. This is in line with Schmidt (2006) with the view that peace education results to empowering people with skills, attitude and knowledge to build, maintain and restore relationships at all levels of human interaction. Resulting in the creation of a safe world based on justice and human rights and build sustainable environment and protect it from exploitation and war.

Again, it was observed from the study that the organization of multicultural promotion gathering, organizing workshops and conferences at the community level, seminars and talk shows, use of hand bills, liaising with community leaders, NGO's and churches, use of mass and local media were identified as some of the sensitization strategies for resolving communal clashes. This finding is supported in a study by Terry Fiona (2016), who defined sensitization as a process of gaining knowledge and understanding of the context of conflict in other to ensure that programming is informed by the understanding of the reality on ground.

The study also found out that peer education, organization of youth clubs with peace development activities such as boys' brigade, girls guide, young men and women Christian Association, age groups, sport club etc as some of the empowerment will instill in them the spirit of brotherhood and the right attitude. This will go a long way to eschew any form of differences that may want to breed elements of conflict and as well turn them into agents of peace.

Furthermore, instituting training and empowerment programmes at the community level are also necessary tools. This is because, every child will have access to acquire skills, knowledge and good behavior ranging from leadership skills, personal, social, conflict management skills, peace-building knowledge and self-reliant skills. When youths get engaged this way, they will be empowered both in their minds, character and hand, and such will make them busy, productive and not give room for negative thought and bad influence. This finding corroborates with earlier report by Ofem and Ajayi (2008) who reported that a proper youth empowerment framework can effectively engage the youth, "mind, soul and body" thereby distracting attention to current issues that results to youth restiveness.

T-test analysis of the mean response of youths and community leaders on youth empowerment strategies for resolving communal clashes indicated a significant difference ($P < 0.05$). However, mean response of youths and community leaders on peace education strategies for resolving communal clashes indicated a no significant difference ($P > 005$). Thus hypotheses

one was rejected while hypothesis two was retained. This shows similarity in the opinion of youths and community leaders on the variables studied.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that adult education strategies such as peace education, sensitization and youth empowerment, are capable of achieving a sustainable communal conflict resolution. Adult education is wide in scope and all-encompassing in its approaches and has the tendency of connecting to everyone through its numerous media of transmissions. It can also instill into individuals, the right knowledge, skills and attitude for peace and conflict resolution.

Recommendations

1. The organization of youth's societies that will be working hand in hand with government council must be encouraged.
2. Youths in every community should be empowered with livelihood skills as well as with positive orientations that will make him or her live a live that will contribute to the progress of man and his society.
3. Peace education should be made compulsory in schools right from nursery schools.
4. Seminars, workshops and conferences on peace building and conflict resolution should be organized periodically to enable the people recognize, control and better manage conflict situations.

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