

ROTARY PEACE FELLOWSHIP SOCIAL CHANGE INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

TITLE: EDUPEACE ADVOCACY INITIATIVE NIGERIA

BY:

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EDUPEACE: Education and Peace Initiative

FCT: Federal Capital Territory

IEP: Institute for Economics and Peace

SCI: Social Change Initiative

SLT: Social Learning Theory

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ABSTRACT

The EDUPEACE ADVOCACY INITIATIVE NIGERIA is a Rotary peace advocacy social change initiative targeting secondary school students aged 11-16 at the School for the Gifted in Gwagwalada, Abuja. This project aims to foster peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and social responsibility among the students of the above named school through tailored educational workshops, interactive sessions, and advocacy activities. By empowering these young learners with skills for peaceful coexistence, empathy, and leadership, the initiative seeks to cultivate a culture of peace and positive social change within the school community and beyond. Through collaboration with Rotary members, educators, and students, the EDUPEACE initiative promotes values of tolerance, understanding, and cooperation, contributing to a more harmonious society. The work adopts a conflict transformation theory which asserts that conflicts are always in a flux, in a constant state of change and the aim is to transform them into something socially useful and non-destructive. Conflict, therefore is a dynamic and changeable process and the process which seeks to alter conflict must be equally dynamic and changeable as projected through this Social Change Initiative implementation.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction and Background

In a world marred by conflicts, violence, and social injustices, the pursuit of peace and stability has become an imperative for human survival and development. Peace education and conflict transformation have emerged as critical tools in this pursuit, offering a framework for addressing the root causes of conflicts and fostering a culture of peace. The EDUPEACE Initiative Nigeria is a social change initiative that seeks to promote peace education and conflict transformation in Nigeria, with a view to building a more peaceful and harmonious society. Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, is a complex landscape of conflicts. From the Boko Haram insurgency in the northeast to the herder-farmer conflicts in the middle belt, and the Niger Delta militancy in the south-south region, the country is beset by a multitude of conflicts that have claimed countless lives, displaced millions, and undermined economic development. These conflicts are often driven by a complex interplay of factors, including poverty, inequality, corruption, and ethnic and religious tensions. Peace education is a critical component of conflict transformation. By teaching individuals and communities about the importance of peace, tolerance, and conflict resolution, peace education can help to build a culture of peace and reduce the likelihood of violent conflict. Peace education can take many forms, including formal education programs, community-based initiatives, and advocacy campaigns. The EduPeace initiative is a social change project aimed at promoting peace and development through education in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nigeria.

Specifically, the initiative will focus on the School for the Gifted in Gwagwalada, Abuja. The FCT, home to Nigeria's capital city Abuja, has seen increasing security concerns due to banditry, 'one-chance'(robbing unsuspected members of the public through commercial motor services), kidnapping for ransom, prostitution and other forms of vices. These issues have affected surrounding communities, including Gwagwalada, where the School for the Gifted is located. The SCI seeks to promote peace education and conflict transformation in Nigeria. The initiative is built on the recognition that peace is a critical component of human development and that conflict transformation is essential for building a more peaceful and harmonious society with the aims to promote peace education and conflict transformation through a range of activities, including workshops, training programs, and community-based initiatives.

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite efforts to promote peace and stability, conflicts persist, fueled by factors such as poverty, inequality, and lack of access to education and opportunities. The EDUPEACE Initiative Nigeria seeks to address the pressing issue of conflicts and violence in Nigeria, which have resulted in significant human suffering, displacement, and economic instability. Students aged 11-16 in secondary schools are vulnerable to the impacts of conflict, violence, and social unrest, which can hinder their academic performance, emotional well-being, and future opportunities. Despite efforts to promote peace and stability, many students lack the skills, knowledge, and support to resolve conflicts peacefully, manage their emotions, and build positive relationships with their peers and

community. As a result, they may be more likely to engage in violent behavior, experience mental health issues, or become disengaged from their education, ultimately affecting their potential to become active citizens and agents of positive change in their communities.

1.3 Goals and Objectives

1.3.1. Goals

The general goal of the SCI is to promote peace education by equipping students with skills and knowledge to resolve conflicts peacefully and build positive relationships, foster a safe and supportive learning environment that prioritizes students' emotional and social needs as well as encourage students to become agents of change by becoming active citizens who promote peace and tolerance in their communities.

1.3.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of the SCI are as follows:

1. To promote peace education and conflict transformation in Nigeria through lecture and advocacy
2. To build the capacity of individuals and communities to manage conflicts in a peaceful and constructive manner through Focus group discussion and experiential learning

3. To foster a culture of peace and tolerance and support the development of a more peaceful and harmonious society in Nigeria by ‘catching them young’

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study on the EDUPEACE Initiative Nigeria is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it highlights the importance of peace education and conflict transformation in building a more peaceful and harmonious society. Secondly, it provides insights into the complex landscape of conflicts in Nigeria and the role that peace education and conflict transformation can play in addressing these conflicts. Finally, it offers a framework for promoting peace education and conflict transformation in Nigeria and other similar contexts.

1.5 Challenges

There are several challenges in the cause of implementation of the SCI. First is the resistance to Change witnessed by Students, teachers, community members as there was reluctance on their part to give in and approve the researcher’s bid to come for advocacy program. Community engagement, building trust and engaging with the community can be time-consuming and challenging. It was difficult than I ever envisaged. I was rejected in three schools before I finally got through in Gwgawalada. On Monday 19th May, 2025 at JSS Giri (one of the schools I earlier visited), the principal was not so moved querying while advocacy program could be important when people are hungry. He was not diplomatic in saying it at all and I couldn’t easily forget that. The Principal said they were only looking for NGOs and support to sponsor few of the students who are

intelligent but do not have financial support. According to him, they are tired of lecture, advocacy and talking when people come and go. Some even promise without fulfilling. This calls to question and reveals how different advocacy groups play on schools and communities to get information, and refuse to come back to fulfill their promises which could be very disappointing.

Again, Limited Resources; Insufficient funding, materials hindered initiative implementation. There are much more that could have been done like donating school items, sponsoring students and many more but the researcher was constrained to work within available resources as graciously provided, through Rotary generosity and the support from his organization in Nigeria. Sustainability of the project by ensuring long-term impact and sustainability of the initiative can be challenging. Despite plans for Monitoring and Evaluation, and sustainability plans, assessing initiative effectiveness and making adjustments can be difficult when the chips are down. It is hoped that more support will be sought after now to be able to adequately follow up for scalability within the Federal Capital Territory schools, and by extension other areas in the country. It should be emphasized that the researcher was able to manage the issue of trust deficit and got goodwill support from friends and colleagues to cover up to mitigate some of the challenges that would have been too obvious or erupt the integrity of the initiative.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Literature Review

EDUPEACE, as a concept, revolves around promoting peace education to foster conflict transformation. Conflict transformation refers to the process of changing the underlying structures, attitudes, and behaviors that lead to conflicts. This literature review aims to explore the role of peace education in conflict transformation, particularly in the context of EDUPEACE.

2.2 Theoretical Underpinnings

There are many theories that could be espoused on EDUPEACE. For instance, Peter Meyer's Human rights education emphasizes the importance of promoting human rights and dignity in peace education, Henry Giroux's Critical pedagogy recognizes the need for critical thinking and reflection in peace education, encouraging individuals to challenge dominant narratives and power structures while Nelson Mandela agenda of Restorative justice focuses on repairing harm and promoting healing in the aftermath of conflict, rather than solely punishing offenders. International organisations such as UNESCO, Amnesty International and individuals like Mahatma Gandhi have advocated and made postulations that are relevant to the application of the concept espouse in the SCI. EDUPEACE, as a concept, is grounded in various theoretical frameworks that inform its approach to promoting peace education and conflict transformation. Understanding these theoretical underpinnings is essential to appreciate the complexities and nuances in the work. This section will explore the critical theoretical underpinnings of EDUPEACE, including conflict theory, peace education, change theory and social learning theory.

2.2.1 Conflict Theory

Conflict theory, as posited by Karl Marx and later developed by other scholars, suggests that conflict arises from the contradictions and inequalities inherent in social structures. This theory is relevant to EDUPEACE, as it highlights the need to address the root causes of conflict, such as social injustices and inequalities, to promote lasting peace. In the context here, conflict theory informs the approach to peace education by emphasizing the importance of critical thinking, social awareness, and community engagement. By understanding the structural and systemic factors that contribute to conflict, individuals can develop a deeper appreciation for the complexities of peace building and the need for sustainable solutions.

2.2.2 Peace Education

Peace education is a critical component of EDUPEACE, and it is grounded in various theoretical frameworks. One such framework is the concept of negative and positive peace, as introduced by Johan Galtung. Negative peace refers to the absence of violence, while positive peace encompasses the presence of social justice, equality, and human rights. Peace education, in the context of EDUPEACE, aims to promote positive peace by fostering a culture of peace, tolerance, and understanding. This approach recognizes that peace is not merely the absence of conflict but rather a dynamic process that requires ongoing effort and commitment. Peace education is grounded in various theoretical frameworks that highlight its significance in conflict transformation. One such framework is the contact hypothesis, which suggests that bringing individuals from

conflicting groups together can help reduce prejudice and improve intergroup relations. This theory supports the idea of peace education programs that involve joint activities and dialogue between conflicting parties. Another framework is the social learning theory (SLT), which posits that individuals learn behaviors and attitudes through observation and imitation. Peace education can utilize this theory by promoting positive role models and reinforcing peaceful behaviors. The SLT is well embraced in this work.

2.2.3 Peace Education and Conflict Transformation

Research has shown that peace education can be an effective tool for conflict transformation. By teaching individuals about conflict resolution skills, empathy, and nonviolent communication amongst others, peace education can help reduce aggression and improve relationships. Studies have demonstrated that students who participate in peace education programs exhibit higher empathy, lower aggression, and better conflict resolution skills.

2.3 The Concept of Change Theory and how it applies to the SCI

Change theory, also known as the Prosci ADKAR Model, is a framework for understanding and managing change. Developed by Jeff Hiatt, the model outlines the key elements required for successful change: Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement. Jeff Hiatt, the founder of Prosci, developed the ADKAR Model, which has been widely adopted in various fields, including business, education, and healthcare. The model provides a structured approach to change management, enabling organizations and individuals to navigate complex changes effectively. The EDUPEACE Advocacy

program, a Social Change Initiative (SCI) at the School for the Gifted in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Federal Capital Territory, aimed to empower secondary school students aged 11-16 with essential skills in empathy, conflict resolution, and community engagement. By applying change theory, the program sought to create a positive impact on the students, their communities, and beyond. This part of the project outlines how change theory was applied in the SCI while relating its alignment with Rotary International's areas of focus and the Positive Peace pillars.

Awareness is the first: Lectures and experience-sharing sessions raised awareness about the importance of empathy, conflict resolution, and community engagement. Students learned about the impact of conflict on individuals and communities, and the benefits of promoting peace and understanding.

Second is Desire: Focused Group Discussions and interactive activities fostered a desire for change among students, encouraging them to become agents of positive change in their communities. Students shared their personal experiences and perspectives, and explored ways to apply new skills and knowledge in their daily lives.

The third is Knowledge: Students acquired knowledge and skills in empathy, conflict resolution, and community engagement, enabling them to make a positive impact. The program covered topics such as active listening, mediation, and problem-solving, and provided opportunities for students to practice these skills.

Fourth is the ability: Role-playing exercises and community engagement projects enabled students to demonstrate their ability to apply new skills and knowledge. Students worked

on projects that promoted community development, and applied their conflict resolution skills in real-world contexts. This was a non-formal component of the SCI which really enhanced the students' understanding of the message of peace brought to their school.

The last but not the least is reinforcement: This entails mentorship, follow-up activities, and community recognition reinforced students' commitment to positive change, ensuring the sustainability of the program's impact. Students received feedback and support from mentors (the trained teachers and representative of Gwagwalada Rotary club), and were promised to be recognized for their achievements in promoting peace and community engagement.

2.4 Alignment with Rotary International's Areas of Focus

The SCI aligns with Rotary International's areas of focus, including:

- a. Promoting Peace: The program's focus on conflict resolution and empathy-building aligns with Rotary's goal of promoting peace and resolving conflicts.
- b. Supporting Education: By targeting secondary school students, the program supports education and empowers young people to become active contributors to their communities.

2.5 Alignment with IEP's Positive Peace Pillars

The Positive Peace model, developed by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), provides a framework for understanding and promoting peace. The EDUPEACE Advocacy program aligns with the following Positive Peace pillars:

- a. Well-Functioning Government: Empowering students to become agents of change in their communities, the SCI promotes good governance and community engagement.
- b. Sound Business Environment: The SCI's focus on empathy and conflict resolution can contribute to a more harmonious and productive business environment.
- c. Equitable Distribution of Resources: By promoting community engagement and development, the program can help address social and economic inequalities.
- d. Free Flow of Information: The program's emphasis on open communication and dialogue can facilitate the free flow of information and promote transparency. This manifested greatly during the interactive session and experience sharing
- e. High Levels of Human Capital: By equipping students with essential skills and knowledge, the program contributes to the development of human capital and promotes positive peace by catching them young, those are potential agents of change in their schools and immediate communities.

2.6 Social Learning Theory (SLT)

According to Albert Bandura's social learning theory, people learn new behaviors and attitudes by observing and imitating others. In the context of EDUPEACE, this theory is applied by promoting positive role models and supportive social environments that foster peaceful behaviors and attitudes. Social learning theory, as developed by Albert Bandura, suggests that individuals learn behaviors and attitudes through observation and imitation. This theory is relevant to EDUPEACE, as it highlights the importance of role models and

social environments in shaping individual behavior. In the context herein, social learning theory informs the approach to peace education by emphasizing the need for positive role models and supportive social environments. By promoting positive behaviors and attitudes, peace education can help individuals develop the skills and knowledge necessary to resolve conflicts peacefully and build more harmonious relationships. Aside from Change Theory, this work also learns more to Social Learning Theory and the emphasis will be on it and how it was applied.

2.6.1 Social Learning Theory and how it was applied

Social learning theory plays a significant role in conflict transformation through EDUPEACE. Social Learning Theory in EDUPEACE emphasised Observational Learning whereby Students learn peaceful behaviors by observing positive role models, such as educators, peers, or community leaders, who demonstrate conflict resolution skills and empathy just as the researcher and his team did during the implementation Also, we ensure Positive Reinforcement: Peaceful behaviors are reinforced through positive feedback, encouragement, and rewards, motivating students to continue exhibiting these behaviors. We shared experience and encourage them as such. Social Environment: EDUPEACE creates a supportive social environment that promotes peace, tolerance, and understanding, encouraging students to adopt peaceful attitudes and behaviors. There are benefits of applying Social Learning Theory in this SCI as the theory appeared best suited to drive home the objectives and all intended messages of the SCI by:

- i. Promoting Peaceful Behaviors: For instance, by observing and imitating positive role models, students learn peaceful behaviors and attitudes.

ii. Fostering Empathy: EDUPEACE programs encourage students to understand others' feelings and experiences, developing empathy and promoting peaceful relationships.

iii. Encouraging Positive Social Change: By promoting peace, tolerance, and understanding, the SCI contributes to positive social change and conflict transformation.

2.7 Methods and Design

To investigate the effectiveness of the initiative in promoting conflict transformation, a mixed-methods research design was employed. This approach combines quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. A number of sixty (60) Secondary school students (male and female) with four school teachers were randomly selected. The students were between the ages of 11-16 years of age. They were engaged through lecture, interactive session, and Focus Groups: Qualitative data collected after the implementation through interviews and focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives. Observational Studies was also used as Researcher observed participants to collect data on their behaviors and interactions. The teachers were selected to be serve as guide and follow up with them while students drawn across classes was to ensure that they are replicating and nurturing their juniors before they will be passing out. The age limit so drawn was to ensure certain level of maturity and spread across classes to ensure the selected students do not pass out of the college (graduate) at the same time.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Intervention and Activities

The EDUPEACE program implemented a series of interventions and activities aimed at promoting peace education and conflict transformation. These initiatives were designed to engage participants, foster a sense of communality, and provide valuable skills and knowledge. First was Lectures where speakers delivered on peace education, conflict resolution, effective communication, active listening, negative and positive peace concepts, conflict transformation, society and development. These lectures provided participants with a foundational understanding of the importance of peace education and its practical applications. There was Experience Sharing where participants shared their personal experiences and insights on peacebuilding and conflict resolution. This sharing helped to realized that the students have idea of some concepts but could not only appreciate them in conceptual terms. The session opened their eyes, aroused their curiosity and fostered empathy among the students. Also, participants engaged in focused discussions on specific topics related to peace education and conflict transformation. These discussions allowed participants to explore complex issues in-depth and develop practical solutions.

Introduction and Induction to Interact Club

Through the SCI, students were introduced to a peace club known as interact club as a subset of the Gwagwalada Rotary Club. The Interact Club is a youth-led organization that

focuses on community service, leadership development, and promoting peace and understanding for students within the target group of the SCI (Age 11-16). Through this introduction, participants learned about the club's activities, goals, and values, and had the opportunity to become members.

Benefits of Intervention and Activities

The interventions and activities implemented by EDUPEACE provided numerous benefits to participants. Participants developed leadership skills through their involvement in the Interact Club and other program activities as the club has kick started. They also learned the importance of community service and engagement in promoting peace and understanding. They acquired practical skills in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Participants also had the opportunity to connect more within and amongst them, thereby fostering a sense of cooperation and networking. Part of the researcher's follow up will be to ensure that Interact club is well formidable and would work with Rotary clubs around the FCT in order to sustain and keep the objectives alive. It will also be the first of its type in FCT where other secondary schools can learn from, that way we can achieve scalability with ease.

3.2 Key Findings/Impact

Peace education was the bane of the activities pervading the implementation of the SCI, and the findings indicate a range of positive impacts on the students and teachers who are representatives of the communities at large. This section will explore the key findings and impacts of peace education programs, highlighting the significance of the SCI and its

impact on the target audience and the community. Through observation, FGD and post activity interview, revelations about huge impact this SCI made within the short time were huge. It serves already as the impetus for scalability and follows up after this phase. The SCI has been found to increase empathy, understanding, and tolerance among participants. This is achieved through activities that promote perspective-taking, active listening, and knowledge sharing through interactive session. It has also equipped the students with effective conflict resolution skills, enabling them to manage disputes in a constructive manner at a later time. Participants learn to approach conflicts with a problem-solving mindset, rather than resorting to aggression or violence.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 General Conclusion

The EDUPEACE program has demonstrated significant potential in promoting peace education and conflict transformation. Through its various interventions and activities, the program has empowered individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to become active contributors to peaceful and sustainable development. The program's impact on promoting social cohesion, reducing aggression and violence, and empowering young people is evident. As such, the EDUPEACE program serves as a valuable model for peace education initiatives, highlighting the importance of collaborative learning, contextual relevance, and 'catch them young'. The EDUPEACE program was designed to promote peace education and conflict transformation through a range of interventions and activities. The program's key components included lectures, experience sharing, focus group discussions, and introduction to the Interact Club. These components were designed to promote empathy, understanding, and conflict resolution skills among participants. The program's impact was evaluated through a range of methods, including interviews, and observational studies. The findings indicate that the program had a positive impact on participants, promoting social cohesion, reducing aggression and violence, and empowering the students.

4.2. Recommendations and Implications for Policy

Based on the findings through the implementation of the SCI, several recommendations can be made: The EDUPEACE program has demonstrated the potential of peace education to promote social cohesion, reduce aggression and violence, and empower young people. By integrating peace education into education systems, supporting community-based initiatives, providing teacher training, and ongoing evaluation and monitoring, policymakers can help promote a culture of peace and conflict resolution. The implications of this study highlight the need for policy support, funding, curriculum development, and partnerships to ensure the effectiveness of peace education programs and the agenda of ‘catch them young’ as agents of change.

4.3 Sustainability Plan

While short-term peace education programs can yield positive results, long-term effects often require sustained efforts and comprehensive approaches. This can involve ongoing training, support, and reinforcement to ensure that peace education is integrated into community norms and practices. Peace education programs can have a multiplier effect, inspiring participants to become agents of change in their communities and fostering networks that promote peacebuilding. This can have a ripple effect, where the impact of peace education is amplified through community connections and relationships. Involving local communities in sustainability efforts to ensure relevance and support is

crucial. Through partnership especially with Rotary clubs, fostering partnerships among governments, educational institutions, civil society, and the private sector could be easily achieved. In the same vein, establishing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impact of sustainability initiatives like the training of teacher could help in monitoring the students. As we measure progress, we will be making necessary adjustments towards a realistic objective with the long term aim of replicating the effort in another school and leave the school to self-monitor and multiply the culture of peace and sense of community development through the interact club.

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Appendix 1: List of photos captured during the training day















Appendices 2: Clearance and Recommendation letter from RPC



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY ROTARY PEACE CENTER

Plot 146, Pool Road. Makerere Kampala-Uganda, Email: info.rpc@mak.ac.ug
Website: www.rpc.mak.ac.ug

21st July, 2025

The Consular Section,
Ministry of Internal Affairs,
Kampala-Uganda.

Dear Consular,

RE: VISA ISSUANCE FOR YUSUF OLALEKAN RAYMOND (PASSPORT NO. B50363700)

I am writing to confirm that Mr. Yusuf Olalekan Raymond Registration No. 2024/HD03/ 047X and student number is 2400700047 is a Makerere University student pursuing a post graduate Diploma in Peace Building and Conflict Transformation funded under the Rotary International Peace Fellowship program.

Mr. Yusuf is currently in his last semester of the program and is expected to travel to Makerere University, Uganda for an onsite engagement of one week, starting 18th -25th October 2025. In fulfillment of the completion of his study, he is expected to attend and present his project report during the Rotary International Capstone Conference at Makerere University

Please accept this letter as evidence of our undertaking to cater for his accommodation at the University's Guest House, located inside Makerere University, and a stipend to cover for his living costs while in Uganda

Any assistance accorded to him, will be highly appreciated. Please feel free to reach out to the undersigned should you require any further information.

Thanking you for your kind support as we Build for the Future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Hba', is written over a circular official stamp.



Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala (Ph. D),
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