

In-building Adult Education into conflict prevention strategy in Africa: Derivable of warning signs

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Abstract

Restoration of peace after a prolonged conflict seems arduous, if not impossible, in conflict-riddled states in Africa. Often, it appears resolved only to reoccur and at times escalate to greater dimension. Thus, peace tends to be elusive as insecurities and crises pervade the region. More, it appears solutions workable in other situations and regions of the world are not applicable in Africa and conversely suggesting that other innovative approaches should be considered and tried. This paper proposes a complementary strategy to address intractable problems of insecurity and conflict in the region. It is a theoretical paper which reflects a common parlance that 'prevention is better than cure'. The paper has five sections. First, it revisits and discusses conflicts in the region which are in varying dimensions, from boundary disputes, cattle rustlings, insurgencies, religious bigotries, xenophobic attacks to terrorisms. These incidences have untold effect on national and regional development. Second, the paper highlights warning signs which are indicators of national or regional vulnerability to conflict eruption and bases for the content, delivery mode and evaluation of the proposed adult education integrated strategy-ICPAES. Third, a frame of reference that shows links among the components of the strategy is presented and described. Fourth, the paper highlights roles of universities in the implementation of the strategy. Finally, the conclusion is presented.

Key Words: Conflict, Threats, Opportunities, Life-Long Learning, Security

Introduction

The continent of Africa comprises 54 independent states, 46 of which are situated on the continent itself and eight of which are visible islands (Population Reference Bureau, 2015). The countries spread across Central, Eastern, Middle, Northern, Southern and West African sub-regions. These countries are diverse in humankind, natural resources, ethnicity, culture and religion (Oduaran, 2015). On the basis of official language of communication, which mostly reflects language of colonial masters, there are four principal groups: Anglo-phone, Franco-phone, Arab-phone and Luso-phone. Even at their varying levels of development, they are mostly classified as third-world countries on global development scale which is more or less an expression of level of peace and security in the constituent countries on the continent.

Frankly, reports on peace and security in many countries on the continent are disheartening and shattering. No sub-region is spared. A history of the widely reported cases of national and or cross-national breach of peace on the continent include: intractable insurgency in Mali, perpetuated by Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa; Boko-haram terrorist attack, herdsman-farmers' clashes and abductions in Nigeria, attacks of Boko-Haram now extend to Chad, Cameroun and Niger; xenophobic attacks in South Africa; fragile transition in Egypt and Libya; unsettled political crises in Congo and South-Sudan; al- Shabaab in Somalia; piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf Guinea and off the coast of Somalia, among others (Ishaq & Ali, 2011; Warnes,

2013; & Fajonyomi, 2015). Besides, there are many intra-national religious crises, inter-tribal clashes and political skirmishes, which have not caught global attention, that occur regularly. According to UNICEF, 80 percent of the world's wars are fought in Africa and Asia, leaving more than 27 million children and youth in the affected countries without access to formal education (Blumor & Buttlar, 2007). These children and youth are potential conflict mongers unless alternative educational provision through adult and non-formal education is made.

Once more, all of the trajectories of conflicts are inimical to the development of the continent and the concerned nation(s). They also serve as barriers to Africa becoming enviable regional economy and polity of the world in spite of its enormous potentialities in human and natural resources and sparing occurrence of natural disasters as in other continents. Furthermore, the spate of violence has been noted to be a major obstacle to achieving educational goals including the Dakar Goal of 'Primary Education for All' (Blumor & Buttlar, 2007). It becomes more disturbing noting that 'armed conflict cost Africa \$18 billion a year from 1990 to 2005' which was almost of the same amount given to the continent as development aid. This revelation questions motives behind sponsorship by the mongers within and outside the theatre of conflict including, industrial nations. Perhaps it is a reflection of a proverb among the Yorubas in Nigeria which says 'arijenidimodaru' meaning 'reaping benefit in confusion'

It is a known fact that preventing violence not only saves lives, but is also cost effective. For instance, 'the cost of measures to promote dialogue and peaceful mediation in a country in order to prevent violent conflict is, on average, just 10 per cent of the cost of recovery after a civil war or in resolution (UNDP, 2013). That is, it may cost a fortune to restore and build peace in conflict-riddled states in Africa. Therefore, it is imperative to prevent it in the first instance in line with parlance that 'prevention is better than cure'. Prevention of violent conflict in any community, nation or region should concern every other nation, region or community, including international community and well-meaning individuals and leaders for its ripple effects. This reflects the feeling of the authors and the reason for the paper as a contribution on how to mitigate violent conflict in the region and possibly take the benefit for those who seek peace (The Holy Bible Matt. 5:9 & The Holy Qu'ran 3:135). Also, that education and conflict, and in particular education in emergencies, is still a fairly young field of research (Blumor & Buttlar, 2007) supposes this modest contribution will be helpful in providing direction or setting agenda for conflict prevention in Africa. Hence, the significance of this paper which proposes a complementary strategy to address intractable problems of insecurity and conflict in the region.

Predisposing Factors of Conflict and Warning Signs

Conflict as opposition between simultaneous but incompatible desires, needs, drives, or impulses of individuals and communities affects the body, soul and environment of the concerned negatively as against peace which impacts positively. Thus, conflict is an infringement on peace and a product of reaction between individuals, or communities and environment (Fajonyomi, 2015). Peace, as peace (English), salam (Arab), paix (French), paz (Portuguese) to alafia (Yoruba, Nigeria), transcends absence of war or conflict to encompass wellness of body, soul and environment of an entity- person, community, nation, region or globe. While not losing the fact that conflict can be helpful and constructive in evoking analytical thinking, increasing cohesion, and in promoting healthy competition (Ashraf 1992), and be seen as a part of economic, social and political change, the concern is intractable conflict that could degenerate into violence or war and breach peace of the entity. That is, '*it is the destructive power of conflict that is the issue rather than the existence of conflict per se*' (DFID, 2004).

Knowing full well that violent conflict can be destructive, it must then be prevented. Conflict prevention strategies are to keep disputes from escalating into violence by the way of establishing predictability indicators of conflict among parties and developing measures to address such (University of John-Hopkins, nd). Conflict prevention which 'aims to prevent outbreaks of violence (minimalist) and to root out structural injustices that may cause conflict (maximalist)' has been classified into *preventive diplomacy* and *structural prevention* with the essence of:

- Establishing mechanisms that detect early warning signs and record specific indicators that may help to predict impending violence.
- Using planned coordination to prevent the creation of conflict when delivering humanitarian aid and in the process of development.
- Institutionalizing the idea of preventing conflict at the local, regional, and international levels (University of John-Hopkins, nd).

From the meaning of conflict prevention, the significance of warning signs identification is underscored. It presents opportunities and threats for prevention of conflict, violence, insecurity and alternatively provides pathway for peace, security and development. These predisposing factors manifest at different levels. They include:

At Individual level: Low esteem, low income, low academic achievement, addiction-drug, sexual abuse, alcoholic, emotional instability, questionable personality, high language tone, unhealthy family relation, overcrowding, religious extremism, peer influence, gang membership, threaten to hurt, physical assault, among others.

National level: Low social capital, weak community sanction, unwillingness to intervene in violent act, illiteracy, unemployment, poverty, substance abuse, proliferation of arms, ethnic militia, unequal distribution of natural resources, lack of political will to prosecute offenders, lack of capacity to control diseases, corruption, lack of basic facilities and services, discrimination against group, marginalisation, disrespect of workers' rights, minorities' rights, inequality between/among groups, ethnic and cultural diversity, and bad governance, exclusion, fraud organised crimes, abductions, electoral disputes, social distrust, disrespect for rule of law, and the like.

Regional level: Piracy, maritime insecurity, cross boarder strife/crimes, harassment of non-residents, porosity of boarders, environmental degradation, unbalanced trade, difference in beliefs, cultural imposition/imperialism, historical antecedents, cultural diversity. The United Nations (2013) identified underlying root causes of violent conflict 'as poverty, hunger, human rights abuses, marginalization and impunity, especially with regard to sexual violence as well as poor governance and grievances over the unequal distribution of resources, wealth and power.'. Marshal (2005) provided additional factors to include poor human security, unstable and inequitable political institutions, limited resources, a "bad neighbourhood" of similar crisis-ridden states, deteriorating sanitation and health.

For ease of measurement, some examples of typical signs and indicators are given as:

Demographic

- Sudden demographic changes and displacement/movements of people
- Increasing "territoriality" of groups/peoples

Economic

- Short-term and long term changes in economic performance of a country or a region
- Increase in poverty or inequality
- Rise in unemployment rate
- Economic shocks or financial crises

Policy-Related

- Deliberate acts of governments against a specific group or region
- Destruction or desecration of religious sites
- Active discrimination or legislation favouring one group over another
- Potentially destabilizing referendums or elections
- Government "clamp-downs"

Public Opinion or "Social Factors"

- A rise in "societal" intolerance and prejudice
- An increase in numbers of demonstrations or rallies

External

- Intervention or support on behalf of one of the parties/groups by an external actor
- "Diffusion" or "contagion" of ideologies or conflicts in neighbouring regions
- An influx of refugees from a conflict into a neighbouring country

Data Generation on Warning Signs of Conflict in Africa

Information from the UNDP report of 2015 and the Population Reference Bureau of the same year on population (POP), population per square kilometre of arable land (POP/A), gross national income per capita (GNI/C), infant mortality rate (INMR), employment by population (EMP/P), gender inequality (GEN/I), expenditure on education (EXP/E), number of refugees (REF) were aggregated by sub-region on the continent. These are presented in table 1 as warning signs of conflict.

Table 1: Warning Signs of Conflict by Sub-Region in Africa*

| Sub-Region | POP | POP/A | GNI/C | INMR | EMP/p | GEN/I | EXP/E | REF. |
|-----------------|-----|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Northern Africa | 37 | 848 | 10418 | 25.2 | 43 | .41 | 5.5 | 114 |
| Western Africa | 22 | 522 | 2283 | 60.3 | 65.1 | .63 | 4.4 | 24 |
| Eastern Africa | 22 | 4221 | 4219 | 50.2 | 72.1 | .77 | 4.1 | 133.9 |
| Middle Africa | 17 | 781 | 6740 | 63 | 58.6 | .62 | 3.9 | 102.1 |
| Southern Africa | 13 | 586 | 9848 | 52.6 | 44.8 | .48 | 9.0 | ,36 |

- *Averages by Sub-Region.*

Sources: UNDP on Human Development Report, 2015 & Population Reference Bureau Data Sheet, 2015

Table 1 contains information on averages of population, population per kilometre square of arable land, Gross National Income per capita, infant mortality rate, employment per population, gender inequality, public expenditure on education, and refugees by country of origin as some of the possible warning signs of violent conflict. For instance, population which could have been an advantage for development may turn otherwise with high human and social capital deficit. Besides, in a situation where there is a significant deviation between population growth and provision of social amenities and infrastructural facilities, pressure mounts on available ones leading to unhealthy rivalries and competition which may slip to violent conflict. Information on population per square kilometre of arable land indicates how much of pressure is put on the land which is highest in Eastern Africa (4221), followed by Northern Africa (848), Middle Africa (781), Southern Africa (586) and Western Africa (522) in that descending order. This information can provide explanation for herdsmen and farmers' clashes, especially in situation where land use is not effectively managed or controlled as in Nigeria.

In addition, Gross National Income (GNI) per capita serves as proxy of personal income or quality of life as well as a country's wealth and when it is appreciably low, suggests incidence of poverty which is widely associated with aggressive behaviour, diseases, abduction and other vices including insurgency. In particular, poverty is noted to create 'a background for more violence and serious difficulties for building peaceful conditions' (Backstrand, Kerstin Greback, Inge Istam & Wirmark, 2002,). It is on record that the bulk of the 44 war-like conflicts recorded in 2002 took place in the world's poorest nations. The trajectory has not really changed even as at now. This is a clear indication of the complex interplay between poverty and violent conflicts (Akuf & Venro in Seitz, 2004). Table 1 also shows that Western Africa appears to be the poorest with GNI per capita of \$2283. Coming from the obvious, it is easier to recruit a poor or an unemployed as an insurgent and the like than an employed with relatively satisfying regular income which underscores the importance of information on employment or unemployment. Information on gender inequality and public expenditure on education respectively signal level of discrimination against women and suggest interest of governments to develop their human and social capitals. Further, it is not news that many Africans are fleeing

the continent almost on a daily basis as refugees because of well-founded fear of persecution due to ethnicity, religion, nationality, political association, or the fear of being killed in wars ravaging their countries of origin. *It is just a tale of all is not well back home.* The information is that the proportion of refugees by home country varies. Thus, information on number of refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs), is a clear indication of violent conflict in the geography(ies) now or at a time. Hence, the figures for Eastern Africa (133.9 with highest contributions from Somalia, South Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Burundi), North Africa (114, with majority from Sudan), Middle Africa (102.1, significant number from Congo Democratic Republic and Central Africa Republic), Western Africa (24 on the average with significant contribution from Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Mauritania and Nigeria) and the very least, Southern Africa (0.6, with Namibia having a highest value of 1.1 and 0.4, the least, for South Africa (UNDP, Human Development Report 2015). In all, it appears Southern Africa is a relative conflict-free haven of Africa.

However, the import of the presentation is for the governments with their agencies and non-government organisations including African development partners, civil societies and private institutions as well as everyone to be sensitive and concerned, well as work towards addressing such challenges. Again, it provides basis for the proposed inclusive-conflict prevention-adult education strategy (ICPAES).

Justification for Adult education in Conflict Prevention

Of the generational rungs-children, youths and adults, adults as parents, community leaders, and national leaders are mostly the architects of every crisis or violence in a community, nation or region. The conduct and comment of these adults and groups of adults directly or indirectly influence the behaviours of other ranks. To this extent, the onus of resolving or preventing such conflicts rests more on them than the children or youths even if they are to be involved in the procedure. It is then important to target adults for education to prevent violence-prone conflict through adult and non-formal education. Unfortunately, adult and non-formal education programme or approach has been so undermined in development projects (Fajonyomi,2015), especially in Africa as against recognition accorded to it in Europe and Americas (Pastuovic, 1995 & Latchem, 2011). It is considered as complementary or supplementary education to school education (Belle & Verhine, 1975; & Fajonyomi, 1991). Whereas it is observed that ideas are continually evolving about how to use the full range of children's educational experiences to promote commitment to principles of peace and social justice through primary education with the consideration of United Nations Children's Endowment Fund (UNICEF) and other organisations (Fountain, 1999), this cannot be said of adults/adult education. It is rather unfortunate that when looking at development goals the benefits of adult education are often not understood and recognised outside of the educational discourse' (EAEA, 2016).

However, adult education in its diverse forms of rural education, community education, peace education, political education, prison education, workers' education, vocational education, counselling education, family education, rehabilitation education, to mention these, becomes relevant in addressing emerging issues or problems, especially when the roles are unconventionally outside those designed for the school (Belle & Verhine,1975; Bhola,1989; Fajonyomi & Balami, 1997;& Fajonyomi,2013). The reasons for its attractiveness are as those for its integral component, non-formal education which include:

1. Decreasing resources and expanding school-age population;
2. Equal opportunity access to education and the resources of society;
3. The need for educational innovation;
4. The need to supplement and complement the benefits of formal education;
5. The need to meet human needs in specific contexts; and
6. The possibility of shifting attention from school certificate to performance as the criterion of achievements (Brembeck in Belle & Verhine, 1975).

In sum, adult education could be credited for its 3Es-elasticity, enduringness, and equality which are proven in practice and in theory. Hence, it could be trusted as a realistic tool in preventing conflict if the goal, content, delivery and assessment are focused on conflict prevention.

In particular, the place of adult education in the prevention of violent conflict and in the insurance and sustenance of peace-individual, national, regional or global- and security-food, economic, social or the like- is implicated in the meaning of adult education as:

The entire body of ongoing learning processes, formal or otherwise, whereby people regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, and improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction to meet their own needs and those of their society'. Also it is considered as 'a key to the twenty-first century; a consequence of active citizenship and a condition for full participation in society; a powerful concept for fostering ecologically sustainable development, for promoting democracy, justice, gender equity, and scientific, social and economic development, and for building a world in which violent conflict is replaced by dialogue and a culture of peace based on justice. (UNESCO, 1997: 1)

A close look at Goal 4 especially Target 7 also gives hope about the relevance of education of adults in the promotion of sustainable development of which 'culture of peace and non-violence' is central (United Nations for Sustainable Development, 2015):

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

In the same vein, adult education is said to 'create change through enhancing employment prospects, improving health levels and financial literacy of poor people as well as giving better chances of acquiring the tools needed to run their own lives (EAEA, 2016). Some testimonies on the potency of adult education to prevent violent conflict directly and indirectly by dealing with the warning signs are summarised as follows (Fajonyomi,2009: 1-22):

There is a high correlation between poverty and illiteracy... For all those women and men who live without access to basic reading and writing skills literacy opens up new horizons of opportunity, improved standards of life and contributes to processes of social change and poverty eradication(Matsura in Fajonyomi, 2009)

Literacy gives people tools with which to improve their livelihoods, participate in community decision making, gain access to information about health care, and much else besides. Above all, it enables individual to realise their rights as citizens and human beings (Ban Ki-Moon in Fajonyomi, 2009).

Without the eradication or at least drastic reduction in mass adult illiteracy and poverty, singly and collectively, democracy will continue to limp on one leg and our democratic ship will never run on an even keel(Akinpelu in Fajonyomi, 2009)

A study of adult learners in Tennessee found a variety of outcomes in the learners' lives, including an increased rate of employment, increased self-esteem and increased community participation, life satisfaction, and

involvement with children schooling (Bingman, Ebert & Smit in Fajonyomi, 2009)

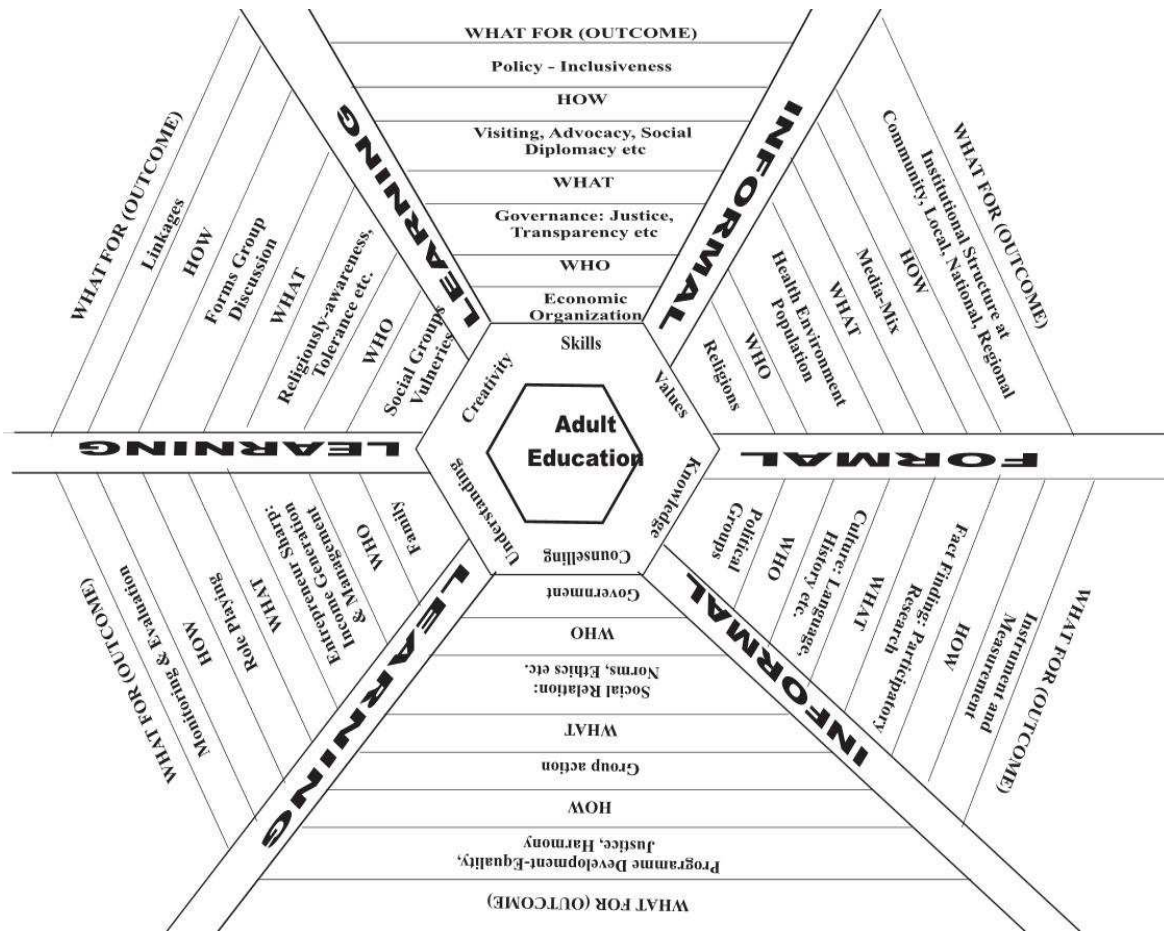
Lifelong learning is a key for achieving social change and reducing poverty levels around the world. It has the capacity to positively affect many dimensions of poverty, peace, reconciliation as well as conflict prevention (EAEA, 2016)

Contingent on the strong supposition for the association between adult education and conflict prevention or its decisive factors, an inclusive-conflict prevention-adult education strategy is advanced in this paper. The strategy focuses on developing innovative and effective education programme for adults, enlightened by backgrounds of conflict warning signs.

Inclusive-Conflict Prevention-Adult Education Strategy (ICPAES)

Goal and Objectives: The ICPAES (see pictograph 1) locates adult education as the driver of conflict prevention strategy with the ultimate goal of complementing and or supplementing other concurrent programme(s) designed to prevent violent conflict in Africa, that is susceptible to conflict in a split of a second for the presence of divisive factors. For this reason, the adult education with its three strands of formal learning, informal learning and non-formal learning cutting across different groups and entailing deep learning complies with the principles of lifelong learning. In that light, the objectives shall reflect::

- Situational analysis and identification of emerging warning signs of violent conflict in and around a nation, region or entity.
- Development of responsive and inclusive adult education programme leading to acquisition of the right attitude, values, knowledge and skills for building culture of peace and conflict prevention.
- Adoption of emancipatory, andragogic approach in the delivery of content.
- Creation of institutional structures at community, local, national, sub-regional and regional levels with formidable network backed up by agreeable policy framework.
- Integration of counselling and guidance services as coping strategies in emerging warning signs.
- In-build monitoring and evaluation mechanism for sustenance, effectiveness and efficiency of the entire system.



Pictograph 1: A web of the relationship between adult education and conflict prevention

Participants (Who): As an inclusive strategy coupled with the fact that consequence of conflict is not status bound, participants cut across the rich and poor divide or leaders and the led in religious organisations, economic circle, political space, government agencies, and social organisations particularly the family. The diversity in the groupings also reflects in composition of individuals as to disposition toward conflict prevention and peace building. The composition speaks of the emotion, personality, integrity, esteem and motivation of the individual which collectively bear on the geographical outlook as a community, nation or region. An undemocratic person may not believe in the rule of law, equality in all ramifications or justice and thereby precipitating conflict. In other words, learning needs and experiences of the participants are expected to vary but provide implicit resources for facilitation and suggest diverse degree of programming.

However, especial attention is directed to the family and government or governance. On the family, training at this *first station of socialisation* is fundamental, lasting and forms the bedrock for future peace. This position is supported by the saying that *'charity begins at home'* and biblical injunction that *'train up a child so that s/he can give you peace at old age'*. Regarding government/governance, represented by executive, legislature and judiciary, responsible for controlling political space which impinges on distribution of resources, and predicts extensively whether or not a society would experience peace or be plunged into violent conflict. More so, instruments to deal with indices of structural violence such as poverty, discrimination and unequal access to opportunities, which are at the root of much conflict lie in the court of the government. Nevertheless, other groups or participants are of no less importance.

Content (What): Giving the warning signs of violent conflict, matters arising as content may revolve around population-family size and living, population control etc; health-access to quality health services and the like; environmental control and management; culture-histories, geographies, languages, cultural relation, etc; entrepreneurship-income generation, skills development etc; religions-awareness, understanding, tolerance, etc (Ambali, 2016); governance-power sharing, rule of law, accountability, transparency etc; and, social relation-social right and duties, agreements between and among parties, etc. However, the content of the learning programme is a function of the social, economic, political and technological milieu as well as learning needs which ought to have been identified (Fajonyomi, 2013). Thus, participants' abilities, capabilities and environment should be given sufficient consideration in programming. Also, the content should manifest skills, knowledge, and attitude domains, well as recognise centrality of communication skills and support services like counselling, archival and library services (Fajonyomi & Balami 1997 & Fajonyomi, 2015). In short, every of the participant should acquire the status of an 'empowered learner' (Morrison, 1995) to be able to negotiate his or her freedom or freedom of others and demand for justices.

Mode of Delivery (How): This is laid on three fundamental assumptions. First, the whole process of learning must guide against making the same mistakes for which school education is being 'crucified' - since the time of Illich (*De-schooling*), Freire (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Pedagogy of Hope, Pedagogy of Autonomy to Pedagogy of Indignation*), Ranciere (*Ignorant Schoolmaster*), Masschelein (*Poor Pedagogy*) to date. The school is often accused of perpetrating economic, political and social inequalities and producing 'undemocratic and unsustainable conditions in society' (Belle & Verhine, 1975; Carrillo, 2007; & Wildemeersch, 2014). Could something be wrong with the school education offered for it not to be patronised? Or rejected and labelled 'boko-haram' (un-worthy learning) by the Boko-Haram fundamentalists? Second, participants at each learning situation should be known and seen as adults/adult learners with unique characteristics of natural tendency to grow and mature in self-concept, ability to accumulate experience, self-motivation, readiness to learn and tendency to use learning for the purpose of solving problems ((NMEC & UNICEF, 2010), Third, readiness and ability of participants to 'detoxify' themselves of learned ill-behaviours manifesting as warning signs or predisposing factors of violent conflict and be 'revitalised' by relearning and seeking behaviours that precipitate equality, justice, harmony, and every of the elements of peace and peaceful living.

In this wise, the andragogical process of facilitation should provide platform for critical understanding of reality about the warning signs and consequential effects on harmonious relationships among parties. The process, enmeshing informal learning, non-formal learning and formal learning, brings to bear experiences of the participants at dialogue, simulation, visit to threes, role-playing, individual-group counselling and/or focus group discussion sessions. It is all the way participatory to the level that the division between facilitators and participants is just imaginary as there is always a role switch with equality as a basic characteristic and the participants are so challenged to realise that the structural conflict situation can be 'changed, transformed and re-invented' (Carrillo, 2007; Fajonyomi, 2006; Fajonyomi, 2008 & Wildmeersch, 2014). The process is more of 'how' rather than 'what' or 'who'. Questions such as 'how did we get to this mess and how do we come out of it' are expected to be addressed in order to generate actionable steps toward conflict prevention. With ingenuity, the resources in terms of information and communication technologies and popular media, in the like of local drama, meant for mediation, could be sourced from the environment and effectively deployed. The programme can take place in religious institutions, designated centres and through community radio and social media as conflict mongers also employ social media including internet. More, the impact of social media and mobile phones in fostering inter-ethnic dialogue and in preventing conflict over resources has been established (Himelfarb, 2012). For high profile participants including government officials and heads of government, it may be organised as workshop, or retreat. In-built evaluation mechanism should be infused with emphasis on qualitative and participatory evaluation techniques ((USAID, 2013)

End Result (What for): This seems to be superfluous as the discourse so far has implicated the end result particularly that violent conflict on the continent is preventable through emancipatory adult education programme(s) with a focus on the warning signs. Perhaps it is necessary to emphasise some actions for

consideration to ensure reality in implementation. For instance, an inclusive adult education policy implementable at regional, sub-regional, national and local levels should be conceived and drawn. The policy should indicate groups and institutional involvement, and their activities which must be coordinated to avoid multiplication of efforts and guide against ineffectiveness. It may involve creation of a coordinating department at the regional level if any extant structure is inadequate. Similar structures should evolve at the lower levels. Among others, responsibilities regarding funding, data collection on warning signs, development of warning-sign-focused curriculum, monitoring and evaluation, and linkages should be spelt out.

Roles of Universities

In line with the earlier stated objectives of the paper, this section presents a brief on the roles of universities in conflict prevention through the process of adult education. As part of the traditional function of university's community servicing, universities on the continent should work in collaboration with other development agencies for the inclusion of adult education in policies and strategies on conflict prevention at the regional, sub-regional, national and local levels. In addition, the universities can lend resource support to agencies engaged in programmes directed at conflict prevention by training the personnel of such agencies in the arts and science of adult education using adult educationists and counsellor educators domiciled in the universities. Certainly, the place of training in a project of this nature cannot be overlooked.

In addition, the universities should be helpful in addressing challenges at their domain in terms of widening access to qualitative university education and ensuring equitable participation in university education by formulating inclusive admission policies, mounting innovative curriculums, and adopting transformative learning approaches. More specifically, university teachers should be conscious of the pedagogy they employ in their interactions with the learners. Does it encourage critical, reflective thinking and participation? Does it include networks of relationships involving trust, communication, and collectives' identities? (Preece, 2006). Is the system capable of taking on academically lower performing younger people and their older peers and turning them into the best graduates? (Waller, Holford, Jarvis, Milana & Webb, 2014). Does it engender creativity in the learners to become problem solvers and creators of jobs?

Outside community servicing and capacity building through teaching and training, universities have significant roles in providing support in terms of research and innovation (Santiago, Tremblay, Basri & Arnal, 2008: 73). Precisely, as it concerns conflict prevention through adult education and counselling, further innovative research should be done to establish the strength of the warning signs in advancing conflict and of the pedagogues or andragogues of adult education, from approaches, techniques to technologies/media which is/are effective in building capacity to mitigate conflict. In the same vein, noting that the peace education field has been dominated by Western theories and approaches (Tanenbaum, 2010), it is important to examine how effective are the local and indigenous approaches, including traditional adult education in preventing violent conflicts. Thus, action research which is participatory and inclusive is advocated. Also, concurrent research efforts should be directed to development of improved measurement and better instrumentation regarding variables associated with the relationship. It is a known fact that violent conflict is intra-and inter-national or that negative effect(s) of violence go beyond the theatre, therefore, research laboratory should be extended to the neighbourhood. The issue of scope of research is then germane if to curtail the spread. Besides, it is suggestive that wider areas of knowledge and multi-disciplinary research should be more beneficial and establishment of linkages should be very important.

Conclusion

Incontrovertibly, adult education within the purview of lifelong learning is very important in building culture of peace and conflict prevention. Unfortunately, less attention has been paid to this. In the paper, attempt was made to draw or re-draw attention of stakeholders, especially development agencies to the role adult education could play and how with gaze on the warning signs of violent conflict. To be modest, the paper tried to do just that by presenting a strategy and explanation indicating strong relationship between adult education and conflict prevention. It is believed that the strategy would have achieved two related goals of getting attention concerning

the significance of adult education in development matters, including issue of conflict prevention, and that of evoking further discussion. Finally, the roles of the universities in adult education-conflict prevention equation was emphasised. Accordingly, it is recommended that universities should get seriously involved in the process of conflict prevention or unless they are consumed by it

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