Man, Peace and Peace Education

Oluwaseun Bamidele
Institute of Peace, Security and Governance, Ekiti State University, Nigeria

Abstract: The essence of education is the development of human potentialities and ultimately, the human self. Since the self is continuously changing, peace education becomes imperative if a planned development of the human self is not achieved. Based on this, this article examines the nature of man in relation to peace and the role of human development and peace education in contributing to a peaceful environment. This paper argues that peace education will also foster the development of man to live and work in dignity, participate in the development of peace and the establishment of processes for compromise and negotiation. This paper concludes that education for peace will produce assertive humankind who will individually and collectively be committed to autonomy of thought and action, eradicate the culture of violence and develop sustainable peace.

Key words: Civilization, Education, Man, Peace, Peace education, Culture of Violence

Introduction

“Since wars begins in the minds of men, it is in the mind of men that defenses of peace must be constituted”

(UNESCO Constitution, 1945)

“Although attempting to bring about world peace through the internal transformation of individuals is difficult, it is the only way. . . . Peace must first be developed within an individual. And I believe that love, compassion, and altruism are the fundamental basis for peace. Once these qualities are developed within an individual, he or she is then able to create an atmosphere of peace and harmony. This atmosphere can be expanded and extended from the individual to his family, from the family to the community and eventually to the whole world”.

(Dalai Lama, in Thich Nhat Hanh, 1991: vii)

In 1945, the United Nations was established to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”, “to reaffirm faith in the ...dignity and worth of the human person [Man] [and] in the equal rights of man”, “to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained”, and “to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom...” (Harris, 2002). Peace education has developed as a means to achieve these goals, and is “directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms” (Duffy, 2000). It promotes “understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups” and furthers "the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace” (Salomon, 2002). Peace education is in line with the General Assembly’s resolution 23/243 of 1999, Article 1, which promotes non-violence through education, dialogue and cooperation, and promotes all human rights and fundamental freedoms of man. Peace education plays a vital role in equipping nations to be more humane, despite the trials and tribulations they may face.

Corresponding author email: oluwaseun.bamidele@gmail.com
©2012/2015 International Assembly Journal of International Social Studies
Website: http://www.iajiss.org
Peace education is the education of man (humanity), without any discrimination of race, caste, creed, language, nationality or other differences. This education continues throughout the life of every man, leading them to be just, peaceful and nonviolent. Only peace education can lead to a real peace on this earth. It has been said that if we are to reach real peace we shall have to begin with man. Peace is not just the absence of war; it is the practice of love. In a peaceful society man would work together to resolve conflicts, develop strong morals, treat each other with justice, satisfy basic needs, and respect each other. In essence, they would live in unity. The aim is not to achieve a perfect place to live, but to promote more unity and peace throughout the earth. There is no happiness greater than peace, which is linked with the practice of love.

Peace can develop within man. 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. Our impression is that in Nigeria there is, in general, a greater stress on inner peace than in the West, where there is more emphasis on outer peace. East and West must come together, as the world needs both. This is known as holistic inner-outer peace. It has both spiritual and material dimensions. The sacred texts of the world’s great religions can help us better understand holistic peace. Peace education would not exist unless man throughout the earth believed that global peace is attainable through a multifaceted effort but starting with the education of man. Peace education is strengthened through the will-power and efforts of those who actively promote it, for they are aware of the terrible consequences if they do not. The horrors and suffering within our society and worldwide can be reduced if we have the strong will to act. In the words of the philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan “We must will peace with our whole body and soul, our feelings and instincts, our flesh and its affections”. In more critical terms, peace can be seen as both a process and a goal (Deepa and Arul Lawrence, 2013). This opens up a particular focus on the process by which peace, a self-conscious and reflexive goal, may be achieved. If peace is seen solely a strategic goal, it would focus on mutual preservation and never move beyond the preliminary stages relating to security. But there are other, more inspiring, possibilities. That is, the idea that the essence of peace is the development of human potential and ultimately, the human self.

Since the human self is involved in continuous process of change and evolution, peace education becomes a necessity for such development and promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men. This involves the rights of everyone, freedom of expression, opinion and information, adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, tolerance, pluralism and the creation of an environment conducive to peace. The great advantage of education is that the development of peace need not be haphazard, but can rather be purposeful and directed towards noble goals, as human intelligence may be capable of designing. The universe is anthropocentric, whether we look at it from the religious and biblical stories of creation, from other national and cultural myths of creation, or scientifically through the concept of evolution. All things in the world are “made” for Man. Equipped with this intelligence, man becomes the homo creator, the inventor, the discoverer and the true progeny of Prometheus.

In the process of evolution, man’s struggle for survival and “meaningful existence” created so-called “modern civilization”, which is materialistic and characterized by an assemblage of gadgetries and other artifacts of scientific and technological inventions. All these he did in his search for “peace”, comfort and satisfaction. However, like the Tantalus of old, he found himself in the cycle of forever striving but forever unsatisfied. Heibonner (1978) has described this result as the “Civilization Malaise”, in which man is overwhelmed by the inventions of his own hand, is eventually displaced from the centre, and becomes de-humanized and enslaved in his own world. This situation is characterized by Kraus (1973) as the “Syndrome of the Sorcerer’s Apprentice”, in which the sorcerer’s apprentice (Man), in imitation of his master (God), ordered his master’s magic broom
(human brain or intelligence) to fetch water (provision of “modern” amenities). However, he did not know how to stop the broom from fetching more water, until he eventually drowned in the flood of water in his small cave (the world).

The above is the predicament in which the 21st century man finds himself. The response from philosophers of the existentialist mold is to decry the loss of man’s authenticity and freedom and to call for readjustment in the imbalance between man and materials and between man and education. The religionists come out with ringing denunciations of the materialism that has dominated man and overwhelmed his spiritual self. “What profiteth a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”, the Bible rhetoric asks. But what is the educational response to this predicament? The simple answer, as educational philosopher Bjerstedt (1990) sees it, is “peace education”, or more education at all levels, at all times and in all conditions. Given the right education, in adequate doses, at every stage of human existence, it is believed that the position of man as the centre point, the rationale and the director of all peace can be restored.

It is from this optimistic point of view that this paper is titled “Man, Peace and Peace Education”. It is intended to examine the role of man towards peace, whether as an individual, as a member of a community or as a citizen of the world. It will demonstrate that, from whatever perspective we look at man, he should still be the director of peace. And as the initiator, as well as the beneficiary, of peace, all these conceptions of his roles have an implication for peace education. The world is anthropocentric and peace education should give meaning to this idea. But the first question is: What is Man? And knowing this will make us appreciate his role regarding peace and thus, the importance of peace education.

Conceptual framework of peace education

A clear conceptualization of ‘peace education’ is essential when developing a wider body of scholarship and knowledge. Conceptual clarity is also crucial if we want to benefit from experience and lessons learned from existing peace education initiatives (Salomon 2002: 4). Reardon (1999), defines Peace education as “the transmission of knowledge about requirements of, the obstacles to, and possibilities for achieving and maintaining peace, training in skills for interpreting the knowledge, and the development of reflective and participatory capacities for applying the knowledge to overcoming problems and achieving possibilities.” The field of Peace education challenges the belief that human beings are inherently violent and thus creates a space from within which the forwarding of the argument that Peace education will address structural and cultural violence against human beings can grow. Peace Education promotes understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups and furthers activities geared towards the maintenance of sustainable and holistic positive peace. Peace Education in this article specifically targeted at the human kinds which is being proposed as the way out of cultural and structural violence against human kind. It is therefore paramount that an understanding of Peace Education as it is envisaged is brought to the fore.

Over the years, Education has been looked at as a way of promoting a positivistic scientific outlook and discouraging human values including Peace. Under the ideal of value-free positivist and reductionist knowledge the whole concept of education was viewed narrowly as teaching facts of various subjects. The aspect of education building the bridge towards life skills was shelved and instead education approached only from a theoretical underpinning that did not take the social dynamics within society into consideration. With the current education system, the sense of empowerment for human kinds has never been realized. Instead structural and cultural violence against them has continued unabated thus proving that education as it is now is not the panacea for addressing these forms of violence and culminating into Positive peace. This then also shows a need
to develop the humanistic side of education in order to achieve the desired end. Peace Education strives to bridge this gap and propagate the idea that it is the way out of structural and cultural violence against human kinds in the world today. This is not only due to its theoretical background and the value-based approach it brings but also in its delivery as shall be shared below.

Education can be an effective tool in building peace and yet its potential has been highly underutilized. Peace education has been defined as “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” Shapiro, (2002). If peace education is to be adopted to address structural and cultural violence against man/or human kinds, one of its essential aspects to be emphasized upon is its futuristic approach right from the grassroots to the national and international levels. Peace Education would enable man to have an equal platform in contributing to addressing forms of structural and cultural violence and actively participating in seeking effective and sustainable ways of resolving the situation and enhancing all-rounded peace.

Schmidt and Friedman (1988) stated “Peace Education is skill building. It empowers human beings towards creative and non-destructive ways to settle conflict and to live in harmony with themselves, others and their world. Peace Education is holistic. It embraces the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social growth of man within a framework deeply rooted in traditional human values. It is based on philosophy that teaches love, compassion, trust, fairness, cooperation and reverence for the human family and all life on this planet.” Peace education thus is not only based on transmission of theoretical knowledge but goes further to build life skills that are useful in promoting a culture of positive peace within the society. Peace Education provides a dynamism that ensures that even the above principles can be taught thus providing a platform that does not only offer the opportunity for peace education to young people but also to old people.

This is because the values it pushes forward are part of the traditional set up of the society and have only, due to gender disparities and unequal power distribution, been pushed to the periphery and consequently ignored. Peace education is a remedial measure to protect human kinds from falling into the ways of violence in society. It aims at the total development of human potentials. It inculcates higher human and social values in the mind of man and attempts to develop a set of behavioral skills necessary for peaceful living and peace building from which everyone within society lives. These skills include communication, active listening, understanding different perspectives, cooperation, problem solving and critical thinking, decision making, empathy and compassion, mediation, negotiation and conflict resolution, patience and self control, responsible citizenship, imagination, leadership, vision and social responsibility.

Peace education also encompasses transmission of specific knowledge that revolves around self awareness and recognition of prejudice and tackles issues relating to conflict and war, peace and non-violence, environment/ecology, nuclear and other weapons, justice and power, theories of conflict analysis, prevention and resolution, culture, race, gender, religion, human rights, responsibilities, globalization, labor, poverty and international economy, international law and criminal court, health care and United Nations, International system, standards and instruments. It is believed that in the transmission of skills and knowledge, certain attitudes are developed that would influence positive peace and shape a future for man/or human kinds free from structural and cultural violence. This is further supported by Porath, (2003) who stated that Peace Education leads to better learning of cognitive material and heightened motivation and response to learning situations.

The essence of Peace education is that it tries to stop conflicts from breaking out in the first place and is thus strategic in Peace building efforts. The core of peace education lies in the content being
taught, the pedagogy and the skills that the intended audiences learn in order to become peaceful people. As Patrick Whitaker, a British Educational Advisor and former teacher puts it “if Peace is the destination and the journey, then what we teach and how we teach it must not be separated”. Peace education in this instance, would include the study of the origins or history of structural and cultural violence against mankind, the current state of things and develop into coming up with practical strategies dealing with these issues drawing from various peace contexts and concepts. “Peace Education does not teach man what to think, but rather how to think critically. In the process, its holistic and participatory approach may conflict with more traditional curriculum design or strict standards-based schooling. Peace education aims not to reproduce but to transform. It consists of people ‘consciously striving to educate their successors not for the existing state of affairs but so as to make possible a future better humanity’.” (John Dewey, Democracy and Education)

In the world today, the propagation of Peace education must be culture and context specific. It must take into account how key concepts in this case, structural and cultural violence against human kinds, are interpreted as this would inform the approaches for intervention. These attitudes include ecological awareness, self-respect, tolerance, respect for human dignity and difference, intercultural understanding, gender sensitivity, caring and empathy, non-violence and reconciliation, social responsibility, solidarity, world mindedness and resolution.

This article shows that through the integration of Peaceful attitudes, values and skills into the teaching and learning process in the society and making these a part of the curriculum, and also through the passing on of the same to next generation through empowerment trainings, education would have acted as a powerful tool towards addressing structural and cultural violence against man. This is supported by Paolo Freire, who contributes to Peace education by stating that it must be contextual having been based on a questioning attitude adopted towards not only analyzing the violence status quo but also seeking alternatives to this violence. For Peace education to be successful in the addressing of structural and cultural violence against mankind in the world today, how it is delivered is a key characteristic. The Peace education envisioned in this article must rely on dialogue that seeks to enmesh the opinions of not only the person delivering the education but also the recipient. It must strive within democratic space that teaches cooperation rather than competition and results in promoting positive self esteem among the mankind.

The advantage of Peace education over the education system being offered now is that it not only offers a teaching style that adjusts to the developmental needs of the recipients, respecting the various identities and concerns about structural and cultural violence but that it provides a long term solution through its orientations towards peaceful values, beliefs and behaviors. As shall be seen in this article, based on the period of time that there has been existence of structural and cultural violence against man, a sustainable solution that provides a futuristic perspective is the only viable option. Peace education as an aspect provides this alternative over all other forms of conflict resolution and transformation. This is because it is a process that inculcates not only a change of the current status quo but also a change in values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. As Montessori, M. states “those who want war prepare young people for war; but those, who want peace, have neglected young children and adolescents so that they are unable to organize them for peace.”

Peace education provides this perfect opportunity to prepare man for peace. It builds and fortifies a sustainable Culture of Positive Peace through building at an early age, a social imagination about alternatives to structural and cultural violence against man and a building of systematic relationships grounded on sustaining conflict transformation before it gets to be manifested through any form of violence. The addressing of structural and cultural violence against man is also highly supported by the idea of empowerment.
Peace education, according to Harris, I., (2000), is about empowering human kinds with skills, attitudes and knowledge to: Build, maintain, and restore relationships at all levels of human interaction, develop positive approaches towards dealing with conflicts-from the personal to the International, create safe environments, both physically and emotionally, that nurture each individual, create a safe world based on justice and human rights and build a sustainable environment and protect it from violence. Peace Education provides a critical dimension of concrete possibilities for alternatives to the current conditions of structural and cultural violence against man and offers a constructive dimension to complement and apply to all the diverse forms of peace education. The actual experiences of mankind would comprise much of the Peace education and would be more readily understood and would form the core of understanding structural and cultural violence better, its control, reduction and eventual elimination.

This is because peace education also strives to foster human dignity, its recognition, fulfillment and universalization and this can only be achieved when the whole world has eliminated all forms of cultural and structural violence against human kinds and has inculcated a culture of peace. The transformative element of Peace Education lies in its participatory nature. Peace Education relies on families, communities, and social networks to affect positive and lasting change. The notion ‘think globally, act locally’ is central to education for a culture of Peace because it strives to create a linkage between theory, practice and the realities on the ground and seeks to find a connection between the grassroots level individual efforts and larger international issues.

**Man as an individual**

In spite of its obvious failure to adequately account for the spirituality of Man, the evolutionary theory offers the most plausible and the most intellectually stimulating explanation of the peace (though not necessarily of the origins) of Man to date. The evolutionary theory also makes possible an orderly direction of that peace for the future. One of the basic principles discovered by evolutionary theory is that man is an evolving organism and always in the in process of becoming. Man is physiologically incomplete and spiritually imperfect, which is important for peace, as well as for Peace Studies. Peace, in the sense that man is imperfect but is in an enviable position of choosing his own destiny and directing the pace of his own perfection. Man is educable in the value-free sense of being capable of changing and of being changed. However, these changes happen with the help of his intelligence, contents, meanings and the available values to which he is exposed. He is able to perceive his own creative ability through the product of his own hand, and the quality of his intelligence thus becomes crucial for the quality of peace that will occur. This is where the dilemma comes in. Man has in his own hand the power to develop himself or to do otherwise (copiously celebrated by the existentialists). There are concerns that man’s incompleteness and the possibility of his process of becoming are both subjects of serious distortions along the evolutionary path. This is exactly what has happened: Man has employed his intelligence in one direction and becomes entrapped in his own creation. He has traded his humanity for a mess of material civilization.

But, perhaps, this paper should stick to the optimistic aspect of man’s dilemma: the possibility of his being educated in the direction of peace. The design of education is the major challenge to man, and peace education has been seriously suggested as the right type of education in this context. Another inherent characteristic of human nature is the possession of culture. Geertz bluntly puts it that “Without men, no culture, certainly: but, equally and more significantly, without culture, no men”. Culture is not something to offer man but has rather evolved with man and is inseparable from human nature. Again, Geertz (1976) puts it that “there are no such things as a human nature independent of culture. Man without culture would not be the clever savages of Loins Golding’s Lord of the Flies thrown back upon the cruel wisdom of their animal instinct; nor even, as classical
anthropological theory would imply, intrinsically talented apes who had somehow failed to find
themselves. They would be unworkable monstrosities with very few useful instincts, fewer
recognizable sentiments and no intellect: mental basket cases”.

Thus, men and culture overlap in their evolution as well as in their interaction. Men are creators of
culture because, in reacting to their environmental conditions, they shape the course of the future
direction of their environment, transform it and create new values. This is the most plausible
explanation of the predicament in which man has found himself. In solving the social, economic,
cultural, technological and scientific problems that beset him, some partial solutions and
achievements are made which pass into the inheritable culture, while new problems are created, the
solution to which constitute new challenges to man. But man must not be simply a problem solver,
but also a problem-poser. Problem-solving as Botkin (1982) notes is an instance of “Shock Learning”,
in that the problem solver is only reacting (scientifically and theoretically) to a conflict or crisis
instead of anticipating such a crisis. On the other hand, change learning, which is a characteristic of
peace education, is marked by its participatory and anticipatory learning modes. The latter form a
good rationale for peace education, since not only must the individual participate actively in the
creation of his own culture but he must also be equipped with anticipatory learning skills to plan for
the future. In not, he will not roll from crisis to crisis and jeopardize his future existence. Only peace
education, with a new content and a new methodology, can ensure that man will acquire both
anticipatory and participatory skills for the future peace of man’s culture.

Man-in-relation

This paper, up to now, has been explaining peace education as if man can exist as an individual and
still be human. It should be noted that man is a being-in-relation, as the existentialist philosophers
would described him. The essentially social nature of man has been celebrated in literature starting
from the famous saying of Aristotle that man is a zoon Politikon (an animal that lives/survives only in
a polis/state), Terence Afer, a Roman comic poet, stated: Homo sum, humani alienum nil est (I am a
man and nothing that pertains to mankind is foreign to me). Donne’s famous poem reads: “No man is
an island entire of itself; everyman is a piece of the continent, a part of the main”. Karl Marx’s
explicit statement on the inter-related nature of man and society is that “Man is not only a social
animal but an animal that can develop into an individual only in society”. Thus, perhaps a more
fundamental characteristic of man is his social and universalistic nature. As a product of a social
relationship, an infant is born into a family and by extension into a community and then a society, in
that order. His growth is to a larger extent determined by the “significant others” in his environment
rather than by his genetic inheritance. Language, which was discussed by Thomas as “the single
human trait that marks us all genetically, setting us apart from all rest of life”, can only develop in a
social setting. Our humanity is dependent on the use of language: “We cannot be human without it;
if we were to be separated from it, our minds would die, as surely as bees lost from hive”, and there,
logically cannot exist one man’s language, in as much as language still serves as a tool of peace.

Peace is the essential basis for all relationships, be it permanent, temporary or evanescent. The relationship
between parents and their children is not guaranteed by the fact that the former gave
birth to the latter and provided materials for survival at a certain point in time, but rather by some
parental and filial feelings which constitute peace. Across cultures there may also be peace links, in
spite of wide physical distances. It is with such universalistic bonds of feeling that peace education
should seek to promote an antidote to excessive feelings of individualism and rabid nationalism
among nations. This is not to suggest an antithesis between the education of the individual man and
his education as a member of society. In fact, it is not possible, as Rousseau long ago discovered, to
educate the individual apart from the society. It is the society that provides the conducive
environment and a resource for man’s learning. Man is interdependent, whether he lives within the family unit, the village or township, community, or as a citizen of a nation-state. This interdependence makes it obligatory for him to seek to provide for those who are dependent on others. He thus must tackle economic, social, cultural, political and moral issues. All these provide him with motivation to acquire the necessary skills to solve such issues.

Two of the most intractable issues that are raised for mankind appear to be those of survival, security and welfare on one hand, and the quality of life on the other. In poor and underdeveloped nations, the issue of finding three or even one square meals a day is an existential reality which overshadows all talks of quality of life or peace. It is only once the stomach is filled that one can think or participate in any meaningful cultural activities - except of course in the dubious culture of poverty which can be equated with Galtung’s pure economical “Culture of Violence”. But even at the non-economic moral and structural planes, the basic struggle for existence has given rise to callousness and insensitivity toward basic human and societal values (Galtung 1990).

The greed of powerful individuals and privileged elites to monopolize public wealth and political power at the expense of the under-privileged and disadvantaged is a crucial factor in this value-crisis. The values which need to be promoted, in spite of the needs of basic human survival, include those of an individual’s freedom of expression, participation in societal ideals, respect for the basic rights and needs of others, tolerance and acceptance of individual differences and being each other’s brother’s keeper. When all these are integrated with the material needs of man, the basic human dignity which is the core of his humanity will be restored. Quality will be added to survival, even in the struggle to escape from the clutches of poverty.

The crisis posed by man’s existence in society is, perhaps, much more clearly dramatized in the developed and affluent societies than in the poor and developing world. It seems that the more affluent a society is, the greater the danger to the individual’s peace and self actualization. Affluence seems to give rise to insatiable passion to produce more and to consume more, until humanity appears to be locked or trapped in these cycles of materialism and power. In the process of satisfying his demands through more or more sophisticated inventions, new and more complex problems are created which seem to threaten the very gains of civilization to date. For example, more things are accomplished through the use of nuclear energy than through traditional energy sources and yet, nothing so far created through human ingenuity constitutes a graver danger to his existence than the nuclear power. This is in addition to the inordinate investment of national wealth in perfecting the weapons of war, a small fraction of which would have been enough to produce an environment conducive for the development of truly peaceful human qualities. The rationalization for this investment has always been the “National Security” and the “Defense of Freedom” so much that one can almost sigh with the French revolutionary’s slogan, Robespierre; “Liberty, how many crimes are committed in thy name”.

The above is just a glimpse of the promises, the dangers and the prospects of the man living in relationship with his society. It may appear gloomy, but man has an indomitable capacity for cheerfulness and optimism, even in the most seemingly helpless situations. If education gave rise to this society of the one-dimensional man, it is then education of a more desirable type that is needed to correct the situation. It is an education that will restore the balance between the marginalized man and his world and that can re-instate man’s control of his peace. This paper shall discuss this type of education later, but before then this paper must try to locate Man in Peace.

Corresponding author email: oluwaseun.bamidele@gmail.com
©2012/2015 International Assembly Journal of International Social Studies
Website: http://www.iajiss.org
Man’s role in peace

Even though the concept of peace has been separated from economic and political interpretations, it has not yet been infused with sufficient humanistic content so as to restore the rightful place of man in it. Protagoras had once said that “Man is the measure of all things”. By inference, this can be interpreted to mean that all things should be evaluated and judged by their contribution to the peace of what is essentially human and elevating in man.

In this sense, all economic, political, social and technological arrangements have meaning, so far as they promote the security, comfort and general welfare of human beings. This welfare has, however, turned out to mean material consumption and physical comfort. The result is that the intangible but important non-material values, which are in fact the core of human-ness and which are fundamental to any harmonious relationship in society, are undermined, neglected and relegated to a secondary position. Such values includes respect for the human person and his dignity, social justice, equity, tolerance, respect for the rights of others, freedom of self expression and even commitment to purpose and meaning in human existence. The result, as noted above, is dissatisfaction with the latest materialistic inventions and high insensitivity in human relationships. But this interpretation of Protagoras’ dictum is just one aspect of what is now popularly described as man-centred or anthropocentric peace. The second, and equally important, interpretation is in respect of the role of man in the process of peace. While the first interpretation takes man as the object of peace, the latter mode makes man the subject and creator of his own peace. Nyerere (1974), one of the leading exponents of this concept of human-centred development, said:

People cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves, for while it is possible for an outsider to build a man’s house, an outsider cannot give the man pride and self-confidence in himself as a human being. Those things man has to create in himself by his own action. He develops himself by making his own decisions by increasing his understanding of what he is doing, and why; by increasing his understanding of what he is doing, and by his own knowledge and ability and by his own fall participation- as an equal- in the life of the community he lives in... A man is developing himself when he improves his education- whatever he learns about-a man develops himself by joining in free discussion of a new venture and participation in the subsequent decision.

In the above quotation, man is the sole cause of his peace and an active participant in the process of social peace, since, as this paper has shown above, his social nature is an indispensable part of his human nature. Peace refers to the development of human capacity to meet human needs and to realize full human potentials, within a framework of universal human values the context of the specific situation and environment limits. This quotation also combines the individual and the social-universalistic dimension of Peace.

Implication for peace education

Based on all these perspectives on peace, if man is to take his peace into his own hands, he must be fully equipped in a way to maximize rather than jeopardize the process of peace. From all indications, peace education can enhance and fructify man’s role in peace. According to Hicks (1988), the objectives of peace education are: the acquisition of skills (critical thinking, cooperation, empathy, assertiveness); knowledge about issues (conflict, power, peace, gender, justice, ecology etc); and the development of attitudes (self respect, respect for others, open mindedness, vision). Thus, the basic principle of peace education is that it is conterminous with life and living. It belongs to the essence of man as a peaceful organism. But peace education in its modern idiom would not
have attracted attention as a possible solution to the present civilization malaise, if it is only a natural, experimental process.

Peace education is much more than this. It is hinged on the dilemmas that confront man. The first dilemma to which peace education will be expected to provide a solution is the present misplacement of priorities at the national and international levels. At both levels, there are concern with national security, national pride and prestige and military superiority, and these have led to a high degree of insensitivity to the plight of individuals and the underprivileged within a nation and to a hardening of heart against the agony and cries of poor nations. It is hoped that peace education will be able to restore a balanced view of human values and a feeling of oneness and brotherliness with less fortunate ones.

Another dimension to human problems that calls for a new concept of education is the deprivation of these qualities that make man truly human, such values as personal freedom, freedom of self-fulfillment and the need to be self-directed. On the social plane, there is the need for participation in the governance of one’s society, the need for equality of treatment and the need for social justice. All these contribute to the peace of the human person and are appropriate values for peace education to realize.

Conclusion

This paper has outlined some of the challenges facing education to help man resume the control and direction of his civilization. Shock and maintenance learning has been found to be inadequate in this regard. Problem solving is a form of maintenance learning, but the learning that can give man confidence and control of his environment is the anticipatory or innovative learning. It is a future-oriented learning which anticipates problems and designs solutions to meet them. This is the type of learning-learning to learn - upon which peace education places a premium and which can guarantee man’s orderly and continuous future peace. Education remains the best tool to achieve lasting positive peace. Peace education, whose primary objective is to develop good citizenship and national unity, has been found to contain adequate number of topics related to peace and man to serve this purpose of integrative peace education. In other words, peace education is an integral part of the work of the United Nations. Through a humanising process of teaching and learning, peace educators facilitate human development. They strive to counteract the dehumanisation of prejudice, discrimination, rape, violence, and war. Originally aimed at eliminating the possibility of global extinction through nuclear war, peace education can address the broader objective of building a culture of peace.

References

Bjerstedt, A., (ed.), (1990), Education for peace in the 1990’s, A conference report, peace education report No1, Malmo School of Education, University of Lund


Jean Jaques Rousseau, fragments of *The Social Contract*.


Plato, fragments of *The Republic*. 

Corresponding author email: oluwaseun.bamidele@gmail.com

©2012/2015 International Assembly Journal of International Social Studies

Website: [http://www.iajiss.org](http://www.iajiss.org)