



RESEARCH ARTICLE

IMPACT OF TRAINING ON CAPACITY BUILDING IN PEACE INITIATIVES AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: THE CASE OF MATHARE SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

*¹Peter N. Keiyoro, ²Kamau G. Wangui and ²Josephine W. Ngunjiri

¹School of Continuing and Distance Education, University of Nairobi, P.O Box - 30197, Nairobi

²University of Nairobi, School of Continuing and Distance education, P.O. Box - 30197, Nairobi

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ABSTRACT

Teachers and school administrators have a big role to play in continuity and stability of peace in schools. They are closely associated with the education system hence can exert social control of the learners at many learning levels. The problem of student becoming violent in secondary schools especially in Kenya is a common phenomenon. This study investigated the influence of capacity building among teachers in peace initiatives in secondary schools in Kenya. This study adopted a descriptive survey design during data collection. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected using closed and open ended questionnaires and Likert scale. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used in selecting respondents from the randomly selected schools. Reliability of research instruments was measured by using split-half technique and the value was +0.6 which was considered satisfactory. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis techniques. This study found that the teachers had not been exposed to various skills that are required for developing peace initiatives among students. The study concluded that the teachers in the selected schools had not been offered training in peace initiatives. The findings are hoped to assist the Education managers and other stake holders on the importance to conduct teacher training courses in peace initiatives so that they can maximize their new skills in helping to curb violence that is often witnessed in secondary schools in Kenya.

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of Peace education is to provide attitudes, knowledge and skills that are useful in overcoming violence by building people's capacity to critically analyze problems and act to promote the non-violent solution of conflicts. The education helps to foster harmonious and cooperative relations among people. There exist essential characteristics for anyone who exerts influence in favor of peace, from national to the global level. Peace education provides people with tools to relate to themselves, to their immediate environment and to the world. To achieve this, it works on cognitive, affective, moral and political aspects in developing content that conveys the concepts and the values of peaceful co-existence. Peace Education therefore is very important in developing a culture of peace and especially when there is conflict and violence in secondary schools in Kenya. Peace Education programmes ensure that teachers are well equipped with the necessary skills to cope with conflict as well as help the children to cope with

the difficult situations that arise from such conflicts. During such violent conflicts, education may have a protective role, for instance by providing points of stability and daily routine for children. Peace education could help children realize the underlying causes of conflict and strengthen peace messages within a society that prevent violence. It is a means of educating people about other non-violent or soft diplomatic means of solving conflicts. School age children are the youth aged between 4 and 18 years. This is a social group that is undergoing drastic psychological, biological, sociological and physical changes often accompanied with a number of social crises. For example the secondary school students are in the process of transition from childhood to adulthood. This is the most unstable and crucial stage of human development in any given society (Nkinyangi, 1981). The students' disturbances increasingly seem to recur at all levels of the educational system including primary schools. In this regard therefore, it is clear that there is a need for teachers to acquire capacity building in skills and attitudes that are necessary in peace building initiatives. This would enable them to cultivate a culture of peaceful coexistence among the learners through nonviolent initiatives. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of teacher training in peace education

*Corresponding author: Peter N. Keiyoro,
School of Continuing and Distance Education, University of Nairobi,
P.O Box - 30197, Nairobi

programmes on capacity building and peace initiatives in Mathare Sub-County, Nairobi County in Kenya. Therefore, objectives of the study were to: determine the influence of attendance, modes of training, duration and frequency of training on peace building initiatives among learners. The findings of this study were expected to help the Education managers and other stake holders on the need to enable teachers acquire skills in peace initiatives. This is to empower them in peace building abilities among learners hence help them to realize lasting peace in schools and the entire society. Teacher development in peace building may be offered during in-service or pre-service modes of training. This may include a focus on skills such as the use of interactive teaching methods, organizing cooperative group work and facilitating group discussion (Hicks, 1985). This is essential for quality basic peace education and enables teachers to convey values of cooperation, respect for the opinions of the child and appreciation of personal differences. Teaching the essentials of peace building may be organized through brief orientation and training seminars followed by ongoing support and supervision. According to Aladejana (2007), seminars should accentuate practical instructions and focus on the relevant skills, knowledge, ethics and guidelines needed for emergency response. The sessions should be participatory and be adapted to the local culture and context and utilize learning models in which participants are both learners and educators (Aladejana, 2007). Peace education programmes should include topics such as child development techniques necessary for creating a supportive classroom environment and fluent communication with children (Jackie, 2015). Also Jackie (2015) working with teachers in Ethiopia on peace building techniques emphasized the need to identify indicators of the child well-being during peace education classes. In studied also carried out in Burundi, Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Tanzania (Baldo, 1998) the training in peace education focused on participatory teaching and learning methods as well as content areas such as children's rights and conflict resolutions skills. Training in peace building for practicing teachers can also be done through short courses in in-service mode of training. Teachers are potential mediators who need adequate training and empowerment in order to provide effective support for healthy coexistence among children. Wolmer (2011) emphasized that classroom initiatives should not only aim at improving peace education programs and policy making in the short and medium terms, but also in the long term ways of enhancing students well-being and protection. Peace education programmes in Ethiopia have implemented teacher centered development packages that include collective identification of teacher development targets, self-evaluation tools and processes (Jackie, 2015). The peace initiatives educators often struggle to overcome the challenges which their learners face, including their own emergency related mental health and psychosocial problems. Therefore, Daunic (2002) noted that training, supervision and support for these educators enable them to acquire a clear understanding of their roles in promoting learners' well-being. This also help them to protect and to foster the development of children, youth and adult learners abilities in peace building throughout emergency periods. Teachers who are trained in peace building activities are likely to communicate critical messages to children, serve as models of caring adults, help to re-establish children's trust

and potentially, create a climate in the classroom that help children and youth to heal. According to Davies (2004) this helps to create protection and psychosocial needs of the children in their minds. Thus, untrained teachers in peace education may find themselves in overcrowded classrooms with little or no teaching and learning resources to support their teaching in peace building. Bickford (1996) asserts that teachers are often unable to respond to the physical and emotional needs of their students or themselves if they poorly trained in peace building initiatives. Hence quality training in peace education programmes in this context is indispensable in preparing teachers to help protect and foster the development of children and youth during and after social conflicts. Everyone involved in providing education, especially teachers and school administrators have a role to play in mitigating the psychological and social impact after any social conflict that affects the children. However, any training content should have some similarities across emergencies but must be modified to the culture, context, needs and capacities of each situation (Alexander, 2010). This study identified the variables that facilitate teacher training in peace initiatives that influence teachers' capacity building. The independent variables comprised of modes of training in the programmes and frequency of training while the dependent variable included teachers' capacity building in peace initiatives.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area: Mathare constituency is part of Nairobi county. It has a population of 193,416 persons according to National Census, 2009 and occupies an area of 3.00 Sq. Km. Mathare constituency is made up of six county assembly wards which are Hospital (Mathare Sub-Location of Nairobi County), Mabatini (4B and Gitathuru) Sub-Location of Nairobi County), Huruma (Part of Huruma Sub-Location of Nairobi County), Ngei (Part of Huruma Sub-Location of Nairobi County), Mlango Kubwa (Mlango Kubwa Sub-Location of Nairobi County) and Kiamaiko (Kiamaiko Sub-Location of Nairobi County). Part of Mathare especially Huruma has been described as a slum in which inadequate sanitation facilities, poor drainage and housing, lack of clean water and energy supply prevail. Mathare is believed to have started in 1963 (Umande Trust, 2007). This also could mean that diverse cultural and socio economic activities as different communities dwell in Mathare. The research design employed for this study was descriptive research survey. Simple random sampling procedure was used to recruit participants from randomly selected schools in Mathare constituency. Questionnaires were used to collect data. Reliability of research instruments was measured by using, split-half technique and the value was +0.6 which was considered adequate. The results were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Data collection tools were all returned and used for data analysis. These were 74 questionnaires administered to the participants. The participants were 37 (50%) males and 37(50%) females with different academic backgrounds. Those who had attained Masters degrees were 15(20%), degree holders 42(57%) and diploma holders were 17 (23%). The study investigated the attendance to peace education training

Table 1. Response to attendance to peace training programmes

| Responses | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| Yes | 40 | 54.1 |
| No | 34 | 45.9 |
| Total | 74 | 100 |

Table 2. Response on the mode of training

| Mode of training | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Workshops | 22 | 55 |
| Seminars | 18 | 45 |
| On-line | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Table 3. Duration of training

| Duration | Frequency | Percentage(%) |
|------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Less than 1 week | 25 | 50 |
| 1 Week | 8 | 27 |
| More than 1 week | 7 | 23 |
| Total | 40 | 100. |

Table 4. Frequency of training in the last 5 years

| Sessions | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1 | 22 | 55 |
| 2 | 8 | 20 |
| 3 | 5 | 12.5 |
| More than 5 | 5 | 12.5 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

programmes by the participants. Their responses are as indicated in Table 1. The study found that at least 45.9 % (Table 1) of the teachers in the sub-county did not attend peace building training programmes. This means that a large proportion of teachers were not trained in peace initiatives although this is an area that is prone to a lot of social conflicts. The study also sought to find out the mode of training for five years in peace initiatives. The modes of training included workshops, seminars and online as shown in Table 2. The study found out that those teachers who were trained in peace initiatives (45%) attended seminars and workshops 55% which lasted for less than a week while only 0% received the training online in the five years period. The most preferred mode of training was workshops. Moreover, the study set to find out how the length of the trainings influenced attendance

to the training programmes in peace initiatives as represented in Table 3. Half of the respondents (50%) Table 3 attended training sessions that only lasted for a few days, less than a week. This could suggest that the training took a very short time hence there was not enough time to cover important issues in the peace initiatives curriculum. During focus group discussions the teachers suggested that more time was needed in order to ensure that they were trained appropriately in order to translate what they had learnt in their classes. Possibly this could create more awareness in need for peace in the society and inculcate positive behaviour among students through peace initiatives education. The study deemed it necessary to find out how often the teacher training took place. Table 4 presents the response of the teachers on the frequency of the teacher training sessions in the last 5 years. The study

found out how often the teacher training sessions in peace initiatives took place in a period of five years Table 4. Majority of the respondents (55%) had attended the training only once in the last 5 years, whereas only (12.5%) have attended the training for more than 5 times. This is an indication that frequency of teacher training in 5 years was very low. During the focus group discussions the teachers indicated that there is need for frequent training in order to assess and be trained in the emerging issues in peace initiatives education and hence produce practical results among the children.

DISCUSSION

This study found that 46.9% of the teachers had not been trained in peace initiatives. This should prevent them from engaging in productive teaching to equip learners with the right skills and attitudes that will prevent them from engaging in conflict related activities. It is assumed that effective peace initiatives education could result to peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution that is, non-violent ways of solving issues among the students (Beth, 1994). It is therefore very important to train all teachers so as to build their capacity in peace initiatives (Wolmer, 2011; Chase, 1999). Teachers are often referred as potential clinic mediators and need adequate training and empowerment in order to provide support for the students (Wolmer, 2011). Training of teachers was done through seminars and workshops which were offered to teachers who are already in the field. However, teachers training in peace education can be done through short courses and in-service training modes. This is suitable because teacher training programme in Kenya rarely provide training in peace initiatives which is very essential if violence in schools is to be curbed. Training of most of the teachers in peace initiatives was done for only a few days. Majority of those who attended training only went to a one day workshop which may not be adequate to cater for the many peace initiative skills that need to be taught to the teachers. Daunic (2002) purported that training, supervision and support for educators could enable them to clearly understand their roles in promoting learners wellbeing. Such preparation could help the teachers to protect and promote the social development of children, youth and adults also (Mena, 1995). Therefore, the teachers need detailed and extensive training in peace initiatives to enable them acquire the required peace keeping skills. It could also provide the teachers with opportunities to interact for longer periods and be able to share experiences. Thus, allow them to come up with ways of tackling the problem related to various types of conflicts as also recommended by Beth (1994). The researchers concluded that many teachers in the study area had not been offered training in peace initiatives. This means that they have not been exposed to various peace initiative skills that are necessary. The resource materials that have been availed in almost all schools ended up being used by some of inexperienced teachers in peace initiatives who did not have the slightest idea of how to use them.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The researchers concluded that teachers may not be able to practice the various skills learnt during training in peace initiatives because the training sessions were too short and

were inadequate. Most of the respondents said that they have only received the training once in the last five years. Therefore, this confirmed that teacher training in peace initiatives is very crucial if the teachers were to acquire the right peace initiative skills and also get to know how to use the resources that were needed to inculcate a culture of peaceful coexistence among the learners and eventually curb violence in secondary schools in Kenya. It is recommended that The Ministry of Education should train all teachers in peace initiatives regardless of the subjects they teach. The training should also be offered for longer periods and repeated at least once every year. The ministry of Education ought to introduce online mode of learning in peace education which can be very appropriate for teachers who are already in service. This would enable them to continue with their school work and gain knowledge and skills in peace initiative without necessarily going for seminars and workshops outside their work places. Online education could also be offered at certificate or degree earning course. The skill and knowledge gained could be immediately be applied in the school or community environments.

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