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Building Infrastructure for Peace in Nigerian Schools

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Abstract

Violence is a worrisome phenomenon in every social setting including schools where it particularly has a negative impact on learning processes, as it largely affects victims' mental, psychological and physical dispositions. It is often more rewarding to tackle violence from its root and work to entrench a lasting culture of peace. Dealing with violent menace however requires a cutting-edge approach which infrastructure for peace represents. This is important in view of the failure of the existing approaches in dealing with violence and promoting attitudinal cum social change in school. This paper therefore focuses on building infrastructures for peace such as peace clubs, and using such standing peace structure to deal with violence, promote positive attitudinal cum social change in schools. The experiences of the schools for the research include the cultivation of a culture of peace, positive attitudinal change among students, development of conflict resolution skills by students and social change for peace.

Key words: Building, Infrastructure for Peace, Peace clubs, Nigerian Schools

Introduction

The Problem of violence in many schools has become a major concern to government, the teaching profession as well as civil society. According to Burton (2008, p.17), “schools are generally seen as mechanisms to develop and reinforce positive citizens with pro-social attitudes and as sites where individuals are prepared for the role they are to play in society at large”. Unfortunately, in many schools today, the safer learning spaces have been taking over and have become “sites of widespread violence” (Burton, 2008, p. xi).

Whilst the problem of school-based violence is not new to many societies in the world, what is however becoming evident is the increasingly serious nature of the violence, taking place within such context. In fact, the widespread of direct violence in many schools and communities is alarming, the usual response to which has been violent; one alternative is to build infrastructures for peace of various kinds including peace clubs. According to Irene (2015, p.128), an infrastructure for peace is a standing peace structure for building peace and in the prevention of violence. As a standing structure for peace, infrastructure for peace has become more imperative in contemporary times to check the rising spate of violence, build peace and promotes peaceful governance in schools, and in other public cum private organisations as well as the human society at large.

Since it is assumed that peace service delivery is the business of infrastructures for peace (Suurmond & Sharma, 2013, p.2), it has become more needful to deploy adequate attention to building infrastructures for peace in our society in order to effectively curb violence in our communities. Infrastructures for peace have been defined as the “structures, resources, and processes through which peace services are delivered at any level of a society”, (Suurmond & Sharma, 2013, p.3). The UNDP on its part defines it as a dynamic network of interdependence structures, mechanisms, resources, values, and skills which, through dialogue and consultation, contribute to conflict prevention and peacebuilding in a society.

Infrastructure for peace is critical to promoting peaceful governance in schools. Various viewpoints as regards the meaning of governance have been advanced by different scholars. Governance generally involves mediating behaviour via values, norms, and where possible, through laws (Rogers and Hall, 2003, p.1). It also refers to operations and management of services. Operating and managing schools obviously involved all stakeholders including the management and teaching staff, however for a governance system to be effective in schools, the role of students cannot be underestimated. In most cases, students are among others critical determinants of

whether the learning environment would be friendly or not. A peaceful academic environment is no doubt required for a governance system to deliver its expected services. The Audit Commission UK (2009) defined good governance in public services as ‘ensuring the organisation is doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner’. A peaceful environment is an essential requirement for this. Infrastructures for peace such as peace club can help mediate behaviour and ensures a peaceful learning environment for doing the right thing and in the right way for students in schools.

This paper therefore focuses on building infrastructures for peace such as peace clubs in schools and examining their impacts in respect to conflict transformation and building peace in schools.

Peace Education

It is, of course, an underlying assumption of peace studies that people can be educated and/or re-educated in the ways of peace and that this education is effective. I prefer to use educating for peace rather than peace education because the former can more easily embrace components apart from curriculum and content.

Key contributions to the literature on educating for peace include those of Harris and Morrison (2003), Page (2008), Bajaj (2008) and Salomon and Nevo (2013). Apart from the philosophical underpinnings of peace education, which are of limited relevance to this thesis, there are three main strands to the literature – the content of the material taught and learned the means by which it is taught and learned and the environment in which it is taught and learned.

Peace education can be very wide in scope. Ian Harris (2004, p.12), for example, identifies five types of peace education – global peace education (also known as international studies), conflict resolution, violence prevention (including peer mediation), development education (including human rights education) and nonviolence education, typically built around the study of great non-violent figures.

There is quite some debate on the meaning and scope of peace education. Salomon (1999, p. 3), for example, rejects much, if not all, of the above characterisation of peace education content and contends that ‘too many things are now called peace education, ranging from violence reduction in schools to learning about war and peace, and from moral and value education to the cultivation of self-esteem’. To him, peace education deals not at all with interpersonal conflicts but rather [with] ‘conflicts based in ‘ethnic [racial, national or religious] hostilities crossed with developmental inequities that have a long history and a bleak future’ (Salomon, 1999, p.5).

In a later paper, Salomon (2013, p. 6) identifies ways of categorising models of peace educations. First, is it educating for positive or negative peace? Second, in

what context are they taking place? Here Salomon differentiates between ‘regions of intractable conflict...regions of racial or ethnic tensions with no overt actions of hostility...or regions of tranquillity and co-operation’. Third, peace education frameworks can be classified in terms of whether the change they intend to effect is on ‘the *local, micro* level, e.g. learning to settle conflicts and to cooperate on an *interpersonal* level, [or]...on a more *global, macro* level, e.g. changing perceptions, stereotypes and prejudices pertaining to whole *collectives*’. Salomon asserts that the second distinction – that of socio-political context – is the most important in classifying different models of peace education. He argues (Salomon, 2013, p.6) that peace education in situations of intractable conflict ‘appears to constitute a superordinate case of peace education, as it includes the other kinds of principles and practices’ – thus clarifying his assertion discussed in the previous paragraph.

There do not seem to be any dispute that peace education is about changing things. As long time peace educator Reardon (1998, p. x). contends,

The general purpose of peace education...is to promote the development of an authentic planetary consciousness that will enable us to function as global citizens and to transform the present human condition by changing the social structures and the patterns of thought that have created it.

Educating for peace does not start with the belief that the teachers knows all, the students know nothing and that it is the job of the teacher to move her/his knowledge into the minds of the students by the most efficient means possible. Peace education recognises that individuals in educational contexts, whatever their age, bring considerable life experience with them and that this provides a jumping off point for peace education. It therefore promotes cooperative learning where the teacher acts a resource person rather than a ‘fount of all knowledge’. Obviously, this represents a change in teaching style which many teachers would find difficult to accept, given their hierarchical view of the world.

Teaching and learning takes place in an immediate context (the classroom and other parts of the school) and a wider context (their households and communities). An immediate implication is that peace education works if it is holistic in coverage and is not confined to the school classroom only. South Africa is a classic example of the need for a holistic approach. After reviewing the findings of two major surveys - the 2012 *National School Violence Survey* and the *Dynamics of Violence in South African schools* - Harris et al. (2014, p.36) assert that ‘South Africa’s schools mirror the intense violence in wider society’. Learners were subject to high levels of violence at school, at home and in the community.

With this overview, we now consider the possible links between peace education and peace clubs. As a general statement, peace clubs are made up of learners who meet voluntarily with objectives along the following lines:

- To understand the meanings of conflict and violence and that conflict is inevitable while violence is a choice.
- To learn and practice the basic communication skills – both listening and speaking – which are central to the resolution of conflict.
- To support each other in dealing with the conflict and violence issues which club members face
- To find ways to contribute to a more peaceful school environment.

Peace clubs are student-led although teachers often provide adult presence at club meetings. They normally follow a curriculum, such as that developed by the Mennonite Central Committee in Zambia. The curriculum focuses on interpersonal conflict and violence rather than structural violence although there might be scope for tackling structural violence within a school under the fourth objective above.

I was not able to locate any academic literature on peace clubs. A search in late January 2015 of the Academic Search Complete database using ‘Peace clubs AND schools’ as key words yielded 231 references (and 85 when full text and peer reviewed articles were specified). In both cases, however, only one reference was relevant (Stomfay-Stitz & Wheeler, 2007, p.1-3) and even that was only three pages.

A google search revealed quite a few websites with information on peace club initiatives being carried out in various places in Africa. Representative examples include the following:

- GM South Africa Foundation began peace clubs in Port Elizabeth, South Africa in 2012 www.gmsouthafricafoundation.com/content/peace-clubs
- A power point presentation on peace clubs was given by Joan Alty to the Strategies for nonviolence in education conference held at Durban University of Technology in June, 2013 www.icon.org.za/current/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Alty.pdf
- The Umtapo Centre in the Eastern Cape www.umtapocentre.org.za/, the Quaker Peace Centre in Cape Town www.qpc.org.za (see also www.medioclubsouthafrica.com/democracy/887-peaceclubs171208). The Mennonite Central Committee in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal support peace clubs in schools

- Peace club curricula are available at <https://sites.google.com/a/zambia.mcc.org/pc.../peace-clubs-materials>
- In Nigeria, a number of organisations utilise the peace club concept, including the African Projects for Peace and Love Initiative www.africanprojectsforpeace.org/Peace_Clubs_Items.html, the Peace Initiative Network www.insightonconflict.org/conflicts/nigeriapeacebuilding-organisations/pin/ and the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding-Nigeria www.wanepnigeria.org/index.php?option

A peace club as infrastructure for peace is a voluntary organization devoted to empowering its members – in this instance, youths or school pupils - with skills and knowledge in the area of peace and conflict resolution. In this case, the training and discussion was conducted within the school context but peace clubs can operate in a wide range of contexts. A peace club can help promote positive attitudinal change among students, trigger social change and ensure peaceful learning environments in schools. As architecture for peace, peace clubs in schools can provide platforms or forums for students, and perhaps also teachers, to share their viewpoints and experience, help curb school-based violence and help a culture of peace in schools. The idea of peace clubs in high schools was hatched against the backdrop of the need to curb the rising spate of violence in high schools.

Action research is an unfolding operation and plans do not always work. In the event, for pragmatic reasons, the peace club operation was broken into two. The first part operated on a weekly basis for 20 weeks at four schools in Ibadan (Immanuel College, Walbrook College, Yinbol College and Kingston College) between April, 2013 and March, 2014. The second part operated for 12 weeks (April, 2014 to July, 2014) in four different schools – Immanuel Grammar, Methodist Grammar, Community High and Bodija International College.

Peace clubs were set up in a total of eight schools and operated over two periods – April, 2013 to March, 2014 for the first group of four schools and April, 2014 to July, 2014 for the second group, also of four schools. In general, there were eight peace clubs, 128 meetings and 179 participants. Some information of the participating schools is provided in Table below. One other school - Distinct Jubilee International College - initially participated but dropped out after a month.

Recruitment of youths/students into peace clubs can either be through selection or volunteering, or both, as the case may be. In this study, recruitment of students into peace clubs was, initially by selection, as the Principals of the schools delegated the teachers in charge of extra-curricular activities in the schools to select students for

membership of the club. The teachers found that some of those selected had limited interest and were allowed to leave while others who were not initially selected expressed their interest to join and were admitted into the club, and membership of the club was essentially based on volunteer basis. Essentially, then, the participants can be regarded as volunteers. All participants were in school years 11 or 12 and their typical age was 17-18. The numbers involved were 79 for the first four schools (44 females and 35 males) and 95 for the second group (50 females and 45 males), resulting in a total of 174 participants. Attendance rates were very high. While the numbers who participated were a small percentage of total student numbers, they were a much higher proportion of students in the senior years.

Table 1: School Characteristics

School	Type	No. of Students	No. of club members
Immanuel College	Public school, co-educational, day school.	2000	23
Yinbol College	Private school, co-educational, day school.	200	20
Walbrook College	Private school, co-educational, day & boarding school.	106	21
Kingston College	Private school, co-educational, day & boarding school.	20	15
Immanuel Grammar	Public school. Co-educational day school	860	23
Community High	Public school. Co-educational day school	500	25
Methodist Grammar	Public school. Co-educational day school	2500	30
Bodija International College	Private school. Co-educational day and boarding school	500	17

The researcher was present at all peace club meetings, which totalled 80 for the first group of schools and 48 for the second group and the teacher in charge of extra-curricular activities in each of the schools attended a few meetings. A typical lesson operated in a strongly interactive and participatory way.

The specific objectives of the peace clubs were:

- To create peace clubs in schools and have the clubs serve as mechanisms for building a culture of peace in schools.
- To empower students with skills and knowledge of peace and conflict resolution so that they can resolve their own conflicts amicably at school, home and in the community.
- To use the peace clubs created to effect positive attitudinal changes in students and have them initiate non-violent campaigns for social change in the target schools.
- To carry out disputes and conflict prevention management in schools.
- To encourage students to work for sustainable peace and against violence in schools.
- To set up a forum where students and teachers can express their viewpoints.

Learning methods used included:

- Skills training (to help build participants basic skills in conflict resolution)
- Brainstorming, interrogation and interactive sessions
- Plenary and small group discussion
- Teaching and presentation
- Case studies, role play and simulation
- The learning process:
- Interactive: involving the participants actively and ensuring cooperative learning
- Practical: applying theory to concrete situations
- Participatory: making the group itself a learning body and mobilising itself organizing capacities
- Elicitive: drawing from the experience, knowledge, and personal resources.

The curriculum used for the training was developed by the Mennonite Central Committee, (MCC), Zambia and is available at <https://sites.google.com/a/zambia.mcc.org/pc.../peace-clubs-materials>. The topics for the training were divided into three parts, one for each term and the first and second terms focused on introduction to conflict resolution. The topics in the first part which were treated in the first term (April 2013 to July 2013) were as follows:

- Introduction and meaning of conflict,
- Perspective and other causes of conflict,
- Cultural differences as a cause of conflict,
- Approaches to solving conflict, problem solving tools,
- Identifying feelings
- Anger management.

The topics or lessons in the second part, treated in the second term that lasted from September to December, were:

- Communication Part 1: Nonverbal communication,
- Communication Part 2: Active listening
- Communication Part 3: Speaking,
- Simple and fair solutions,
- Brainstorming,
- Problem solving methods,
- Becoming a peace-builder.

The lessons in the third part for third term, which lasted from January 2014 to March 2014, were on non-violence:

- Introduction to non-violence,
- Non-violent communication, and
- Story 1: The three bulls,
- Story 2: The children of nonviolence,
- Story 3: Women united,
- Story 4: The servant of God,
- Story 5: Non-violence – a case study on Mahatma Gandhi.

The outcome evaluation technique employed for the peace club project was randomised control testing (RCT) based on pre and post-training test completed by peace club members and a similar number of youths or schoolmates of similar ages who were not peace club members. Data were also collected on focus group discussion and structured interviews for student participants and teachers/principals.

In the evaluation carried out on the preliminary peace club activities that lasted from April 2013 to March 2014, the average score for the pre-training test was 8 out of 25, while the average score for the post-training test was 20 out of 25 questions. The same questions were used in both the pre-training and post-training test. The questions were drawn from the peace club curriculum developed by the Mennonite Central Committee, Zambia. The said peace club training curriculum was also used for conducting the peace club training's/meeting's for this study.

Following the end of preliminary peace club activities in March 2014, the main peace club project began in May 2014, and lasted till the ending of July 2014 when schools proceeded on long vacation. The main peace club project was occasioned by the need to fill the gap created in the course of the preliminary peace club activities. There was the need for more data for a detailed evaluation of the peace club fieldwork

for the study. It was against this backdrop, that it became necessary to extend the peace club project till July 2014.

As aforesaid, four new schools were used for the main peace club project. The pre-training tests were conducted in the four schools. The questions used for the tests were drawn from the peace club curriculum of Mennonite Central Committee, Zambia. The questions were the same used in the preliminary peace club project evaluation tests, except that, five additional 'fill in the gap' questions were included in that of the main peace club project.

At Immanuel College, a total of 21 members participated in the test, while a total of 30 participated at Methodist College, and the number of peace club members who took the test at Community High school and Bodija International College were 17 and 17 respectively. The first set of questions (for preliminary peace club project), were 25 in number and required true or false responses, while the second set of questions (for main peace club), were five 'fill in the gap' questions, designed to test their knowledge on the five approaches to handling conflict.

The post-training tests were carried out at the end of the peace club training in July 2014. The questions administered to the students during the post-training test were the same to that of pre-training tests. At Community High School, about 17 students participated in the test.

Table 2: Summary of test results

	Participants			Non-participants		
	Number	Pre-test score	Post-test score	Number	Pre-test score	Post-test score
Community High	17	9.9	25	15	9.3	9.5
Methodist Grammar	30	9.3	24	30	9.4	9.7
Immanuel Grammar	21	9.8	22	17	9.6	9.7
Bodija International	17	10.1	23	14	10.0	10.0
Total/means	85	9.8	23.5	76	9.6	9.7

It seems clear that on the basis of these tests that the training has resulted in much increased scores for the participants; non-participants have remained stationary.

Participants' Essays

Prior to the commencement of the peace club trainings, the participants in the peace clubs were requested to write essays (i.e. first essay) on their conflict experiences and how the conflicts were handled. This was design to collect data from the participants on their experiences with conflicts and how they handled such conflicts in the past. After undergoing peace club trainings, they were again requested to write another essays (i.e. second essay) explaining how they thought they would have better addressed the conflicts they wrote about in the first essay using the skills they learnt during the peace club trainings. A comparative analysis of the two essays was carried out by the researcher to ascertain their areas of improvement in addressing conflict situations, and see whether the training achieved its purpose. A sample of two representative examples as seen below was chosen in this article to illustrate how they worked.

Temi versus Tope: 'I wanted to share the meat!'

In her first essay, Temi narrated how she had quarrel with Tope. The conflict was all about a piece of meat that was to be shared between Temi and her brother, Tope. Temi's brother, Tope said he wanted to share the meat, but Temi refused and insisted that he would be the one to share the meat. Temi grabbed the meat while his brother struggled to hold on to the meat too. Temi said, so they were now fighting and arguing against each other on who was to share the meat.

Whilst they were busy arguing on who was to share the meat, Temi said that their mother suddenly walked into the scene and asked them what was happening between the two of them. Temi did not waste time in answering their mother as she jumped up and began to tell her mother what led to the argument.

Temi said, she explained to her that it was because of a piece of meat that they were arguing and fighting. After the explanation, their mother steered at them and according to Temi she just took a knife and shared the meat equally with the knife for both them.

Temi further added that while they were trying to settle down and pick the shared piece of meat to eat, their father who they suspected might have heard their quarrel from a distance but did not immediately interfered, but waited till their mother finished sharing the piece meat, suddenly walked into the scene, and according to Temi before each of them began to eat his or her own share of the piece of meat, their father came in asked them what was going on that they have not finished eating their meat since morning?.

Temi further said that as he was trying to explain, their father who was so angry of them because of their behaviour seized their piece of meat from them and ate it.

According to the story, Temi and her sister felt bad and suddenly began to express regret for their behaviour leading to their losing their meat to their father, who acted to punish them for their action over their inability to simply handle the conflict over sharing of a piece of meat that was given to them in the course of their eating together.

In Temi's second essay, while responding to the question on if she would do things differently from how she acted in the conflict between her and Tope, following her involvement in the peace club, Temi answered with a yes, as she expressed happiness for being part of the peace club. She said she has benefitted a lot from the club, especially the training on conflict handling styles. She further added that she has now also learnt to be more forgiving and live at peace with her colleagues, and that the peace club training has really helped to change her attitude for better. The comment of Temi was indeed an indication that the objective of the peace club concerning attitudinal change has been realised in her. An attitudinal change in support of peaceful relationships with people and being able to forgive those who trespassed against one is critical to the attainment of sustainable peace and non-violent social change in communities all over the world.

The peace club sessions addressed the topic of forgiveness and repentance, during which members of the club learnt various skills including steps victims takes to forgive. Temi had added that she carefully learnt the steps and has been working hard to apply them in her day to day living. Forgiveness and repentance are the two paths that lead to reconciliation which is concerned with restoring the relationship that was broken down as a result of the conflict. This is critical to the promotion and consolidation of non-violent social change in schools and community at large.

Temi further stated that initially she found it difficult to forgive Tope following the conflict, and that she even used to find it hard to forgive those who offended her, but since she joined the peace club, she has become more forgiving and tolerant. Furthermore, that the training on conflict handling styles really helped to build her capacity in problem-solving approach and as such changed and reshaped her attitude to a win-win attitude in line with the specific objective of the project. She said she gained knowledge in compromising approach including other styles and that it was after the training she realised that the approach her mother tried to use in settling the conflict between her and Tope was compromising.

Temi expressed enthusiasm to continue to work for the sustenance of the club and towards nonviolent social change in her school. She added that her involvement in the club has indeed brought about attitudinal change in her as she expressed confidence in her ability and willingness to do things differently in the future to the effect of promoting peace in her school and the society at large. She ceased from fighting in school whenever her colleagues offended her, and practically became a preacher of

peace in her school. The development among others showed that the specific objective of the peace club was realised.

Olabisi versus Roki: 'I was slapped because of a biscuit!'

In her first essay, Olabisi stated that she had quarrel with her elder Sister Roki. The root cause of the conflict was biscuit. The biscuit was bought by their mummy. According to Olabisi, the biscuit was given to her by her mum, and as her sister walked in and found her eating the biscuit she became furious.

Roki looked at Olabisi bitterly and gave her a slap. Olabisi became very angry and according to her she beat Roki also and that was what led to the conflict between herself and Roki. Olabisi further said that as the conflict continued, one of her friend Funmi joined her and stood beside her to fight for her upon hearing what happened, especially considering that she did not do anything against her sister that warranted her sister slapping her.

An elderly woman eventually came to help them resolved the conflict, but instead of the conflict to be resolved, Olabisi said it continued more and more, i.e. "it escalated", and at that point people had gathered together in crowd to watch them.

Later Olabisi mum arrived and saw that they were fighting, and according to Olabisi statement, her mum quickly joined the crowd, and asked what the cause of the fight was. Her sister said that she ate her biscuit, while she argued that it was the biscuit that her mum gave to her that she ate.

Olabisi mum responded in the presence of everybody that the biscuit was for Olabisi, although she gave it to Olabisi's sister before, but that she later gave her another money to buy another biscuit, and that was why she later gave the biscuit to Olabisi. On hearing this, both of them relaxed and began to steer at each other.

So, their mum eventually resolved the conflict, and she further said Olabisi should beg her sister for being rude to her sister, especially considering that she is her elder sister. Also, their mother asked Roki to beg Olabisi for cheating her. Olabisi submitted that they begged each other as they began to relate with each other again.

In her second essay, Olabisi was full of appreciation for the organisers of the peace club as she recounted her experiences and benefits following her involvement in the peace club. She expressed confidence that with the skills she acquired from the club, she was not in doubt of her ability to do things differently in the future from how she acted in the conflict between her and Roki.

She said the training in non-violence, anger management, repentance and forgiveness rather than revenge including problem-solving approach among others had really helped to build the requisite skills in her to address future conflict. She said she

now know that it is not good to want to get even with one's offender through revenge, and as such would not have retaliated when her sister slapped her. Though she said she acted out of anger, she however submitted that haven gained skills in anger management she would be able to handle her anger when confronted with such experiences in the future.

Olabisi now believe that her involvement in the peace club has changed her attitude to conflict, especially in defining her reaction to offender, and in the general handling of conflicts. She is hopeful that this positive attitudinal change will shape her to be a more responsible person in the society as she also expressed enthusiasm to work with her colleagues in the promotion of non-violent action for social change in her school.

Olabisi participatory involvement in the peace club class was indeed outstanding, and her experience and testimony following her involvement in the peace club was momentous, and in terms of meeting the specific objective of the peace club project one can say, like in the case of several other participants in the project, the objective was met.

Olabisi had tried to convey her gains in the peace club in several forms; the following excerpt from her write up is of one such attempt:

I have gained a lot in peace club, some of them include, I have gained not to fight with other people, gained not to involve in violent conflict, gained how to maintain peace with people. I have particularly gained on how to forgive when people offend me, even as the training has helped me to forgive those who I have offended me.

She has changed from one who used to seek revenge readily to a more forgiving person, from one with high anger outburst to one who readily puts her anger under control, and from one with poor conflict handling skills to one good in handling conflicts. Roki need to be more patience before taking action in the future and also need to be aware that violence is not a viable solution to any problem. Olabisi however agreed to share her gain with Roki and promised to work towards influencing her positively. Finally, she reiterated her resolution to stand in support for a non-violent action for social change in her school.

Conclusion

The Peace clubs established in eight schools in the course of the study operated over a 15-month period. It aimed at empowering students with skills of conflict resolution, so they can resolve their own conflicts at schools, homes and in the community. This was achieved, insofar as we can take the positive responses of the participants as an indicator of future behaviour. Follow-up studies months and years

into the future, together with an appropriate control group, would be needed to be sure of this conclusion. Various methods were used to train the students in a number of areas which led to building their capacities and skills in handling conflicts and promoting peace in schools and community at large. This could be seen expressed in their second essays. Also, the interviews with a cross section of the students further lend credence to the extent at which the students have gained knowledge and basic skills in conflict resolution which has helped to positively influence their contributions to efforts aim at resolving conflicts amicably in their schools, homes and the community at large.

Another objective of the peace club was to use the infrastructure created to effect positive attitudinal changes in students and have them contribute to the process of nonviolent social change in their schools. The peace club training sessions have indeed helped changed the student's attitude to handling conflicts. A large number of them who shared their experiences in the course of the peace club meetings said that they no longer engage in fights, and other types of violence. They added that they have also imbibed other virtues such as patience, respects and love among others. They submitted that, the peace club project indeed positively changed their attitudes in all its ramifications.

Another objective of the peace clubs was to set up a forum where students and teachers can express their viewpoints. The peace club platform created in the schools for the study indeed provided the forum when students particularly and even teachers largely expressed their viewpoints on peace and the promotion and sustenance of peace in schools. The forum provided teachers the opportunity to further advise students on the need for them to be the agents of change in the school as well as also share in the opinion of the researcher and coordinator of the peace club on how teachers and students can work together towards an institutionalised peace in the school. The forum set up via the creation of peace club provided opportunities for the participants to share their points of view on their conflict experiences and how their involvement in peace club has helped changed them. In short, the participants reported considerable positive changes in the direction of dealing with their conflicts non-violently and effectively.

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