

# Students' Attitude to Peace Education Concepts in Social Studies in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State

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## Abstract

*This study investigated students' attitude as catalyst for achievement in peace education concepts in Social Studies in Oyo West Local Government Area of Oyo State. The study adopted the survey research design. Four public junior secondary schools were randomly selected from public junior secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area of Oyo State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select ten JSS II students from each school making a total of 40 students. One research instrument was used for data collection: Questionnaire on Students' Attitude to Peace Education Concepts in Social Studies ( $r=0.76$ ). Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentage, frequency count, mean and standard deviation. Findings of the study revealed that the weighted mean of 3.31 against the threshold of 2.50. The level of students' attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies was high. Also, it revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female students' level of attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies ( $t = -0.96$ ;  $df = 38$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). It showed that female ( $\pi=64.83$ ) students have higher level of attitude than male students ( $\pi=63.06$ ). Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that teachers of Social Studies should teach the peace education concepts in Social Studies in a way that students will be interested in learning it. Students should be encouraged to have positive attitude to peace in their environment. Government should provide necessary facilities that will make teaching and learning of peace education concepts easy.*

**Keywords:** Attitude, Peace, Peace Education Concepts, Social Studies.

## Introduction

Peace in its progressive or dialectical mode denotes active individual and collective efforts and emancipatory empowerment for peace-making and peace-keeping (Webel, 2007). The purpose of incorporating peace concepts in Social Studies curriculum is to build culture of tolerance, understanding and care in the world. As human beings continue to have interactions among themselves, so also, they continue to generate conflicts among themselves. So, peace education is important as a mitigating programme for building culture of peace in the society. It can be seen as learning to effect a shift in perspective from culture of intolerance and violence to a culture of peace (Mezieobi, 2012).

Johnson and Johnson (2006) opine that peace can be divided into two distinct forms. The first area could be categorised as violence, strife and war. The second dimension could also be defined as opposite of the first such as having

common understanding, agreement and resolution that put an end to violence, war and strife. The absence of strife, violence as well as war is referred to as period of peace. In one side there is discord, strife, uncommon ground, disagreement and winner or loser attitude which indicate social injustice while other side embraces common goal, mutual understanding and benefits and this signifies social justice. Based on these viewpoints, when there are positive beneficial human relationships then there is presence of peace. Once there is mutual understanding by individual, nations or groups of people, then there is peace (Johnson and Johnson, 2006).

On the basis of all these propositions, Bartal (2002) affirms that every society likes a peaceful environment and it is therefore mandatory for every member of any society to be educated on how to sustain a peaceful living with oneself and others within the society. This act of education about peace is only possible through

education in which school is the vehicle through which it can be achieved. Society recognises that education of younger generation as regard peaceful living can be possible through schools. The agencies of education such as ministry of education as well as other bodies of education can design required educational curriculum that can train the younger generation a peaceful living.

Peace concepts are essential means of promoting necessary attitude change to evolve a culture of peace and non-violent behaviour (Ezeoba, 2012). They develop a climate that models peaceful behaviour among all members of the learning community, demonstrate the principles of equality and non-discrimination in administrative policies and practices, draw on the knowledge of peacebuilding that exists in the community (Edozie & Ezeoba, 2010). Also, including means of dealing with conflict that are effective, non-violent and rooted in the local culture, handle conflicts in ways that respect the rights and dignity of all involved, integrate an understanding of peace, human rights, social justice and global issues throughout the curriculum whenever possible, provide a forum for the explicit discussion of values of peace and social justices, enable children to put peace making into practice in the education setting as well as in the wider community and generate opportunities for continuous reflection and professional development of all educators in relation to issues of peace, justice and rights (Chianson, Kurumeh & Obida, 2010).

Peace education aims to empower individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to promote peace, resolve conflicts, and work towards a more peaceful coexistence among individuals and nations (Julius, Ngao, David & Paul, 2012). According to Kester (2008), peace education is a democratic pedagogy to foster peaceful personal relationship in a non-violent manner. It raises dialogue on critical issues to transform oppressive systems from a violent orientation

toward a culture of peace. This is because peace educators teach the values of respect, understanding, tolerance, social justice, free and fair elections as well as non-violent governmental transitions. Equally, peace education deals with 'constructive responses to human tension and violence', and helps students to appreciate the importance of good government, respect for the rule of law and solidarity among other people. To this end, peace education is a peace building programme for democratic education in Social Studies.

According to Page (2008), peace education involves a process of acquiring values, knowledge, skills, attitudes and other forms of competencies needed to live in harmony with oneself, with others, and with the natural environment. It is the process of acquiring the values, knowledge and attitudes, skills and behaviors to live in harmony with oneself, with others and with the natural environment (Tugbiyele, 2014). Tugbiyele equally pin point various keys components of peace education which includes desire for peace, non-violent alternative for managing conflicts and skills for critical analysis of structure arrangements that produce and legitimise injustice and inequality. Other components include nature and sources of conflicts, of justice and welfare within and between individuals, of nature of power and the way in which power influences, groups and nations.

Adedoja and Fakokunde (2010) revealed that for any reasonable progress to be made in human life, peace must prevail. The level of restiveness and violence prevailing at individual, family, communal, national and international levels made it a necessity to build a culture of peace. If culture is a total way of life of a people, it means a culture of peace must be cultivated and the major instrument for cultural transmission and transformation is education. Peace education therefore is the cornerstone for entrenching the culture of peace in any society. Peace education is one of the means of ensuring harmony and security in Nigeria. It is in the light of this that some peace concepts have been integrated into the Universal Basic Education

(UBE) Social Studies curriculum. Some of these are: peace, conflict resolution within social group, national unity and integration, group behaviour and living together (Falade, Adeyemi & Olowo, 2011).

Peace education as being concerned with how to establish and maintain good attitude towards peaceful co-existence within and among different levels of people and as well as various society segments. In short, peace education is a process of teaching, training and cultivating in learners especially the young ones, the relevant knowledge, attitudes, skills and values that promote peace in schools with a view to having a developed society void of incessant and avoidable conflicts and violence especially in a multicultural society like Nigeria. Sommerfelt and Vambheim (2008) propose that every citizen should learn how to resolve any conflict out of violence, stop act of aggression among themselves as well as learn better ways of living in cooperation among themselves.

Jenkins (2007) differentiated education about peace from what is called peace education. When contents are built around historical figures of people who maintained peaceful living in their various generations such as Gandhi and Kings as well as contents on peace and war, this is referred to or categorized as education about peace. Meanwhile education for peace is regarded as the way of building skills in individuals that will enable them to conquer violence. Those skills are built through nurturing of appropriate values, knowledge as well as good behaviour and strength to conquer violence of any form.

Harris (2004) notes that peace education hopes to build peaceful consciousness and commitment to the way of peace in an individual. Peace education is a means by which students are immunised against any act of violence by teaching them some skills on how to manage any conflict they confront in life without the act of violence. Studies in the field of peace education have indicated that in reality, peace education is tailored towards building a kind of values and behaviour that are common in nature upon which individuals can cultivate a peaceful

living. Peace education also embraces the act of solving conflict without violence through building of non-violence resolution skills in an individual and also directs individual's commitment to a peaceful living in order to build a better future society.

In spite of the importance attached to teaching and learning of peace education concepts in Social Studies, there is no a single day without a report of something terrible happening somewhere. During this period, it is obvious that people's life is not safe. There is so much disorder and confusion in the society people have built for themselves as a result of challenges such as boundary disputes, tribal conflicts, religious crisis, and so on which have accounted for loss of lives and properties in no small measure. Available records have shown that a number of countries in the world that have been ravaged by war, and other forms of violence. The country is faced with increasing number of security challenges like ethnic militias, kidnapping, robbery, ritual killings and Boko Haram insurgence (Bamikole 2021). Agulanna (2012) observed that in the last three years, the prevalence of delinquent acts among school children in the country has increased in terms of frequency of recorded delinquent crisis and number of students involved.

Efforts to address this problem has made scholars and researchers to carry out numerous studies. quasi-participatory learning (Ajitoni, 2005), brainstorming and role-play (Olowo, 2021), appreciative inquiry (Olubela, 2014) and buzz group and futures wheel strategies (Bamikole, 2021). All these studies came up with good insights to the teaching and learning of peace education concepts in Social Studies in junior secondary schools but with less research focus on students' attitude as catalyst for achievement in peace education concepts in Social Studies among junior secondary schools especially in Oyo West Local Government Area of Oyo State. Attitude is an internal state that moderates the choice of personal action made by the individual. One's behaviour at a time is not caused; it is the consequences of what is going on within the individual. Ochonogor (2003)

notes that an attitude may be thought as an expression of a person's values which results from the influence of the environment, past and present acting upon the personality of an individual. This appears to prove that attitude of individual is learned and somewhat emotional pictures of his personality. Attitude can be measured by carefully accepting or rejecting opinions. It is the way of feeling, thinking or behaving towards something or event or a situation.

Attitude is expressible in words or action which depicts one's positive or negative reaction towards something or a given situation (Mkpa, 2001). Obodo (2002) views attitude as a system of positive or negative evaluation of emotional feelings. Harbour-Peters (2002) asserts that attitude is a state that influences and modifies the individual choice of personal action. Attitude is very important in life because it determines the direction of activities (Ajzen, 2005). This study investigated students' attitude as catalyst for achievement in peace education concepts in Social Studies among junior secondary schools especially in Oyo West Local Government Area of Oyo State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Peace education is the process of acquiring the values, knowledge and attitudes, skills and behaviors to live in harmony with oneself, with others and with the natural environment. In spite of the importance attached to teaching and learning of peace education concepts in Social Studies, there is no a single day without a report of something terrible happening somewhere which makes people's life not to be safe. There are challenges of boundary disputes, tribal conflicts, religious crisis, and so on which have accounted for loss of lives and properties. Efforts to address this problem has made scholars and researchers to carry out numerous studies. All these studies came up with useful insights to the teaching and

learning of peace education concepts in Social Studies in junior secondary schools but with less research focus on students' attitude as catalyst for achievement in peace education concepts in Social Studies among junior secondary schools especially in Oyo West Local Government Area of Oyo State.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives are to:

- i. ascertain the level of students' attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies
- ii. examine the difference between male and female students' level of attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies

### **Research Questions**

The following questions guided the study:

1. What is students' attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies?
2. What is the difference between male and female students' of attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies?

### **Methodology**

The study adopted the survey research design. Four public junior secondary schools were randomly selected from public junior secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area of Oyo State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select ten JSS II students from each school making a total of 40 students. One research instrument was used for data collection: Questionnaire on Students' Attitude to Peace Education Concepts in Social Studies ( $r=0.76$ ). Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentage, frequency count, mean and standard deviation.

### **Results**

**Research Question One:** What is the level of students' attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies?

**Table 1:** The level of students' attitude to peace education concepts in social studies

N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	St. D.
1	I hate peace education concepts	20 (50%)	17 (42.5%)	3 (7.5%)	-	3.42	.635
2	I like peace education concepts because they promote cooperation among students	12 (30%)	19 (47.5%)	6 (15%)	3 (7.5%)	3.00	.877
3	I enjoy learning about peace education concepts because they make students to participate actively in peace dialogue	21 (52.5%)	18 (45%)	1 (2.5%)	-	3.50	.554
4	Peace education concepts increase my interest in conflict resolution.	20 (50%)	19 (47.5%)	-	1 (2.5%)	3.45	.638
5	Peace education concepts encourage me to engage in non-violent acts	20 (50%)	17 (42.5%)	2 (5%)	1 (2.5%)	3.40	.708
6	Peace education concepts encourage solidarity among students	17 (42.5%)	11 (27.5%)	3 (7.5%)	9 (22.5%)	2.90	1.194
7	I find Peace education concepts beneficial because they foster forgiveness among the students.	13 (32.5%)	19 (47.5%)	4 (10%)	4 (10%)	3.02	.919
8	Peace education concepts make me love people regardless of their tribe	24 (60%)	16 (40%)	-	-	3.60	.496
9	I exercise patience on issues that cause misunderstanding based on my knowledge of peace education concepts	24 (60%)	16 (40%)	-	-	3.60	.496
10	I dislike peace education concepts because they do not facilitate peaceful co-existence among tribes	22 (55%)	11 (27.5%)	2 (5%)	5 (12.5%)	3.25	1.031
11	I am able to respect people's opinion because of my knowledge of Peace education concepts	19 (47.5%)	17 (42.5%)	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	3.32	.797
12	I am able to tolerate people of other religions because of my knowledge of Peace education concepts	21 (52.5%)	18 (45%)	-	1 (2.5%)	3.47	.640
13	I enjoy learning Peace education concepts because they make me aware of advantages of promoting peace.	20 (50%)	11 (27.5%)	4 (10%)	5 (12.5%)	3.15	1.051
14	I want peace education concepts to be removed from the curriculum because they make students not to give peace a chance.	20 (50%)	15 (37.5%)	2 (5%)	3 (7.5%)	3.30	.882
15	I enjoy learning about peace education concepts because they make students to preach peace	21 (52.5%)	13 (32.5%)	4 (10%)	2 (5%)	3.32	.858
<b>Standard Mean = 2.50; Weighted Mean=3.31</b>							

Table 1 shows the level of students' attitude to peace education concepts as revealed by the descriptive analysis of the responses of the respondents to the set items. It reveals that the weighted mean of 3.31 against the threshold of 2.50. It implies that the level of students' attitude to peace education concepts in Social is high.

**Research Question 2:** What is the difference between male and female students' level of attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies?

**Table 2:** Showing t-test analysis of the difference between male and female students' level of attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies

Gender	N	Mean	Std.D	t	df	Sig.	Remark
Male	17	63.06	6.00	-0.962	38	0.342	Not Significant
Female	23	64.83	5.56				

Table 2 shows that there is no significant difference between male and female students' level of attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies ( $t = -0.96$ ;  $df = 38$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). The table also shows that female ( $\pi = 64.83$ ) students have higher level of attitude than male students ( $\pi = 63.06$ ).

students' attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies. Based on the findings, this study has provided a better understanding of students' attitude as catalyst for peace education concepts in Social Studies in Oyo West Local Government Area of Oyo State.

### Discussion of Findings

Table I revealed that the level of students' attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies was high. This is in line with the study of Bamikole (2021) and Olowo (2021) who reported that peace education must be taught and students should be able to practice what they have been taught in schools. This is against the finding of Agulana (2012) who reported that the level of students' attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies was not high.

Table II showed that female students had higher level of attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies than male students. This is in line with the study of Bosede (2010) who revealed that female students performed better than their male counterpart. This finding contradicts the study of Yusuf and Adigun (2010) who revealed that male students performed better than their female counterpart.

### Conclusion

The study has shown that peace education concepts in Social Studies could be enhanced by

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that teachers of Social Studies should teach the peace education concepts in Social Studies very well. Students should be encouraged to maintain peace in their environment. They should be encouraged to have positive attitude to peace education concepts in Social Studies. Parents and guardians should encourage their children to promote peace. Finally, government and school management should provide all the necessary materials that will make the teaching and learning of peace education effective in schools.

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