Beyond the Pedagogy: Indigenous Approaches for Peace Practices in Africa

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ABSTRACT

Peace is the requisite for the world order, likewise is the conflict for the development of the world’s space. This indicates the positivism of conflict in the development of human and man’s space. However, the negativity of conflicts in man’s space brought about the ‘Peace Pedagogy’ in educational institutions in the world over. Better still and less well, the results compared in the conflict management and peace building strategies in most if not all countries revealed a rethink and review of the pedagogical peace efforts in Africa. The so far achievements in the field of conflicts resolution and peace building strategies in most if not all countries revealed a rethink and review of the pedagogical peace efforts in Africa. Nevertheless, the success of peace pedagogies in some countries of the world should be having noticed, ‘the out-put’ changes the narrative of their society. Africa, the continent blessed with natural and human resources, believed to have been the first civilized continent of the world, evolved in peace practiced on conflict resolution and peace-building strategies that are indigenous and well fixed into the various conflicts bedeviled the people of Sahel and sub-Saharan Africa before the emergence of western strategy of peace pedagogies. In this wise, this paper explored beyond the pedagogy the indigenous approaches for peace practices in Africa using a qualitative method of a desk base research report on indigenous approach of peace-practice strategies in order to strengthen the traditional and indigenous strategies’ peace efforts and peace building in Africa.

Keywords: Approaches, Development, Indigenous, Peace Practices, Pedagogy.

I. INTRODUCTION

Peace is fundamental to human existence as conflict is equally unavoidable and inevitable in human’s pace. Both have advantages but the later disadvantages led to calamities, catastrophes, destructions, economic brutality and socio-political backwardness. The world experienced the First World War also known as the Great War (1914–1918) and the Second World War (1939–1945). Both wars were of territorial invasion. On the issue of German-France war that gave the German upper hand and the eventual took over of Alsace-Lorraine created the desire for revenge by the French. In the similar vein, the invasion of Poland by German brought about the alliance of France and Great Britain (Encyclopedia Britannica Online) with other nations joining the alliances that brought about the world conflict II violence referred World War II. In the political history of Africa, there was nothing like Africa war or two nations in Africa that wage war against one and another that led to either world war. This could be as a result of its position as a colonized continent as well as under-develop, consuming and black nations.

However, there was genetic evident in history that Africa is the home of the modern human (Reader, 1997, p. 99). It was evidently reported that despite the blackmail, Africa became a foreign place, unseen, but occupying a fertile corner of the non-Africa collective imagination. The people’s continent of the Africa has a way of doing, politically, socially and economically. Nevertheless, the colonization and the scramble for partition of Africa by the Europeans crippled and damaged the political and economic pragmatism of the most blessed continent of the world. The empire system of government was a manifestation of uniqueness of Africa and African ancient people. Utim and Obio (2018) reported that the African societies had a well-organized system and institution of governance that enhanced stability and cohesion for the larger African communities. Ajayi and Buhari (2014) submitted that having confidence and will submission to the elders, chiefs, priests, priestesses, secret cults and so on are principles in conflict resolution in indigenous Africa societies. ‘Truth’ as reported by their research was the main emphasis and watchword in the peace practices of indigenous Africa societies. The mechanism and principle put in place by the indigenous/traditional African societies were not derived in any formal setting or school but indigenous/traditionally of informal setting believed to be crude and fluid by the Europeans and other
Western cohorts. But, significantly resolved every issues raised before the scramble for partisan and colonization of Africa. The coming of Europeans into Africa in 1844 brought about the pedagogical inclination and subsequent lead to different fields of studies. Whenever there is a challenge especially to the major leading nation’s of the world, the next and best place for practical solution to be sought is the academic institutions for immediate and future solutions. However, as new field being established so are the challenges being legion and hard to crack. The continent of Africa in which Nigerian is a nation face different violent conflicts which ordinarily wouldn’t have risen to the level of escalation, the lackadaisical attitudes of the formal sector led to spending more money, more time and too many deaths. The Boko Haram insurgency in the northeastern Nigeria, which over three hundred fifty (350,000) thousands of live had been lost and more than 3 million were internally displaced (www.cfr.org). The xenophobic attack in Zimbabwe and South Africa are indigenous conflict that required African indigenous solutions but been tackled using modern approach of western ideologies. In this regards, this paper look beyond the pedagogy-that is - looking outside the scope of the formal setting of teaching and learning for peace practices on conflict issues in the world. However, the use of indigenous/traditional approaches for peace practices in Africa. It was done successfully in those days and can be done differently and uniquely in what is known the modern day of the world in Africa.

II. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL CLARIFICATION

A. Pedagogy

Pedagogy, from the oxford language is the method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept. MasterSoft online (2021) explained pedagogy as a way of teaching or interacting with the students, whether it is the theory or practice of educating. It is regarded as the relationship between the culture and techniques of learning with the aim to build on previous knowledge of the students and work on the development of skills and attitudes of the learners (Shirke, 2021, p. 1). The approaches in pedagogy are constructive, collaborative, integrative, reflective and inquiry based learning. It is all encompassing method of imparting knowledge on learner for result oriented and learning outcomes. In relations to peace studies or peace education, the idea of pedagogy in peace education or studies came over after different scholars have written scholarly paper and books on topical peace issues. The scholars includes, Lewis Fry Richardson, Pitirin Aleksandrovich Sorokin, and Quincy Wright laid the foundation for the peace studies and education within the four walls of classroom (Asuni and Owonikoko, 2016).

B. Indigenous/Traditional Approach

Stewart (2018) referred indigenous to the notion of a place-based human ethnic culture that has not migrated from its homeland and it is not a settler or colonial population. It portends that being indigenous is therefore different form being of a world culture, such as the Western or Euro-American culture. Stewart (2018) in his argument submitted that despite this fundamental difference, western and indigenous are similar identity labels. Because, both ‘western’ and ‘indigenous’ are general words for heterogeneous groups of peoples who nevertheless understand themselves as aligned in some ways. Stewart used the word placeholder to explain indigenous which this paper concord and adopted because, philosophically and pragmatically indigenous is a placeholder as explained by Stewart (2018) for any of many specifically identity names. He argued further that, indigenous is an umbrella term that includes different people from different segment of the globe. However, western is also an umbrella term, but, not a placeholder term because it has definitional specificity attached to it. Boege (2011) submitted that the indigenous approaches to peace practices have not been reported and addressed by scholarly research and political practice but held the fact of the indigenous approach relevancy to mariad of conflicts cases even in today’s era of what he described as ‘new wars’ in a globalised world.

C. Peace Practices

Peace practices are about preventive diplomacy, peace building, conflict resolution, peace containments and other peace sustainability’s approaches. Peace practices as used in this study as a strategy, approach, method as well as positive attitudes and behaviours of individuals and group of individuals in peace and peaceful interactions. In this wise, based on this research and end user of what will comes up in this research, peace practice(s) it’s an act or approach with which an agreement or harmonious interaction/relationship approaches are used in preventive diplomacy, peace building, conflicts resolution, management, transformation and other peace sustainability paradigm in peace and peaceful co-existence. It is a giant and calm attitude and positive behaviour experienced from individuals and group of individuals in peace sustainability in Africa and world over.
III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this study is to establish the indigenous approaches for peace practices in Africa. It distinctively shows the indigenous preventive diplomacy, traditional peace building and indigenous conflict resolution mechanism different from western-conventional approaches.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this study is qualitative method. It is therefore largely a desk based research report. The primary data collection consists of existing literature on the indigenous approaches for peace practices in Africa. These include journal articles, books and reports of research in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peace building, and conflict resolution, indigenous knowledge, communicative strategies, and internet materials were researched and analyzed.

V. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The people of Africa were once in charge of their own affairs before the coming of Europeans who took over their ways of life and changed their cultural endowment consciously and un-censoriously. Issifu (2015) criticized the west Conventional Approaches also referred to as Liberal Peace Building. The critique is adopted for its relevance to this study.

Liberal Peace Building was invariably adopted by United Nation to carry out the agenda of international commitment to transform post-war nation-states. Among other reasons, the elements of democratic elections, market liberals humanitarian assistance and the rule of law that underpin liberal peace-building gained the massive international support and was used by the UN and other large donor countries to transform war-shattered nations (Hoffmann, 1995) including Angola, Namibia, El-Salvador. In spite the massive support that liberal peace building approach has gained, it is bedeviled with challenges. Paris (1997) in Issifu (2015) submitted that liberal peace building has not been an effective model for establishing sustainable peace especially in Africa. Paradoxically, the very process of political and economic liberalization used in some war torn countries generated destabilizing side effects, hindering the consolidation of peace and in some cases, even sparking renewed violent conflicts. For instance, in Angola, political liberalization contributed to the resurgence of violence. Moreover, in Mozambique, the effect of economic liberalization threatened to reignite the conflict. These cases illustrate the potential dangers of the western-conventional approach of peace building in war-shattered Africa states (Issiful, 2015).

It is against the reasons, that scholars have argued that indigenous approaches to peace practices are more effective than western-conventional approaches (Zartman, 2000; Bukari, 2013; Issifu, 2015). Unlike the traditional peace practices techniques, western conventional approaches are not credit with local legitimacy because they do not focus on psychosocial and spiritual dimension, and do not take into account the cultural milieu of Africans during conflict transformation (Karby, 2006; Issifu, 2015). Instead, the western-conventional approaches focuses on holding immediate elections after peace agreements signed and introducing unfriendly economic restructuring policies without tackling the structural causes of the conflict as well as appreciating the cultural needs of the vulnerable in society (Austin et al., 2011, p. 125).

The failure to recognize the customs of the people, and identifying the structural causes of violence according to Kirby (2006); Issifu (2015) are the reasons behind the failure of western-conventional approaches for peace practices in Africa.

VI. INDIgenous PEACE PRACTICES FOR PREVENTATIVE DIPLOMACY

Conflict is part of human’s life. The indigenous people in Africa holds a fact to the believe of conflict being part of man and the mechanism for dealing with it either in preventing or resolving are entrenched in the traditional management of conflict. Sibanda (2018) submitted that the Ndebeles people of Zimbabwe use proverbs and wise saying as a means of preventive diplomacy to transmit cultural strategies for peace and conflict management – ‘ginyilitshe’ (Swallow a stone). This statement for the Ndebedes in Zimbabwe is applicable not to degenerate inter personal or/and inter group conflict. Ordinarily, one cannot ideally swallow a stone but metaphorically the issue(s) between the two parties regardless the offences, one should just swallow the bitter pill by forgiving and forgetting and the relationship continues. The instinct of “I” in every individual that make him/her centered is a causal effect in interpersonal conflict and conflicts. The indigenous approach of peace practices as emphasized in Ubuntu – a traditional conflict mechanism. Tutu (1999) emphasized that, a person with Ubuntu spirit is the one who is open and live peacefully with others and does not feel threatened when others achieved successes because, he or she recognizes that they belong to a greater whole. In addition, the ‘Yoruba’ speaking of south-west Nigeria, in their oral culture of proverbs
'Ife, Sagbalbera' (literally love better of fear). For the people to be in love of one and another is better still than to be in rancor and fear of each other. In the same parlance 'se mi bio logun ore’ (literally friends don’t fight but quarrel (disagree to agree)). In most culture in African, there are mechanisms, principles or approaches inform of oral culture of proverbs and wise saying, or statements that entrench peace practices among the indigenous people that the west approaches have eroded that prevent conflicts and at the same time sustain the existing peace within the community members.

VII. INDIGENOUS PEACE PRACTICES FOR PEACE BUILDING

Peace building as a systematic way of restoring peace to a conflicting situation that was once in a relationship but as a result of unmet needs of interests, scarcity of resources, misinformation of information, values, ideologies and culture. All identifies causal effects are also parts of the conflicts with the indigenous people of Africa before the modern approaches of conflict management. Osamba (2001) reported that, when there is a conflict among the Twakana people of Eastern Africa, the elders would call a traditional peace conference. The whole community would gather with one common objective to restore the broken relationship and invigorate the process of healing, such a meeting would be held in a ‘carnival’ atmosphere, punctuated with stories, songs, dance, proverbs and other peculiarities of the communities or people. The name of God and the spirits would be invoked at the meeting. A bull would be slaughtered, its blood collected and sprinkled into the air as a way of binding the community to the peace covenant.

As a gesture of reconciliation, the whole group would eat the meat together. Thereafter, feasting, singing, dancing and celebration would continue for several days. The whole society would thus be part of the agreement and anybody that violated it could suffer some calamity (Osamba, 2001, p. 6). Such of these peace practices of peace building are in most societies in African communities. These peace-building strategies through the leaders, elders and the community members are respected, recognized and they all keyed into by every member of the community because of the authority they commanded. Their authority is derived from the position they held in the community.

VIII. INDIGENOUS PEACE PRACTICES FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflict resolution in indigenous Africa is a mechanism that is effectively reliable and grudge free that conflicting parties will not hesitate to accept because of the principles therein. The conflicting parties have confidence in the panel that would resolve the dispute. These include elders, chiefs, priest, priestesses secret cult (Ajayi and Buhari, 2014). The conflicting parties must submit themselves to the indigenous constituted authorities. Some of the peace practice strategies of the panel or tribunal according to Ajayi and Buhari (2014) are:

Truth – The conflicting parties know that there will be no partiality even if any of the disputant wants to short charge his opponent, the elders will be conscious of the wrath of ancestral forces. Similarly, the conflicting parties in indigenous peace practice understand the fact that the transgressors among them will face serious sanction if indeed he/she errs in saying the truth.

Compliance of the ruling – In indigenous peace practice, there is compliance and enforcement of the panel or tribunals final pronouncement on the conflict. In tradition of African communities, the conflicting parties or one of them may take their case to the elders and sometimes the third party who is truthful and observant may call the attention of the elders to the conflicts within the two adversaries.

Ubuntu- It is an indigenous peace practice approach which common among the people of South Africa. Mokgoro (1997) in Issifu (2015) explained that the concept of Ubuntu over the years been used in a general sense to refer to an Africa of life and survival. Ubuntu based on the research originates from within African idioms. Ramose (1999), Goduka (2000) in Issifu (2015) explained 'mothokemothokabathobabangwe’ and ‘Umuntungumuntungabantu’ which loosely translated means ‘A person is a person through other person’, and ‘I am because we are, we are because I am’. Research shows that in Africa philosophy a person with Ubuntu spirit is the one noted for being hospitable, friendly, generous, compassionate, and caring for his fellow human being.

A communality ‘we’ approach as enshrined in the concept of Ubuntu and the understanding that a person is a person through others will be conscious of other human beings. Thus, that community or society will be in peace and the cooperation for community development will be experienced and achieved. This is in line with the submission of Mbiti (2008) in Omona (2020) that the individual does not and cannot exist alone except corporately. He owes this existence to the other people including those of the past generation and his contemporaries. He is simply part of whole. The community must therefore make, create, or produce the individual, for the individual can depend in the cooperate group…Whatever happens to the individual happens to whole group (Mbiti, 2008, p.106).
IX. MAJOR TECHNIQUES IN INDIGENOUS PEACE PRACTICE PROCESSES IN AFRICA

A. The Story

Story telling is one of the techniques and play key role in most indigenous peace practice (conflict resolution and peace building) in local conflict and conflicts in Africa. The relevant story to the conflict being looked into will be told to the conflicting parties to restore hope and harmony among them. Through the story telling, the err individual will learnt the gravity of the crime committed and apologized to him/her and the relationship continues.

B. Active Participation of the Parties

The conflicting parties or disputants actively participate and involve in the peace process. The essence of the coming together of the community panel or community tribunal which involved elders, leaders and other community stakeholders is to bring about the restorative justices, togetherness, mutual relationships and co-existence communalities. This will then promote the spirit of pardon, forgiveness, fairness, and openness. The involvement of parties helped to appropriate various ways of addressing the harm and criminality committed against each other and the main causes of the conflict. This will afford the elders to rebuild the relationships for the mutual co-existence of the community (Issifu, 2014:68).

C. Joint Problem Solving Strategy

Both the community elders, leaders, title hold individual of the community and the relevant stakeholders in the community panels is on restitution not retribution, restoration of friendliness not finding fault, truth saying not bias, dialogue and a times blame not condemnation. It is also on an apology-forgiveness rather than zero sum game, on accommodation not avoidance and on cooperativeness not assertiveness. In indigenous peace practices of joint problem solving, the underline efforts are win-win for the community conflicting parties.

D. Mutual Respect

The conflicting parties or disputants are made to understand by the community panel that the individual right and respect need to be observed. Thus, the indigenous peace practices identify the right and respect of each and individual conflicting parties. Therefore, they should do away with interaction and actions that could jeopardize the efforts of the community leaders and elders in peace practice efforts.

E. Empowerment

The indigenous peace practices enable the conflicting parties to have a greater influence over the peace initiative process. Because, the conflicting parties have a greater influence over the peace initiative process the community panel will let them understand that the reasons behind their gathering is to restore peace. Therefore, the part of peace for the conflicting parties and by extension community peace is the utmost. Thus, each party will be empower to bring to the fore that workable path for peace practice in the community.

X. THE INDIGENOUS PEACE PRACTICES IN AFRICA

A. The Yoruba People of Nigeria

The ancient Yoruba people were in Nigeria and present Benin Republic. The modern structure of Nigeria defies carved some Yorubas to the present Republic of Benin. The culture of the Yoruba in Nigeria and that of those in Benin Republic are the same. However, globalization might have infuriated modernization into their peculiarities. Ajayi and Buhari (2014) held the view that among the Yoruba people, indigenous lands are derives essentially from customs and traditional knowledge of the forebears were always dramatized. Olaoba (2001) as quoted by Ajayi and Buhari (2014) confirmed that, the elders sit under the tree and talk until they agree, the elders (old age or seniority) are the force behind the order or decorum in Yoruba traditional society.

Fighting among the younger children were in the traditional Yoruba accorded immediate settlement by those around or passer-by who ensured restoration of peace and harmony. In commercial and marketing operations where there is issue of stealing, debt and fraud. In certain circumstances, gods and ancestors (the living dead) are called upon, their spirit invoked. The disputants in commercial or marketing conflict are reminded of the aftermath of the wrath of gods and ancestors if they refuse to say the truth. If the committer or conflicting parties still adamant, their spirit invoked and the committer face the repercussion. The spirit could be malevolent/benevolent (Olaoba, 2002 p. 9; Ajayi & Buhari, 2014, p. 143).

In Yoruba Africa tradition, there were level or phases of peace practices, there are at the inter-personal or family level, the extended family level and village or town level (chief in council). These tiers according to Ajayi and Buhari (2014) represent the political units that make up the community. They emphasized that the smallest unit called Idile (compound/nuclear family) is headed by Bale (compound head). Then, there
is Ebi (extended family) headed by Mogaji who is the most influential or usually the eldest person in the extended family. The extended includes all people who are blood related either paternally or maternally. The last tier of unit is the quarters, which comprises of several family compound headed by Baale (the chief of ward/quarter), this can equally refers to as a community (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014, p. 143).

Bale as head of the family resolve domestic conflicts among co-wives, brothers and sisters, truants, and domestic fight involving his children and foster children or dependants. Bale as the family head in minor conflicts scolded the trouble shorter and appease the offended. For restorative justice, the bale can visit the offended person the next day to thank him or her for accepting a peaceful and amicable settlement. Bale in his duty can invite all the members of the family and warn them to desist from making such trouble and embarrassment to the family. During which the Bale used proverbs and wise saying to drive home its point. Oguntomisin (2004) in Ajayi & Buhari (2014) submitted that appeals could be made from that level of Bale to the second court, which is the court of the ward chief (Ile-ejo ijoye adugbo). This court tried civil cases. Though, it can conduct preliminary investigation of criminal cases but it cannot decide on it but transfer to the court of king (ile-ejo Oba).

Baale (community head) controls the relationship between members of his family and outsiders. He emphasized on how good neighbourliness can be achieved and preserved. Oguntomisin (2004) in Ajayi & Buhari (2014) revealed that land dispute, lack of good care of the wife and children, infidelity by the women, dispute over inheritance are the jurisdictions of the head (Baale) at this level. However, the chief-in-council (Igbimo-Ilu) in Yoruba land was the highest traditional institution for peace practices. The court of the king was the highest court and the last court to which appeal could be made. Though, among Egbas and Ijebus, the Ogboni court seemed to be the last court of appeal (Oguntomisin, 2004, p. 11; Ajayi & Buhari, 2014, p.144).

In Yoruba traditional judiciary system; fines of damaged are not usually awarded by the mediators in civil cases. Because, restoration of harmonious relationships is the paramount thing in the traditional judicial system. Sometimes, simple fines are place on parties to serve as deterrent and this may be in form of Kola nuts or local gins, palm wine both of which have ritual significance. Some kola nuts and the local gins were serving for those present to eat and drink, where local gins and palm-wine were not found, ordinary water will be used. These strategies help to reinforce the term of reconciliation for reinvented relationship.

B. The Ndebele People of Zimbabwe

The Ndebele of Zimbabwe formerly known as Matabele are Bantu speaking of southwestern Zimbabwe. Presently live around the city of Bulawayo (Britanica online). As African human being, there is every tendency to offend one another either at inter-personal level or neighbourhood community level. The Zimbabwe Ndebele have their indigenous methods of managing conflict, which has relevance to the present world multifaceted challenges. Sibanda (2018) argued that culture is the soul of any nation so much that anything that a nation produces through its cultural structures has a potential to be applied anywhere as long as there are adaptations. The Zimbabwean Ndebele used as strategies for peace practices are oral literature/traditions. For instance, ‘impi yormndeniKayingenwa’ (literally A clan conflict does not require outside interference). The African people hold that whatever the nature of the conflict, it should be within the disputants and resolve without the interfering or knowledge of the third party. The Zimbabwean Ndebele according to Sibadan (2018) used oral traditions for positive attitude, shaping behaviour of people, and preventive diplomacy, especially the concept of Ubuntu which is a key element in shaping social and moral behaviours of Ndebele people in as much as strategies for peace practices is concerned. Sibadan citing Mapara and Mudzanhire (2013) Ubuntu is a force that helps maintain the equilibrium of nature, spiritual and human forces in Ndebele community.

The peace practices in Zimbabwe Ndebele indicates how Africans do away with a spirit of individualisms, greed and egocentrism which promotes a culture of going up even at the cost of the downfall of the rest with the implication of proverbial ‘Umuntungumuntungabantu’ literally a person is a person because of other. With this, Ndebele people enshrine the spirit of togetherness and collective promotion in successes of the entire community instead of individual achievement at the expense of others that may likely resulted in conflict.

Moyo et al (2011) in Sibanda (2018) postulated that this proverb’s endavour is to capture this spirit of personhood, respect, decorum, and good values that imbue the community with solidarity and groupness. The Zimbabwean Ndebele peace practices held the belief that it is the family unit that make a village and then the larger community or town, city and the nation or a country. Therefore, it frowns at domestic violence and make it imperative to promote peace in the village and or at national level. This reflects in the oral tradition that ‘akhukhumuzigathunqintuthu’ (literally, there is no home, which does not exude smoke). The Ndebele has made the community members to understand that conflict is inevitable and such everyone should expect it one time or the other. Thus, the Zimbabwean Ndebele rely on own home grown strategies as their peace practices at different levels such as marriage, domestic violence as well as family disputes.
and conflicts which involve general community members. Ndebele peoples subscribe to the concept of Ubuntu hereditarily because the forebears inculcated it in them through the process of socialization and various rites passages, which distinguish a well mannered from a mischievous member of the society (Sibanda, 2018 p. 164).

C. The Acholi People of Northern Uganda

Africa peoples have rich culture that indicates their greatness as a special species on the surface of the earth. This dynamics reflects in the peace practices of Acholi people of Northern Uganda. According to Jendia (2019) the cultural factor in conflict management/resolution: a case study of the Acholi of northern Uganda, described the Acholi as ‘jonam’ literally people of rivers/lakes. They are mostly in the northern Uganda and eastern Equatorial in south Sudan. Jendia (2019) submitted that reasons behind the choice of traditional mechanisms for peace practices (conflict resolution and peace building) is based on the assumption that the Acholi people and by extension the Uganda societies are rich in knowledge and skills which is inherent in deep seated peace practices (p. 19). This is also supported by Latigo (2018) that African societies are rich in knowledge that provides principles and beliefs for peaceful and harmonious living. He stressed that the Acholi people of northern Uganda sustain, advocate, and preserve cultural beliefs about the spirit world and social order, which in effect informs their perception of truth, justice, forgiveness and reconciliation. All of which are critical values in peace practices. The application of indigenous principles for peace practices is realistic and is appropriate alternative approach to conflict resolution and management (Jendia, 2019 p.19).

The indigenous approaches used by Acholi people as peace practices at the height of conflict in northern Uganda include: Mato Oput, Nyona Tong Gweno, Lwoko Pi Wang, MoyoKum, Moyo Piny, Lakere Kat, and Gono Tong.

Mato Oput literally drinking bitterroot. It is part of a rite frequently used in peace practice between the victim’s clan and the perpetrator’s clan. It begins with mediation and negotiation between the two adversaries (see Lonergan, 2012; Jendia, 2019). It involves preparation of the Mato Oput reconciliation drink and materials, drinking the reconciliation concoction ( Mato Oput and other twelve (12) steps:

i. Leveling the ground
ii. Spitting into the mouth of the sacrificial sheep
iii. Preparation of the Oput
iv. Confession of wrongs committed
v. Participants converge to the Oput
vi. Drinking the Oput
vii. Moment of crisis
viii. Killing of sacrificial sheep
ix. Eating live of sacrificial sheep
x. Examination, acceptance and blessing of indemnity
xi. Eating the sacrificial meat
xii. Celebrating peace

Nyono Tong Gweno: Another commonly peace practice in traditional justice mechanism is Nyono Tong Gweno used in ritual cleansing in Acholi culture. Jendia (2015) explained ‘Nyono’ literally to step on, Tong Gweno literally a chicken egg. Therefore, ‘nyono tong gweno’ literally the ‘stepping onto an egg’ ceremony (Lonergan, 2012; Jendia, 2015; Jendia, 2019). The traditional approach is used to welcome and cleanse on who has gone away from home for an extended period, regardless of the reason for their absence. Essentially, Nyono Tong Gweno is one of the rites of peace practices (reconciliation and conflict resolution) live with MapoOput (Jendia, 2019, p.23).

The returnee must step on and break an egg before reentering the homestead and village. The ceremony rites serve dual purpose of cleansing and giving a cultural welcome and integration of people especially those abducted by and fight against his people (see Jendia, 2019).

Lwoko Pi Wang for the people of Acholi of northern Uganda means the washing away tears. It is closely related to Nyono Tong Gweno, indeed both can be perform together and referred frequently to as part of the same process. It is performed in situations where mourning and funeral rites are being performed for a person who has been assumed dead. The family members wash their faces with water symbolizing the washing away of the tears shed as the returne presumed dead (Jendia, 2019, p.23). In addition, animal will be slaughter for cleansing with other rites used for welcoming and reintegrate the person even for non-conflict derived absenteeism.

MoyoKum and Moyo Piny are ritual designed for body and community or area cleansing. An animal is slaughter to appease the angry bad spirits. The content of the animal’s rumen is used to cleanse the area. Moyo Piny ceremony is intended to influence an entire community, rather than an individual. It was a widely common peace practiced as residents moved from internally displace persons (IDP) camps back to their home areas to cleanse the bad spirits before reestablishing communities and homestead (Lonergan,
2012; Jendia, 2019).  

Gomo Tong- literally bending of spears. In Acholi culture, Gomo Tong (the bending of spears) it is performed to show that violence between two groups or individuals has ended. If any of the parties initiate violence again, the spear will turn against him or her (Jendia, 2015). This is related to Mato Oput. Thus, the two parties involved in a conflict where death was registered agree to come together and undergo the rituals of reconciliation. Though, broader than the Mato Oput because it takes into account even situations where the murderer is not known but the clan is known instead (Jendia, 2019). All the strategies were part of Acholi’s culture brought forward to address the political/community conflict in the northern Uganda. It is an appropriate mechanism for peace practices. However, there are challenges that hinder wider application in another cultural environment, most especially the Mato Oput.

The indigenous peace practices discussed indicates the cultural richness of the African people. For peace practices like participation, cleansing, reintegration, reconciliation, retribution administration of social justice which are fundamentals of preventive diplomacy, peace resolution, and peace building for Yorubas in south-western Nigeria, Ndebele people in south-western Zimbabwe and the Acholi people in northern Uganda and indeed the entire African people.

XI. CONCLUSION

The study has comprehensively looked at indigenous peace practices in Africa through the background, conceptual and theoretical clarifications, research objective, methodology, theoretical framework, indigenous peace practices for preventive diplomacy, peace building, conflict resolution, major techniques and the indigenous peace practices of some major peoples in Africa with adequate recommendations. However, conflict in Africa does not beyond the African indigenous peace practices mechanism. The solution to any conflict that confronts the Africans as a people, the solutions are also embedded in the socio-cultural existence of that particular group of people or country. The genesis that brought about the mantra that Africa solutions to the Africa problems is in consonants and in tandem to all faceted issues includes conflict, peace and security of African people in particular and the world over. Boege (2006) in Omona (2020) argued that indigenous peace practice approaches has its shortfalls like it does not terminate violence in the long term; may contradict universal standards of human rights and has a limited spheres of applicability. All these are misplaced on the indigenous peace practices approaches. The diversion to modern techniques of conflict handling styles by the peace practitioners at the instance of indigenous peace practice techniques made the later to be jettisoned, and the lackadaisical attitude towards the appropriate and critical reviews of the indigenous approaches to be in congruent and tandem with the emerging conflicts arising in Africa countries. Therefore, indigenous peace practice approaches are of great valued for addressing different conflicts confronting the people of Africa.

XII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The government in African countries should promote integration of indigenous approaches of peace practices through the establishment of an independent vibrant ministry of culture and peace development that will facilitate dialogue between conflicting parties in each country and regions of Africa.

2. The governments in African countries either at regional, state and local level should promote the value place upon the family unit by making sure that they support all efforts made by the community and the individual families to solve their conflicts at family level in order to promote discipline, unity, and peaceful coexistence among the community’s people of Africa.

3. The government in Africa countries should capacitate rural communities through the supposed Ministry of Culture and Peace Development or relevant appropriate agencies to organize seminars and traditional conferences where people will be conscientized about their not only culture but also about indigenous best peace practices that will be beneficial for all the stakeholders in all communities of Africa.

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