

## **Utilization of Peace Education to Counter Terrorism among Youths for Sustainable Development in Nsukka Local Government Area**

**By**

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### **Abstract**

This paper examined the extent peace education has been used to counter terrorism in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. Three research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consists of 956 registered members of youth association in Nsukka Local Government Area. The sample size for this study was 478 registered members of youth association in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. Proportionate stratified sampling technique by balloting without replacement was used to draw 50% from each of the associations. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The instrument was face validated by three experts. The instrument was trail tested using 22 members of Obollo Afor youths' association in Udenu Local Government Area of Enugu. Cronbach alpha statistic was deemed appropriate and therefor used in this study since it was multiple scored with no preferred responses and each response equally attracted a score. The grand reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.81. The researcher with the help of two research assistants administered and collected 478 copies of the questionnaires to the respondents during their meeting days'. Data were analyzed using weighted mean. The findings of the study revealed that human rights, right values and conflict resolution are used to a high extent to counter terrorism for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. It was recommended that both government and international organizations should regularly fund peace education through making provision for sufficient budgetary allocations and financial support among others.

**Keywords: Peace, Peace Education, Terrorism, Development and Sustainable Development**

### **Introduction**

The recent happenings worldwide in relations to political and social crimes such as kidnapping, theft, murder, necessitate effective utilization of peace education to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development. Schaefer and Crane (2005) noted that sustainable development is a developmental process that meets the needs of the present generation without comprising the ability of meeting the needs of future generation. It is considered to be the end-goal of the United Nation's place for the planet, and many countries have agreed to achieve the sustainable development goal (Bexell and Jönsson, 2017).

Sustainable development paradigm is a concept that calls for improving living standards without jeopardizing the earth's ecosystems or causing environmental challenges such as deforestation, water and air pollution that can result in problems such as climate change and extinction of species (Browning & Rigolon, (2019). Therefore, Sustainable development demands for improvement in all areas of life such as health, education, environment, economy and security among others that will favour the present and future generations.

The development must be devoid of social crimes such as terrorism. US Department of Defense (2000) noted that terrorism is the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological. Terrorism can cause a loss of human life and physical destruction, which in turn can lead to economic losses and a decline in the quality of life. United States House of Representatives Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (2002) noted that "terrorism is the illegitimate, premeditated violence or threat of violence by subnational groups against persons or property with the intent to coerce a government by installing fear amongst the populace. According to John Philip in the John Philip Jenkins, (2003) terrorism is the calculated use of violence devoid of peace to create a general climate of fear in a population. Terrorism ranges from kidnapping, banditry, herdsmen, book-haram among other

Since 1990s, terrorist groups have sprung up all across the globe committing serious atrocities on innocent civilians (Yayla and Yahaya, 2023). They also noted that currently, terrorism and terror organizations have spread across several regions and countries but more commonly in Africa and the Middle East regions. In support, Eke (2012) observed that today global insecurity resulting from terrorist attacks by religious extremist has worsened the case of Nigeria. The dimension of terrorism in Nigeria according to Eke especially as witnessed after the April 2011 general elections aid government inept attitude in tackling the security situation is worrisome. For instance, in Nigeria, killing of Christians by the Muslims, destroying of peoples' farm by the herdsmen, killing of innocent people by the book haram, assassination and kidnapping for ransoms happen on daily bases. This is because religion and politics are used to cover up multitudes of terrorist and violent criminal activities committed especially by the youths against the state.

Youth is an active stage of life. United Nation Population Fund (2004) defines youth as a period of transition from dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. For instance, in Nigeria, the National Policy on Youth Development (2009) considers people

within the age bracket of 18-35 years as a youth. Most of the people in the above age bracket acts without considering whether their actions will bring war or peace.

Peace is considered to be a general condition where there is calm and order in a specific environment, mind or body. When there is peace, there is no disturbance of any sort as to cause things not to move in the way it should be. Peace implies to respect human rights and human life, working cooperatively to resolve conflicts nonviolently, training or educating citizens for positive contribution in their governments (Harris & Morrison, 2003). Education is one of the powerful strategy that helps in the establishment of long term and sustainable peace by educating and training citizens step by step on how to achieve peace. Education is a fundamental human right of every citizen and an essential tool for achieving peace and development, peace, and human rights.

Peace education is the process of acquiring values, knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors to live in conformity, harmony with oneself, others, and even with nature. Akunole (2010) observed that peace education is a process of inculcating elements of peace in the learners to enable them develops the ability to manifest tolerance, the skills for non-violent, conflict resolution and the sense of dedication to the establishment of a culture of peace. Okolie-Osemene (2012) envisaged that peace education is the process of acquiring the skills, values and knowledge that promote harmonious relationships among people in the society Peace education implies all efforts to promote peace, especially in conflict or violence-ridden areas through educational activities Nwafor, (2013). Ikechukwu (2014) observed that peace education is a process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavioural changes that would enable especially youths to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural to resolve conflict peacefully and to create the conditions conducive for peace. Peace education is an educational process that aims to promote the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to bring about behavior change that will enable individuals, groups, and societies to live in harmony and resolve their conflicts peacefully" UNESCO, (2017).

Peace education encourages the search for alternatives as well as possible non-violent skills and sharpens the awareness about the existence of holistic relationships between people and nations for countering especially terrorism among youths for sustainable development. Peace education establishes cultures of peace by creating awareness of various forms of violence present in the society and teaching about alternative peaceful ways of being and doing to establish harmonious relationships (Gursel-Bilgin, 2022). Therefore, peace

education is a solution oriented education that equips the individuals with the knowledge, understanding, different values and skills to co-exist in a violence free environment.

Consequently, there are varieties of components of peace education that are used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development. The components include civic values, conflict resolution, decision making and relationship issues such as democracy, right values, human rights, gender equality among others (Johnson and Johnson, 2010). In the context of this study, only human rights, right values and conflict resolution will be considered because they are very much recognized and used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in the study area.

Human rights aimed at the building of a universal culture through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the molding of attitudes which are directed to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom to full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity (United Nations Decade for Human Rights, 2004). Human rights education (HRE) is an international movement to promote awareness about the rights accorded by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related human rights conventions, and the procedures that exist for the redress of violations of these rights (Amnesty International, 2005). It creates awareness and equips people with the understanding of their rights, with the goal of promoting and protecting these rights for all people with the knowledge and acceptance of right values.

Right values are individual beliefs that motivate people to act in one way or another. They serve as a guide for human behavior. Generally, people are predisposed to adopt the values that they are raised with. People also tend to believe that those values are right because they are the values of their particular culture. Right values are principles, fundamental convictions, ideas, standards or life stances which act as general guides to behaviour or as reference points in decision-making or the evaluation of beliefs or action (Elendu, 2009). Right values are values that are considered to be essential for the well-being of individuals and society, such as respect for human dignity, honesty, and fairness.

On the other hand, conflict resolution typically focuses on the socio-behavioural interventions to ensure that individuals resolve inter-personal disputes amicably. Conflict resolution is a process of resolving differences in the ideals and viewpoints of other's by encouraging interpersonal communication through mediation, bargaining, and negotiation (Bannon and Paul, 2003). According to Francis (2009), conflict resolution is seen as a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts through the constructive peaceful solving of

problems which includes negotiation, facilitation, conciliation, mediation and brokerage. Conflict resolution is more or less the reduction, elimination, or termination of any form or kind of dispute (Odigwe, 2014). Conflict resolution is a process of resolving disputes constructively, with the goal of reaching mutual understanding for community development.

In Nsukka Local Government area of Enugu State, Nigeria, there are cases of kidnapping and herdsmen attacks particularly at Opi (Opi – Ugwuogo) road which calls for urgent attention of the governments (local, state and federal). Again, inadequate knowledge about the concept of terrorism as well as its objectives by both the policy makers and members of the general public, inadequate funding and lack of unified curriculum for youths hinders the efficacy of peace education in countering terrorism. However, peace education continues to promote tolerance and understanding between individuals and groups in the study area. Therefore, the problem of the study was to investigate the extent to which peace education has been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The following objectives guided the study:

- To examine the extent human rights have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area.
- To ascertain the extent right values have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka local government area.
- To ascertain the extent conflict resolution has been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study

1. To what extent have human rights been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area?
2. To what extent have right values been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area?
3. To what extent has conflict resolution been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area?

## **Methodology**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. This is because descriptive survey design is a generalized means of data collection through the use of interviews or questionnaires. Nworgu (2015) noted that descriptive survey design is aimed at collecting data on and describing in systematic manner the characteristics, features or facts about a given population. This design is more appropriate for this study because it involves collecting data from members of the registered youth's association in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu state and described the collected data in a systematic manner so as to determine the extent peace education has been utilized to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu state.

The communities that make up Nsukka Local Government are Opi, Lejja, Obukpa, Okpuje, Ibagwa-ani, Ibagwa-Agu, Alor-Uno, Ede-Oballa, Edem, Nru, Okutu, Okpaligbo, Obimo, Opi-Agu, Isiuja, Anuka, Eha-Alumona, and Eha-Ndiagu. Geographically, Nsukka Local Government is located in the Northern part of Enugu State. The local Government Area is bounded in the East by Udenu and Isi-Uzo Local Government Area, to the West by Oduru Local Government Area, to the North by Igalla Local Government Area of Kogi State and to the South by Uzo-Uwani and Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area of Enugu State. Nsukka as a homogeneous area has many things in common such as common religion, which is predominantly Christianity, common beliefs, norms, traditional and cultural values.

The population of the study consisted of 956 members of the registered youths' association in Nsukka Local Government Area. The population was derived from the twenty-eight (28) registered youths' association consisting of 502 males and 454 females registered members. The sample size for this study was 478 registered members of youth associations in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. Proportionate stratified sampling technique by balloting. without replacement was used to draw 50% from each of the associations. The justification for proportionate stratified sampling for this study was to ensure that all the associations are proportionately represented in the sample drawn out in order to reduce biases.

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled; "Utilization of Peace Education to Counter Terrorism among Youths for Sustainable Development (UPECTYSDQ). The instrument consists of three clusters (A-C) with 18 items. The response mode adopted for the study was: 4-point rating scale of (VHE) Very high Extent, (HE) High Extent, (LE) Low Extent and (VHE) Very Low Extent. Very high extent 3.5-4.00, High

Extent 2.50-3.49, low Extent 1.50- 2.49, very low extent 1.00-1.49. Cluster A-C elicited information on the extent human rights, right values and conflict resolution have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. The instrument was validated by three experts. The three experts examined the items on the draft questionnaire in terms of clarity of the item statements, relevance of the content to the study and sustainability of the rating scale adopted. The suggestions and inputs of these experts were noted and effected in the final copy of the instrument. The instrument was trail tested using 22 members of Obollo Afor youths' association in Udenu Local Government Area of Enugu state. Obollo-Afor community in Udenu Local Government Area is outside the area of the study but was chosen because it has similar characteristics with Nsukka Local Government Area in terms of cultural practices, religious belief and societal values. Their responses to the items statement were collected and analyzed to determine the reliability of the instrument using Cronbach alpha statistic. Nworgu (2015), averred that the Cronbach Alpha Estimate is used for instrument that has multiple scores with no preferred responses and in which every responses attracts score. Cronbach alpha statistic was deemed appropriate for this study since it was multiple scored with no preferred responses and each response equally attracted a score. The reliability co-efficient obtained for cluster A - C were 0.76, 0.80 and 0.87 respectively, while the grand reliability co-efficient of the instrument was 0.81. This shows that the instrument was reliable enough to measure what it was designed to measure.

The researchers administered 478 copies of the questionnaires to the respondents. The researchers employed the services of two research assistants to help them administer questionnaires to the respondents during their meeting days. The assistants were acquainted with the purpose of the study and method of data collection. On the spot method of distribution and collection was adopted in order to ensure the instruments were filled and collected immediately. All copies of the questionnaires distributed were returned representing 100% return rate. Mean and standard deviation were used in analyzing the data collected from the research questions one to three.

## Results

**Table 1: Mean rating responses of respondents on the extent human rights have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area (n=478)**

S/N	Item Statements	Mean Score	SD	Decision
1	Educating people about their rights	2.79	0.77	HE
2	Creating an environment where people feel safe to express their opinions	3.11	0.92	HE
3	Sensitizing individuals to quite terrorism	2.86	1.00	HE
4	Building a resilience community that are less vulnerable to violent extremism	3.45	0.88	HE
5	Fostering a culture of respect for human rights	2.74	0.94	HE
6	Re-orienting people about other people rights	3.21	1.02	HE
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>3.06</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>HE</b>

Table 1 above shows the extent human rights have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka LGA of Enugu State. The mean responses of respondents revealed that educating people about their rights had a mean score of 2.79, creating an environment where people feel safe to express their opinions had a mean score of 3.11, sensitizing individuals to quite the act of terrorism had a mean score of 2.86, building a resilience communities that are less vulnerable to violent extremism had a mean score of 3.45 fostering a culture of respect for human rights had a mean score of 2.74 re-orienting people about other people rights had a mean score of 3.21. With the grand mean and standard deviation of (3.06) and (0.92). The table therefore infers that to a high extent, human rights have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State



**Table 2: Mean rating responses of respondents on the extent right values have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area (n=478)**

S/N	Item Statements	Mean Score	SD	Decision
7	Creating an environment where grievances can be addressed peacefully	3.40	.92	HE
8	Reducing the appeal of extremist ideologies	2.78	.84.	HE
9	Fostering social cohesion among people	3.12	.77	HE
10	Strengthening resilience against radicalization	3.01	.81	HE
11	Ensuring peaceful co-existence among individuals in their different communities	2.75	.90	HE
12	Encouraging individuals to tolerate and accommodate one another	2.66	.82	HE
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>0.84</b>	<b>HE</b>

Table 2 above shows the extent right values have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka LGA of Enugu state. The mean responses of respondents revealed that creating an environments where grievances can be addressed peacefully has a mean score of (3.40), reducing the appeal of extremist ideologies has a mean score of (2.78), fostering social cohesion among people has a mean score of (3.12), strengthening resilience against radicalization has a mean score of (3.01), ensuring peaceful co-existence among individuals in their different communities has a mean score of (2.75), encouraging individuals to tolerate and accommodate one another has a mean score of (2.66). With the grand mean and standard deviation of (2.95) and (0,84), the table therefore infers that to a high extent, right values have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu state.

**Table 3: Mean rating responses of respondents on the extent conflict resolution has been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area (n= 478)**

S/N	Item Statements	Mean Score	SD	Decision
13	Educating youths on how to settle disputes among themselves through dialogue	3.36	1.01	HE
14	Teaching people how to express their opinions in a respectful way	2.89	0.84	HE
15	Reducing conditions that breed terrorism through negotiation	2.74	0.96	HE
16	Restricting them from mingling with people of questionable character	3.16	1.02	HE
17	Raising their consciousness on the need for peaceful co-existence	3.32	0.87	HE
18	Motivating the youths to settle disputes through peaceful protests	2.78	0.92	HE
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>3.04</b>	<b>0.94</b>	<b>HE</b>

Table 3 shows the extent conflict resolution has been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka LGA of Enugu state. The mean responses of respondents revealed that educating youths on how to settle disputes among people through dialogue has a mean score of (3.36), teaching people how to express their opinions in a respectful way has a mean score of (2.89), reducing conditions that breed terrorism through negotiation has a mean score of (2.74), restricting them from mingling with people of questionable character has a mean score of (3.16), raising their consciousness on the need for peaceful co-existence has a mean score of (3.32), motivating the youths to settle disputes through peaceful protests has a mean score of (2.78). With the grand mean and standard deviation of (3.04) and 0.94, the table therefore infers that to a high extent, conflict resolution has been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State.

## **Discussion of the findings**

Findings from research question one revealed that to a high extent, human rights have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development as it helps in educating people about their rights, creating an environment where people feel safe to express their opinions, sensitizing individuals to quite the act of terrorism, building a resilience communities that are less vulnerable to violent extremism, fostering a culture of respect for human rights, and re-orienting people about other people rights.

The above findings are in line with United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (2004) defined Human Rights Education as "training, dissemination, and information efforts aimed at the building of a universal culture of human rights through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the molding of attitudes which are directed to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom to full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity. Human rights education (HRE) is an international movement to promote awareness about the rights accorded by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related human rights conventions, and the procedures that exist for the redress of violations of these rights (Amnesty International, 2005).

Findings from research question two revealed that to a high extent, right values have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development as it helps in creating an environments where grievances can be addressed peacefully, reducing the appeal of extremist ideologies, Fostering social cohesion among people, strengthening resilience against radicalization, ensuring peaceful co-existence among individuals in their different communities, encouraging individuals to tolerate and accommodate one another.

The above findings are in line with Elendu, (2009) who asserted that right values are principles, fundamental convictions, ideas, standards or life stances which act as general guides to behaviour or as reference points in decision-making or the evaluation of beliefs or action. Okpilike (2010) viewed right values as one's principles or standards, judgment of what is valuable and important to life. In support, Dontigney (2013) stated that accommodating essentially entails giving the opposing side what it wants. Right values are values that are considered to be essential for the well-being of individuals and society, such as respect for human dignity, honesty, and fairness.

Findings from research question three revealed that to a high extent, conflict resolution has been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development as it helps in educating youths on how to settle disputes among people through dialogue,

teaching people how to express their opinions in a respectful way, it reduces the conditions that breed terrorism through negotiation, restricting the youths from mingling with people of questionable character, raising their consciousness on the need for peaceful co-existence and motivating the youths to settle disputes through peaceful protests.

The above findings revealed that conflict resolution is a process of reducing differences in the other's ideals and viewpoints by encouraging interpersonal communication through mediation, bargaining, and negotiation (Bannon and Paul (2003). According to Francis (2009), conflict resolution is seen as a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts through the constructive peaceful solving of problems which includes negotiation, facilitation, conciliation, mediation and brokerage. As a result, Maisese (2005) noted that training people to learn and apply the skills of dialogue and negotiation in conflict resolution is of utmost importance. On the other hand, consciousness-raising means breaking through prevailing mythologies to reach new levels of awareness. In support Ngwu (2014) stated that consciousness-raising is the process whereby people are helped to gain a heightened awareness of their conditions and their possible causes, and the subsequent realization of the fact that change and socio-structural transformation is possible. Therefore, consciousness-raising impart people with the knowledge of their crisis and possible means of resolving them.

### **Conclusion**

This study examined the extent peace education has been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development. Terrorism is the planned use of violence to instill fear projected to intimidate governments, societies or individuals in the pursuit of specified goals. Hence, peace education is the process through which individuals acquires the abilities, principles and information that uphold affiliations among people in the society. Considering the use of force to instill fear in individuals for selfish interest and alternative solutions for the mutual understanding and harmonious relationship, the researcher addressed the extent human rights, right values and conflict resolution have been used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area. The study revealed that to a high extent human rights, right values and conflict resolution are used to counter terrorism among youths for sustainable development in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the researchers made the following recommendations:

1. Both government and international organizations should be funding peace education through making provision for sufficient budgetary allocations and financial support.
2. Peace education should effectively be integrated and embedded into all formal and nonformal education programmes curriculum particularly for youths for them to be aware of their rights, possess right values and be able to resolve conflicts amicably.
3. Government should effectively utilize and implement policies (through adequate consultations) on peace education and effective mass campaign should also be carried out on the subject area for public enlightenment.
4. Teachers//facilitators of peace education should endeavor to embark on campaign to counter terrorism regularly to provide adequate information on the concept as well as its objectives for the benefit of general public.
5. Governments should welcome the idea of dialogue and negotiation to an extent for understanding between different groups so that people can resolve their differences peacefully without resorting to violence.

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