PEACE EDUCATION IN AFRICA: THE ROLE OF GAMES, VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS.

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ABSTRACT

This paper explored the role and value of games, visual arts, and crafts in both formal and informal peace education processes in Africa, focusing on country case studies from Southern and West Africa. Games, visual arts, and crafts are powerful tools for formal and informal education in Africa. They engage people in an interactive, inclusive, and creative way, enabling them to explore intricate issues in a relaxed manner. The use of a scoping study method to put together literature for compiling secondary data for the study was corroborated with telephone interviews with 6 women informal peace educators and 6 peace students from both formal and informal peace education backgrounds. The research established the power of games, art and crafts as indigenous methods for peace education from antiquity Africa to date, the symbiotic relationship between artistic expressions and society, the value of games, arts and crafts as stimulants for emotional intelligence and the relationship between positive emotional intelligence and peace.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper explored the role and value of games, visual arts and crafts in both formal and informal peace education processes in Africa, focusing on country case studies from Southern and West Africa. Games, visual arts and crafts are powerful tools for both formal and informal education purposes in Africa. They engage people in an interactive, inclusive and creative way, enabling them to explore intricate issues in relaxed ways. They also help people to come together despite their differences, to build empathy in pain, and foster understanding. In the context of peace education games, visual arts and crafts can help break down conflict impasses, remove obstacles and promote dialogue for peaceful conflict management and where possible, transformation. Games, visual arts and crafts have no age barrier, and they transcend learning barriers imposed by any form of physical, emotional and visual disabilities on human being. In young learners in formal schools, games, visual arts and crafts incorporate sensory aspects to the learning process by stimulating minds. When children are exposed to art exhibitions, plays, musical performances and museum tours, their mental capacities are activated and enhanced (UNESCO, 2021). Games and visual arts also function as tools to speak up, express oneself through different techniques such as role playing, drawing, singing, watching games or pictures, listening to music and dancing. These can be of therapeutic value to both young children and adults who have been traumatized by abuse, war, forced Labour, torture and persecution

(UNESCO, 2021). Arts therapy, which utilizes different options of techniques including the drawing of houses, trees, roads, community sites is used as forms of self-expression in difficult circumstances, and it helps traumatized people develop their physical, emotional, cognitive and social skills. Self-expression through dance also helps to calm the mind, further teaching the body and mind to be responsive even in times of trauma and difficulty.

As mind stimulants in formal education, games, visual arts and crafts are used as tools for adding fun to the learning process in various subjects including history, literature and science. Creative exercises catalyze learners' understanding, reminding them of what they have learnt (UNICEF, 2021). Plays are used in the study of literature, to simulate different scenes, and this makes learning and comprehension easier from the experiential mode than from reading, even in mathematics and science, tools such as the abacus, stone counts, or drawing of different colorful shapes adds fun to the process of learning (UNICEF).

Technological advancement has created digital learning spaces and digital learning devices. In pottery, children learn how to exercise their logic and solve problems, for example, the child decides whether to add water to make the clay thinner or to add more clay to make it thicker by merely watching the adults do it, and sometimes by merely applying logic (UNICEF). In churches and museums, observing religious paintings and attaching spiritual meaning to them is both a cognitive and spiritual way of learning. Both adults and children get to know and understand religious characters and history before they get to read the religious literature. There is also a way of teaching learners cognitive skills form watching religious pictures, when they get to answer questions concerning the pictures as individuals or as groups, thus allowing them to express their feelings, cognitive and critical thinking skills (Clinton, 2020). Learners can also write stories about the pictures, stimulating their creative power in the process. In drama, learners experience both enjoyable and sad moments, as well as learn how to solve problems and how to cope with complex issues through the characters and messages conveyed in those dramas (Clinton, 2020).

1.1 Problem Statement

Commonplace theoretical approaches to the study of peace education focus on the systemic dimension in peacebuilding processes, usually the internationalized methods of conveying and understanding peace education (Amollo, 2008). The paper sought to decolonize the manner peace education is conceptualized and practiced in Africa by focusing on the natural methodologies like games, visual arts and craft,whole foundations derive from indigenous knowledge systems and practices. The study further sought to integrated these indigenous knowledge practices and methodologies with theory to produce knowledge that upholds the value of African philosophy in peace education (Amollo, 2008). The study asked three main questions: What is the role and impact of games, drama, songs, dance and story-telling in peace education? What can informal peace education achieve in African society? How have some specific forms of expression been used in implementing peace education in both formal and informal settings in selected countries in Africa?

2 BACKGROUND

This section provides the background information to the study.

2.1. Origins of Education

Education is the vehicle for conveying skills, values, knowledge, belief systems and habits. There are various through which human beings acquire education, including lectures, listening,

observing, training, to mention a few. Education is a fundamental human right and every individual has the right to access it in its quality form, without discrimination, as enshrined in various international agreements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966). Education is not a foreign importation, but a foundational anchor of the African society. In Africa antiquity, before the promulgation of international and local bills of rights, education remained a fundamental part of society.

Education is differentiated into formal and informal. Whether formal or informal, education used to take place under the guidance of someone knowledgeable in the area of learning, and has different sets of curricula. Informal education preceded formal education, becoming the foundation upon which formal schools and related institutions were built. Different countries founded their education systems in ways that are peculiar to their contexts and histories of development, globally, as revealed by the scanty documented evidence that is available. Ancient India founded its formal education system on the gurukul system of education where learners would leave their homes to go and live with, and be guided by a guru. (Ghonge, Bag & Singh, 2020). In Ancient Greece, education in a gymnasium under a philosopher king was considered essential to the development of children in stages into adult-hood (Usanova, Ishchenko & Djyakonova, 2020). For Ancient Rome, the education system was tuition based. Although there were no formal schools, families would bring in tutors into the homes to teach children up to the age of 15, and upon reaching 16 years, only boys from wealthy families would proceed to tertiary education to study philosophy and rhetoric (Bloomer, 2011). In China, as far back as 2070 BC to 1600 BC, State schools were run for the children of the nobility families, in the form of elementary and higher-level colleges. Village schools were those designed for learners from ordinary families (Bloomer, 2011). Schools in medieval Europe were mostly run by churches, emphasizing on Christian ethical and moral values, reading and writing, to train clergy and monks.

Pre-colonial Africa had its own systems of education that were often based on oral traditions, communal apprenticeships and community-based learning (Mosweunyane, 2013). This traditional form of education has been a crucial aspect of many indigenous cultures around the continent, further influencing world education (Onwuatuegwu & Mgbeafulike, 2023). There were different kinds of curricula starting from the family curricula in the home, where different key members were strategically positioned (Onwuatuegwu & Mgbeafulike, 2023), both by biology and by gender, to teach their families various forms of knowledge. The knowledge forms included family values, religious values, kinships and related survival skills sets. The mothers, aunts, uncles, grandfathers and grandmothers taught children life skills from conception to puberty, while community elders taught societal ethical and moral codes, in addition to passing on training skills in hunting, farming, curving and curving (MacDonald, 2020). Horell (1964), argues that the African family curricula was saturated with principles, goodness and patterns of conduct learnt at the feet of a "Bantu"[1] mother. During that time, Africans learnt survival skills experientially, from their interface with their natural environs (Mace, 1993). Through experiential interaction with their environment, and through various raw materials for survival, Africans formulated, tested and proved various concepts over time, as part of their education and transformation process (Emeagwali, 2006). The ever-changing societal exigencies wrought by historical dynamics, including the slave trade and the iron ag, further created the need for Africans to adapt to emerging changes, and thus new modes of learning continued to be defined. Although no documented evidence exists, the rock paintings, the pyramids, the stone ruins, construction of huts, development of hunting tools from stones and wood all prove the fact that learning among the Africans developed in stages, in response to the ever-changing historical dynamics (Frankema, Hillbom, Kufakurinani & zu Selhausen, 2023; Mosweunyane, 2013).

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[1] A derogatory term used by Europeans to refer to indigenous Africans.

… wandering in the bush enabled members of African societies to know their immediate surroundings such as river systems, the hills and forests, the type of flora and fauna and other characteristics. This means knowledge to resource management was unquestionable obligatory. The fabrication of metallic tools and implements, textile production, traditional medicine or food processing, involved the application of various techniques, principles and propositions arrived at through observation of environment and experimentation at various levels. (Mosweunyane, 2013:4).

These arguments defeat Meredith's (2006) postulation that Africans prior to colonialism were illiterate and innumerate. Perhaps what the Africans lacked then was the Western language of expression and Western method of numbering, but, realistically, If Africans could paint rocks as signage for hunters to follow and connect with each other during hunting, it means that they had their own language of passing and interpreting written communication. As they fabricated hunting spears from rock, iron and copper, Africans used some form of measurement that made their tools standard and functional, in their own language. In terms of counting, Africans brewed beer from wild fruits, preserved different forms of food for future use and processed indigenous medicines, processes that could not happen without keeping count of days involved in their processes. What they could have lacked was perhaps the Roman numerical figures, but the African people, for example among the Shona people, kept count from the 1 to 10 using some poetic or song African numerals. One of such poetry or song was recited in tandem with finger holds, where each finger touched during the song represented a count. One of the songs or poems was: Motsiro (1), Dhendere (2), Wagara (3). Mumapako (4), Mbirimbizha (5), Pamuromo (6), Pegari (7), Karidza (8), Chindori (9), Gumirawa (10). Figure 1 illustrates this way of counting.
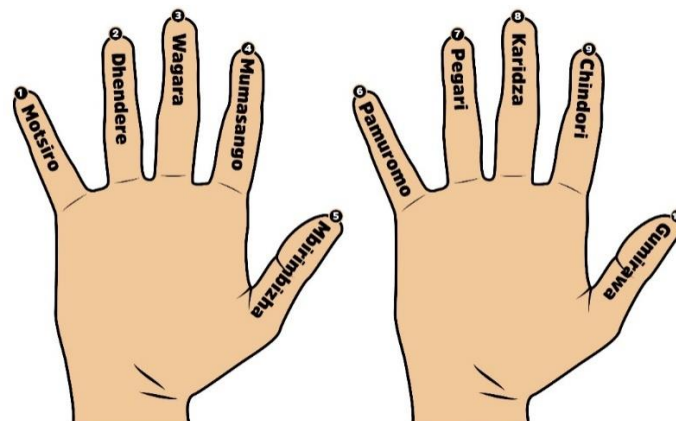

Figure 1: © Shingirayi Williams Siziba, 2024

The argument that the origins of formal education and formal architecture in Africa came with colonialism is again defeated by the evidence of ancient civilizations in temples and royal courts in Egypt, and by the existence of scientifically constructed stone ruins in Egypt, Zimbabwe and other countries. Colonialism did not bring education for advancement only, but a Western style education and school system that sought to tame the local people for total domination (Blij & Muller, 2003; Mkandawire, 2005; Margalit, 2004). African languages and cultures were downplayed by this education system (Blij & Muller, 2003; Mkandawire, 2005; Margalit, 2004), to such an extent that by the time African nationalists rose up to confront colonialism through the

national liberation struggles, Western style education had produced in the main, Africans that was alienated from their roots, identity, ethical and moral values. Furthermore, education was meant to provide Africans with a language that the colonisers understood, as a tool for supporting the process of colonization. Education was also meant to land a few Africans into white collar jobs to again support the colonial administrative process. It was an education that oppressed and impoverished rather than equipped the Africans with enough tools to explore, experiment, invent and thrive. Starting as the Negritude Movement in the Diaspora in the 1930s (Galafa, 2018) to the Black Consciousness Movement in Southern African during the liberation struggles and Jullius Nyerere's Ujamaa (Dolamo, 2017) in the 1960s, it became the pre-occupation of the African elite post-independence, to reclaim an African Ubuntu education system that could aid value to the African people.

Post-independence, ongoing challenges in the educations sector centered on issues of access to quality education, language barriers, and funding (Aghenitei, Abbas & Fortunado, 2023; Da Costa, 2021, OECD, 2012). In some countries, these challenges continue to impact negatively on the education system (Da Costa, 2021; OECD, 2012). The African education sector has never been free from foreign influences owing to the role that is played by the international community in development and education processes. Efforts driven by the Education for All and the Millenium Development Goals were like all initiatives led by the international community's project-oriented focus, found to be exclusionary of the ideas and inputs of the local people. Huge developments were realized in the education sector, starting from the 1990s onwards, as a result of concerted efforts between African governments and international organisations that specialize in education matters (Gyimah-Brempong, 2011). Issues of low-quality education and disparities between and among classes remained of concern. Furthermore, the education still failed to provide learners with skills to create jobs and expand industrialization (Mosweunyane, 2013). Current transformations in the educations sector in Africa, under the Sustainable Development Goals, have a focus on reclaiming the indigenous African knowledge sources to facilitate an enriching educational narrative that equips learners with skills and knowledge for research, innovation and industrialisation. Education 5.0 in Africa enables the use of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and big data in education to enhance learning outcomes and improve access to education for all. Education 5.0 further provides upskilling opportunities for learners in innovative processes that promote industrialisation. Sustainable Development Goal 16 highlights the need to promote just, peaceful, and inclusive societies, especially with regards to protecting the lives and well-being of children and youths to be in tandem with safe environs (TechHub, 2022; Fabris & Longobarti, 2023).

Peace education relates to any theoretical and practical underpinnings for eliminating conflict and violence. The goal of peace education is to promote and establish a culture of peace and positive conflict transformation (UNESCO, 2021). Peace education promotes both the theoretical and practical aspects of knowledge and skills promotion that have to be operationalized to minimise, manage, resolve and transform conflicts. A culture of peace can enable broken relations to mend, sustain existing good relations and prevent re-occurrence of conflicts. A culture of peace presents a set of values, attitudes, and non-violent behaviours and lifestyles that uphold dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and states as the means of addressing the root causes of conflict (Roiolle, 2013). In this regard, peace education does not help people to eliminate conflict perse, but rather, to sharpen their awareness of the inevitability of conflict in human life, as well as their knowledge and skills for using non-violent means to transform conflicts from their violent forms to a positive peace.

Peace education programmes can be implemented at local, national, and international levels, and in times of conflict, and post-conflict – in the prevalence of either negative or positive peace (Peace Direct, 2024).Deriving from the concept of negative peace which connotes the absence of bloody

war, positive peace implies the presence of transformative institutions that promote just societies and relationships in society (Peace Direct, 2024). Positive peace focuses on addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting sustainable peace, whereas negative peace simply seeks to end violence or war. Relevant topics for peace education include conflict transformation, traditional values, tolerance, human rights, sexuality, prevention of gender-based violence and reproductive health, environmental education, among others. However, to avoid confusion that can lead to conflict, peace education topics and programmes have to be expertly tailor-made to suit different contexts. The topics have to align to the contextual political ideologies, traditional and cultural belief systems, especially in contexts where such peace education is done by non-governmental organisations. Imposing a forced peace education programme on a particular context can be harmful to the context and to the polity. There is greater need to create a balance any peace education projects' scopes and objectives with the culture and context (Peace Direct, 2024). The concept of conflict sensitivity requires peace actors, policies and programmes to be sensitive to conflict and cultural dynamics (Van Brabant, 2010). The Do No Harm principle likewise calls for interventions that pose no harm or risk of heightening conflict to the polity (Van Brabant, 2010; Anderson and Olson 2003).

THE IMPORTANCE OF PEACE EDUCATION

Though it sounds similar to education in general, peace education is different from conventional education in that it lays the foundation for eradication of war and establishment of non-violent engagements, without which the fruits of conventional education will not be enjoyable. Given the complicated conflict conundrum in Africa, peace education is imperative to enable cohesion and continuity, especially to support the youths to build their identity in a world that is perpetuating division, hurt and loss of identity. The roles of peace education are many, and only part of them can be highlighted here. By teaching concepts such as empathy, communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution, peace education can help create a more peaceful and just society. Peace education is also important because it plays the role of preventing, managing, resolving and transforming conflict relations. Depending on the approach used, peace education can be helpful towards those who wish to participate in the development of a culture of peace, those who are faced with conflict and violence in their lives, as well as to those who are fueling the conflict, hence the importance of applying user friendly and context specific methods of learning for ease of appreciation.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Two theories, the conflict transformation theory and the theory of emotional intelligence inform the conceptualization of this paper. Paul Laderach argues that conflicts thrive on systemic practices that build deep seated incongruities and imbalances in societies, leading to entrenched systems of injustices and oppression (Lederach, 1997). He proposes a transformational approach to peace building, where the indigenous people's traditions, history and culture become key in fostering the required indigenous knowledge systems and practices that are required for effective relationship building approaches that are relevant for transforming the systems of injustice and oppressions and build an owned lasting and shared peace in a post-conflict phase (Lederach, 1997). The conflict transformation theory is a salient critique of the liberal peace theory.[2] The liberal peace theory has given an overly internationalised view to the peace education narrative, to an extent where critical peace pedagogy is underpinned by a European culture and legacy that privileges the West as enlightened and enlightening, rational and emancipating to individuals and

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[2]The liberal peace theory suggests that democracies are less likely to engage in conflict with one another, and that economic interdependence and international institutions can help promote peace. This theory has been influential in shaping international relations and foreign policy.

groups (Grayling 2013; Cremin et al. 2018; Zembylas 2018), while Africa is presented as a passive learner of what the European peace models present.

European enlightenment, instead of helping people build stronger foundations for peace, produces a group of African scholars who mimic Europeans and derogate their own cultural identity, including language and lifestyle (Grayling 2013; Cremin et al. 2018; Zembylas 2018). On the other hand, however, the 'said' emancipated individuals and groups are supposed to conform to a level of distinctiveness in language, class, gender, race, sexuality, able-bodiedness, religion and other identity markers already established and anchored in European power and authority (Pennycook 2018). Barad (2014:169) describes this as a 'colonising logic' (Barad, 2014:170), whereby the so called rational, enlightened and emancipated individuals and groups become a class that excludes 'the other', in order to establish and maintain its own hegemony, as well as buttress European hegemony (Harvey, Cooke & Bishop Simeon Trust South Africa, 2021). This 'colonising logic' tends to collapse people and processes into generalities, further anchoring binaries in place – to an extent where those who have imbibed European modes of peace education, when measured against those who have not, become the rational knowers against the non-rational and ignorant other. The 'colonising logic' intentionally elevates European knowledge sources whilst tagging indigenous knowledge and beliefs as irrational and inapplicable in global peace theory and practice. These linear fallacies reproduce epistemic tensions and hegemonies, and subsequent ontological violences that render sustainable peace untenable in Africa. These fallacies further create and perpetuate a false narrative, a level of disinformation that manifests itself through imported theories and practices that however fail to solve the conflict challenges that the indigenous people face. Disinformation as part of this 'colonial logic', aims at deceiving those perceived as less powerful, in order to perpetuate Western ideological dominance and control (Bennett & Livingston, 2018; Freelon & Wells, 2020; Hancock & Bailenson, 2021).

Goleman's theory of emotional intelligence compliments the arguments advanced by the conflict transformation theory in that it supports relationship building that leads to transformations from chaos, hurt, frustrations and violent behaviour to tranquility, happiness, wellbeing and peace. Goleman (1995) argues that emotional intelligence helps individuals to guide their thinking and actions. Emotional intelligence is the ability of individuals to recognize their feelings and those of others for motivation and management of emotions for themselves and their relationship with others (Goleman, 1995). Peace education researchers have established an intricate connection between both formal and informal pedagogic artistic expressions and the development of emotional intelligence in humans (Kozhemyakin, 2018; Syrotkina & Broad, 2022; Siahaya, Runukti, Naban, Budiyanto & Nugroho, 2021; Santhi & Ramalingan, 2022).

Emotional intelligence defines personal happiness in individuals, which adds up to a social capital of well-being in families, societies and communities (Goleman, 1995). Emotional intelligence as a component of personal, professional, and social success has potential to influence the elimination of negative energy which accumulates to failure, hate and violence. Systematic education, training and practice is required for one to acquire the ability to cultivate the set of abilities and skills that emotional intelligence accords for one's self-actualization (Drigas & Papoutsi, 2021).

The notion of conflict transformation also encompasses the issue of inclusivity. While traditional peacebuilding was an enclave for men, with the changing of times, current African and global policies and frameworks link peace and security to women by advocating for their increased participation in conflict and peace processes at all levels. As such, women are the main actors and

agents for change in their various communities through community education and community participation (Agbaje, 2021).

Building on these highlighted concepts and arguments, this study grounds the origins of story-telling, games, drama and simulation, song, dance and art as part of the African philosophy and knowledge heritage. In African societal curricula expressions such as songs, dance, drama and simulation, story-telling, drawings and paintings were done for both entertainment and education purposes. Indigenousknowledge for such artistic forms of expression was conveyed and preserved through families, communities and societies, with a major purpose of fostering social cohesion and building lasting peace, based on traditional customs, beliefs and philosophies.

The relationship between peace education and politics is complex and multi-faceted. Peace education and politics are closely intertwined as they both, ideally, involve promoting sustainable peace through conflict resolution, development and social justice. Peace education aims to teach individuals about peaceful ways to resolve conflicts, promote tolerance and understanding for co-existence, and work towards a more peaceful society. Politics, on the other hand, involves the governance and decision-making processes of a society, including how conflicts are prevented, addressed, managed and resolved at a larger scale. Good politics leads to good governance, reduced tensions and conflicts, and a sustainable peace.

The relationship between peace education and politics can be seen in how political leaders and policymakers can incorporate peace education principles into their decision-making processes and policies. Political leaders gave potential to promote a culture of peace, if they live violent free lives.The importance of such a strong socio-political background is that when peace is sustainable in communities and States, citizens have freedom to engage with each other and build relationships that in turn foster growth and prosperity on all fronts, including on the economic and environmental fronts. This Euro-centric view as noted above, tends to negate the indigenous view to peace processes, further creating ontological and epistemological binaries which promotes division, otherness and violence instead of peace. Persistent ontological and epistemological binaries, besides impeding a productive examination of peace education projects and their epistemic commitment (Danielsson, 2020), also perpetuate a narrative that denigrates indigenous processes and pathways to peace, while upholding foreign but inapplicable trails. A return to the formative indigenous models of channeling peace education that operated at the very emergence of the African people, in primordial Africa, is the starting point for influencing an alternative to relevant and effective peace education for the continent.

Critical approaches to peace education focus on exploring the underlying power dynamics, inequalities, and structures that contribute to conflict and violence (e.g. Bajaj 2015; Danielsson, 2020; Stetter, 2021). This approach focuses on questioning dominant narratives, challenging traditional liberal peace assumptions, and advocating for social justice and equality in peacebuilding efforts. Some key concepts within critical approaches to peace studies include postcolonialism, feminism, critical race theory, and intersectionality. The challenge however, is that, as already noted, peace education is influenced in the main by the European Enlightenment view which negates the Indigenous view to peace processes.

STUDY DESIGN METHODS

The study utilised a review of available literature on the subject under review, with telephone conversations with selected peace educators in both formal and informal peacebuilding settings to gather secondary and primary data to carry out a qualitative exploratory study on the role of artistic forms of expression in peace education in Africa.

A scoping study method was used to gather published documents on the subject under review. A search for published literature was undertaken online, in four stages. In the first stage the phrase, "Games, art, drama & simulations, dance and music in implementing peace education in Africa" was used on Google search engine, Google Scholar, Academia and ResearchGate. In the next search the phrase was simplified to "Using artistic forms of expressions to implement peace education AND Africa." In the third stage of the search, the phrase, "The origins of education in Africa" was used. In the final stage the search phrase used was, "Decolonising methods and tools for peace education in Africa." A total of(n = 150) records was identified altogether. In putting this list together, the researcher did not mind about the publication timeline, since the origins of education in Africa was an important component of the study, and some of the useful published literature would obviously date back to the 199s. All the titles were entered on an online memo titled 'List 1', together with their links. The next stage entailed a manual screening of the publications by title. Each title was scrutinized, to gauge its relevance to the issues that were being searched for. The discarded titles were (n=.65), and (n=85) progressed to final screening stage. Inclusion criteria was articles on using artistic forms of expression to teach peace education. The majority of articles were excluded for having titles about education in general, for focusing narrowly on specific country contexts and for focusing on contexts outside Africa. A more thorough screening of the abstracts was undertaken, the first page in the introduction sections and the conclusions. A total of (n = 13) was discarded for being off the issues that were required, and remained with (n = 72). The remaining selected articles were saved on a manual memo as 'Final list', and the researcher worked on their bibliographic information which was entered alongside each title in a table format. A wealth of literature on peace education and the various forms of expression under study was established, but no literature written to express the view of the students in formal education circles and of the trainees in informal peace education circles was identified. Very insignificant literature also expressed the views and lived experiences of women peace educators from the communities. All the views expressed in the literature were from expert teachers, lecturers and project evaluators.

Thus, the researcher sought to fill this identified gap by carrying out online key informant interviews with n=12 participants; including n=6 women peace educators, n=3 formal peace scholars and n=3 community beneficiaries of informal peace education projects. All 12 participants were purposively sampled from Zimbabwe, and the inclusion criteria as their gender, positions as either peace educators or peace learners, and their knowledge of peace education processes. All the 12 participants chose to be anonymized, and based on this aspect, all findings in the study, except for those from the literature review, will be non-attributed, to protect the identities of the key informants. The researcher prepared key informant guide based on the questions guiding this study, which were tweaked a bit to suit the interview mode, and administered the questions via telephone. The key informant questions were: What is the role and impact of games, drama, songs, dance and story-telling in peace education? What can informal peace education achieve in African society? What is your experience of using some specific games, arts and crafts in implementing peace education in in your community? How effective were the methods?

FINDINGS

The study established that traditionally, in Africa, art was an active part of the lives of Africans, either in the private sphere or in the public domain. In relation to ordinary life, findings established that different forms of art were used to preserve and transmit knowledge on the historical foundations of Africa across generations. This was for general knowledge and entertainment, but also for preservation to posterity. Education was artistically conveyed as part of the African people's oral tradition, through storytelling, song and dance in families as part of the evening entertainment. Family or community gatherings at storytelling and oral poetry

sessions motivated an affinity for traditional performance and an understanding of Africa's principles, beliefs and philosophies (Ebewo, 2009). In the public domain art was used at communal social gatherings, where song, dance and drama were practiced for both entertainment and education purposes, commenting on important social matters that required the people's attention. Thieves, witches and social deviants were warned in song, dance and drama, and the people took these warnings seriously to an extent that they would where possible, stop their deviant behaviours.

Drama

The study established that evening gatherings where peace education was bequeathed through oral folklore and songs in traditional Africa have been replaced by television, where these dramas and songs are broadcast. In Zimbabwe for example, the drama "Sabhuku Vharazipi" is a socio-political comedy that comments on several issues like abuse of power among social and political leaders, sexual abuse of women in families and villages, corruption and abuse of public property by politicians and those linked to power. Through drama, serious political and social comments that would have been too sensitive to talk about in everyday life are conveyed. This exposure acts as education to the listeners, but also as a tip off to corruption managers and the police who can take advantage of this information to launch investigateions and prevent these negative acts. During the drama also, key information is given as advice, for example on how and where to report abuse, which partners to look for in the event of abuse and corruption. This kind of peace education happens in a context of negative peace, where prevailing structural difference between the rich and the poor, the powerful and the powerless lead to act of cultural violence that ahs potential to distabilise society.

The theme of corruption that is very visible and prominent in this theatrical piece mirrors the depth of moral "rottenness" that is threatening to destroy Zimbabweans as a   nation. As   a meta-narrative, Sabhuku Vharazipi is saying that unless something positive is done to   "nip corruption in the bud", Zimbabwe is unlikely to relive those golden years (early   1980s) when people used to be rewarded through merit or hardworking, not through   corruption and laziness (Masau, 2013)

Likewise, Nigerian playwriter Wole Soyinka used satire to expose the oppression of the Nigerian polity through his various plays (Afolauan, 2017). His critique of greed, corruption and abuse of power is an outcry against social ills that lead to violence and war, as in his play, Madmen and Specialists (1971). This play speaks against the irrationally of war, focusing on the Biafran war of 1967-1970 where many people were killed and maimed, and property worth a lifetime destroyed (Gurnah, n/d). The stigmatization of war in this play has an effect to motivate people to loathe war and campaign for peace (Gurnah, n/d). These arguments in total establish a profitable and reciprocal relationship between theatre and society which can be seen in the way that theatre reflects and responds to societal issues, challenges, and values. Theatre is inspirational, though provoking and satirical, and in appreciation, society supports and sustains theatre through attendance, funding, and participation, ensuring that it continues to thrive and evolve (Thornton, 2012). Theatre takes the form of a social institution which thrives on ideas and complex interactions in society (Thornton, 2012), at the same time as having potential to establish a desirable society through education that instills values for positive transformation, hence why theatrical experience is regarded as a mirror that reflects society.

Community peacebuilder X, who leads a community peace building project for preventing violence against women in a farming community described community theatre as a useful tool for educating communities, and for sharing sensitive knowledge and information from society's loved experiences with both victims and perpetrators in sensitive contexts. She explained how the

use of drama at village gatherings has helped ease relations between women and their husbands in a rural village where women had for long been subjected to gender-based violence.

Of notable interest was what community peace education facilitator Y from a different community said about the use of drama in peace education.

Designing a drama or simulation exercise for a conflict dynamic requires a deeper understanding of the conflict context, the conflict dynamics, including the historical antecedents, the conflict drivers, triggers, conflict actors and their interests. When I prepare a script for a drama or a simulation exercise, as the facilitator I know almost all the aspects, and I use this opportunity to test the participants' knowledge of the same. When the participants organise themselves, assign each other roles and act out the simulation to its logical imagined conclusion, there is so much evidence that they have done a lot of work in demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of the conflict dynamics, its actors and interests. In the conclusion they present their view to peace. Of most interest is that there are a lot of new issues that will emerge from the drama or simulation that I, as the facilitator, can learn from. This takes away the assumption that the facilitator of peace education knows all the dynamics relating to the conflict, but the drama or simulation is a moment for the participants to get guidance on how to shape their drama from me, and also an opportunity for me to learn from their knowledge and understanding as indigenous people who have experienced this conflict in their context (Peace education facilitator, telephone interview, 19 April 2024).

Drawings

Various forms of artistic expression were also established as tools to stir emotional intelligence, consequently creating a peaceful environment around both the artists and the consumers. Artistic paintings and drawings were ranked first among the forms of art that stir emotional intelligence, followed by music and drama, and the participants argued that paintings inscribe close to permanent memories in the minds of the consumers. Paulo Freire, likewise described paintings as 'functional literacy', which has immense power to awaken people's critical awareness. Foregoing theoretical arguments in this study have also established that art has potential to stimulate emotional intelligence which in turn has potential to influence the elimination of negative energy which accumulates to failure, hate and violence (Drigas & Papoutsi, 2021; Goleman, 1995; Drigas & Papoutsi, 2021; Seddighi, Sajjad, Yousefzadeh, Lopez, Vameghio, Rafiey & Khankeh, 2016). In both educators and students, emotional intelligence provides the tools with which to reduce and manage stress and emotional exhaustion, further enabling confidence, motivation and personal satisfaction in performance on all fronts. (Drigas & Papoutsi, 2021; Seddighi et al., 2016; Vesely, 2014). Logically, decreases in self-reported stress and anxiety among teachers has potential to lead to motivation, happiness and well-being of the students that they teach (Lucas - Mangas et al., 2022). Participant W, a student recovering from trauma testified how an artistic drawing of a library shown in Figure 2 has played a transformational role in motivating her to come out of the stressful moments and concentrate on her studies.

Figure 2: © Laura Bongiwe Dube

One student testified how constantly looking at the library drawing in Figure 2 helped him come out of trauma that was preventing him from concentrating on his studies for a long time.

In Rwanda post genocide, an initiative called Art for Peace provides an opportunity for secondary school students across the country to take part in the "National Schools" arts competition where they compete in poetry writing, recitals and in drawing (Nzahambwanayo, 2022). In a country that suffered huge losses from the genocide fueled by hatred, the thematic artistic creations reflecting peace, unity, culture and development help to inspire and remind the citizens across generations on shared human values that catalyse the commitment to peaceful existence and development (Nzahambwanayo, 2022).

Women's crafts

Given the rise in cases of violence against women and gender-based violence, women peace educators and activists have over time expanded their approach, theories and practices of peace education and peacebuilding by examining alternative spaces and practices of social learning (Machakanja, 2021). Most of these approaches are bottom-up alternatives whose foundations are grounded in the thoughts, wisdom and aspirations of women and what they envision as a liberating narrative for peace. Women community-based educators are creating what they dub as "safe spaces" for educating each other on prevention and support in the face of violence against women. Song, dance, arts and crafts are used to bring people together. Working together through symbolic artistic expressions has power to stimulate dialogue, knowledge, imagination, action and critique by developing a common space of safety, creativity, confidence and control (Silvey, 2014). In colonial Africa, women often specialized in various crafts such as weaving, pottery, beadwork, and basketry. These skills were passed down from generation to generation and played a crucial role in the economic and cultural life of many African societies. Craft production by women was often valued and respected within their communities (Kaler, 1999). To empower the narrative, women have turned craft into a specialized skill that does not only bring capital, but

adds value to a social understanding of alternative spaces for transformative engagements for peace.

Using arts and craft methodologies, the Decolonising Education for Peace in Africa (DEPA) project has created intergenerational links to provide new data on how peace is understood in marginalized communities across Africa (DEPA, n/d). Craft wares from the women in the Zimbabwe and Zambia are collected and sold globally, enhancing better livelihoods for the women and their families. Gender based violence in communities has a strong link to poverty, and when women can provide for their daily needs, the dependence on men that perpetuates gender-based violence is terminated. The crafts also promote business in the museums, where tourists bring income as profit for the women and revenue for the governments. Furthermore, the craft centres provide safe spaces for intergenerational learning engagements where the seasoned women craft makers bequeath knowledge, skills and using digital media to promote their businesses and peace to the youths (DEPA, n/d). Furthermore, these places provide spaces for dialogue between the women and the youths, where the girls are taught positive aspects of the Batonga culture that help to cement peace in the communities (DEPA, n/d).

Song

Song, dance and the drum are tools that are also utilised for promoting peace and dialogue, as well as for bringing people together for joyful celebrations. The elders also transmit knowledge on traditional song, dance and drum beat to posterity as a way of preserving an indigenous culture for peace. During their income generation projects in a community garden where they do market gardening to foster better livelihoods, the women take time off their hoes and garden forks to sing songs of solidarity, play the drum and dance. Figure 3 illustrates a woman playing the drum during a community peace event.

Figure 3: Adapted from UN Women, 2015

Peace educator V narrated how song and dance brings people together to forget their strife in the community, further explaining the value of the drum in women's nonviolent protests against gender-based violence.

It helps us forget our troubles and embrace joy and enough energy for the future. It cements us together as neighbors and community women, and when the men and children hear the beat of the drum, they come to the community garden to dance with us in solidarity. Many people have forgotten their feuds as they became united by the drum. We have also used the drum to call abusive men to attention in the village by staging a peaceful song and dramavigil for three continuous days protecting against a man who was throwing his wife out of her marital home to bring in another wife from the city during Covid 18 when he lost his job. (Anonymous woman peace educator, telephone conversation, 2024).

Sport – football and netball

The study established that using football as a tool to promote peace as well as to convey knowledge and messages for peace in Africa has been a successful initiative in many countries on the continent. Peace educators have managed to bring feuding parties together through football tournaments and related sports workshops, which helped in promoting reconciliation and creating positive change.

One example of using football to promote peace in Africa is the "Football for Peace" program, which has been implemented in countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda where football platforms translate into forums for conflict resolution and reconciliation (Gounden, 2010). In Rwanda the first public event that brought people from different ethnic groups together after the genocide was a football match between two rival camps (Nzahabwanayo, 2022). Playing football together enabled a new narrative both to the players and the spectators, enabling the first moments of healing and cohesion. A footballer from Rwanda also lives to testify how photographs depicting his football club photos served him from death, further enabling a conversation between him and his would-be killer (Africa Renewal, 2024).

In February 2015, the Africa Cup of Nations brought warring African countries together to further football completions on the continent, and the example of Ivorian footballers from different and warring political parties coming together to scoop the Africa Cup of Nations for their country (was a telling example of the need to always make what brings people together greater and of fundamental value that the ethnic, political and related differences that set them apart. In West Africa, footballers like Dider Drogba of Ivory Coast in investing in peacebuilding and development initiatives to build a more peaceful region (McCann, 2015).

According to Participant R from an anonymous rural community in Zimbabwe, a woman's peace group solved a community rivalry emanating from political party differences when they formed a netball club and played as two teams, with members in each team representing their political affiliations in 2013. When the games started spectators were in the habit of sitting on two different sides of the netball pitch to cheer the players from their camps. With time, as the game gained momentum, spectators ran across the pitch to the side of the winning team and joined the different camp in cheers. This dynamic built up into a habit as both players and spectators got united over the netball game, and with time the two warring communities buried the hatchet and continued to co-exist for peace and development inter-communally.

CONCLUSIONS

This research used a scoping study and telephone interview methods to explore the roles of games, artistic expressions and crafts in furthering peace education in Africa. Insights were drawn from relevant country cases in Southern and West Africa. The scoping study revealed a wealth of literature on how games, artistic expressions have defined and enriched the purvey of formal and informal peace education in various contexts in Africa. There was clear evidence on the usage of

games and arts as a pathway for education and peace from traditional Africa to date, with the arguments dispelling the myth that education and peace education are foreign imports. Developments from traditional forms of education to the current technology aided forms of education were also proven to be based on the rich African philosophy of education where conflict is understood as inevitable but manageable through the various forms of educational interventions.

Different forms of art were used to preserve and transmit knowledge on the historical foundations of Africa across generations for general knowledge and entertainment, but also for preservation to posterity. Education was thus artistically conveyed as part of the African people's oral tradition, through storytelling, song and dance in families as part of the evening entertainment.

Community theatre, drama and song were also established to be in relevant used for the same purposes as in traditional Africa, as methodologies for conveying information, knowledge and skills on peace, although in quite different settings and through different media. Examples from "Sabhuku Vharazipi" and Wole Soyinka from Zimbabwe and Nigeria respectively established how satire is useful in providing social commentary and critique of social ills such as greed, corruption and abuse of power. A profitable and reciprocal relationship between theatre and society was therefore established.

Theoretically, art was upheld for its ability to stimulate emotional intelligence which in turn has potential to influence the elimination of negative energy which accumulates to failure, hate and violence. Emotional intelligence provides the tools with which to reduce and manage stress and emotional exhaustion, further enabling confidence, motivation and personal satisfaction in performance on all fronts. Practically, use of games and artistic expressions in peace education, besides providing avenues for healing and mending broken relationships, as well as of bringing people together, also have a profitable economic aspect to them. Investments emanating from football proceeds were established in Ivory Coast, while in Zimbabwe and Zambia, women's crafts have provided a business boom through art museums and craft shops. Finally, the role of women in using games, artistic expressions and crafts to confront gender-based violence was established, with the drum being a tool for social protest against abuse of women, and netball bringing together warring political factions for peace and social cohesion.

Last but not least, two important concepts emerged in the study, which could be pursued as areas for further study. First is the concept of games, art and craft as indigenous forms of methods for peace education that are useful in decolonising the current Euro-centric views to peace education. Second, the role that women play in the se oof games, arts and crafts as method for peace education in Africa is another fertile area for further research exploration.

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