

THE YORÙBÁ'S PEACEFULNESS ENHANCED BY AN INFORMAL PEACE EDUCATION

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Abstract

This paper is a review of the southwest Nigerian Yorùbá and their recognized peacefulness in the context of Nigeria as a country. It attempts to address the peacefulness amidst the Nigeria unstable circumstances and in comparison, with the established peaceful societies (PS). The first part of the paper provides a concise discussion about peace and conflict studies as it developed in the West followed by an outline of conflicts in Nigeria and amongst the Yorùbá to identify a gap for this inquiry. The paper suggests the Yorùbá multireligious community provides some clues to how peacefulness could be retained in a society. Similarly, it suggests the roles informal peace education play in supporting people of different beliefs but same culture to retain their harmony. The author, nevertheless, left a challenge to move the study of PS beyond the agrarian and rural communities to investigate more modern societies for peacefulness.

NOTE: This article is taken from part of chapter 2 and the conclusion of the author's doctoral thesis, with a few amendments.

I. Introduction

Peace studies developed through the activities of scholars and peace practitioners from the 1900s and became an academic study around the late 1950s (Alkana, 1984; Dungen & Wittner, 2003.; Harris et al., 1998). During its early stage, professional bodies emerged like the Committee on Psychology of War and Peace, and Peace Research Movement [between the First and Second World Wars], (Kelman, 1981). This is followed by many theories ranging from conflict resolution, non-violence and protests, civil disobedience, conflict transformation and the realist approach, mostly from the West (Barash & Webel, 2009; Barsky, 2014; Galtung, 2000, 2007; Sriram et al., 2010). More works are still ongoing to bring a lasting peace to human society. As peace research continues to advance, it keeps seeking innovative approaches for in-depth studies to ameliorate any identified deficiencies. While Harris et al. (1998) and Montiel (2006) argue for a multidisciplinary approach to research peace, Galtung suggests a trans-disciplinary approach for the study (2010). The contributions from different fields further enhanced the relevance of peace studies, both locally and internationally and have expanded to peace works to oil and gas industry, mining, arms struggle, and peacemaking to mention but a few.

To this end, lately, Mulimbi and Dryden-Peterson suggest a need for a multi-culturalist approach across about 20 ethnic groups in Botswana (southern part of Africa), where an assimilation approach (around the dominant ethnic group, culture, and language) has been used in the education policies and curriculum to foster unity and avoid armed conflicts. While assimilation approach helped somewhat, the minority ethnic groups experienced low education benefits, (a type of 'negative peace', to secure unity with dreadful structural problems in their minority group. A multi-culturalist approach could help better sustain the 'condition of positive peace' in the region, both scholars argued, (2018, pp. 142, 146). Groves and others write on the United Nations peacekeepers' failure to address the gender violence prevalent in the Timor-Leste new state (2009). Marriage (2006) discusses the contributions of multinational aid providers and the Non-Governmental

Organisations (NGOs) to the economic hardship of the deprived people they were meant to help. Marriage further opposes the lukewarm attitude to investigating the agencies' failures to reach out to the Sierra Leone interior, and poor support to Congo and South Sudan. Providing solutions to conflicts and transforming societies for peacefulness is still an unfinished task.

According to Rodríguez-Martínez and Calvo, 'All types of violence have their origins in inequalities that have become embedded in the customs and traditions of our culture and society [...]' (2014, p. 108). Thus, what must be considered as an acceptable peace culture should promote opportunity for the wholeness of being; that is: 'development which ensures the maximum well-being of societies and which are fully consistent with the proposals of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Human Rights' (*ibid*, p. 108). The idea of a peace culture in relation to sustainable peace, not necessarily as an aftermath of a war should be considered to further peace initiatives and education.

Religions are being made part of the debate. Peace studies in association with religion have become inevitable and a religious approach to peace research has begun to expand. Scholars in religion have made contributions with the rise in terrorism, violent propaganda, and heavy losses to human life and property, (Abu-Nimer, 2001, 2008; Paden, 2006). Abu-Nimer focuses on peace in Islam and interreligious conflict resolution, dialogue and peacebuilding. Azumah (2012) and Huff (2004) write on Christian-Muslim relations and dialogue while Griggs (2013) writes on Christian-Muslim relations with a focus on religious polemics and dialogue. Montiel and Macapagal (2006) researched Christian-Muslim relations in Marawi in the Philippines. Research on religions such as these has the potential to serve a purpose in peace and conflict studies. These are part of the areas of multidisciplinary study the earlier researchers have suggested.

A. The Problematic of the paper/Focus!

The goal of the peace and conflict research pioneers, according to Galtung was 'to draft a research program[me] in the field of peace studies' (1985, p. 141), suggesting a need to achieve peace, which involves the wholeness of life otherwise called positive peace. The peace must ensure a violence free life, be it physical, psychological, economical, and structural. **Many communities have been identified as peaceful societies (PS) across the globe but with no examples from West Africa.** However, the Yorùbá of southwest Nigeria have been identified by a group of scholars (Akinade, 1996; Akinjogbin, 1966; Lateju, 2012) as being peaceful, although not included among the PS in the wider peace and conflict studies. Another study also mentions the Senegalese, (Wisconsin, 2009; UguccioniI, 2018).

This study wants to find out or at least open a discussion on: to what extent the Yorùbá's peacefulness could be generalized, over-simplified or be recognized by scholars in peace and anthropological studies as an example of PS? In this paper, the author examines the Yorùbá of two different religions (Islam and Christianity) rooted in the ethnic host culture, and how they manage their religious related crises and retain their peace. What contributions could the Yorùbá studies bring to the idea of peacefulness in human societies?

B. Relevant Studies among the Yorùbá

The author is aware of a recent study among the Yorùbá called, 'Knowing Each Other' (KEO) with several surveys in Lagos, Ogun, Ekiti and Ondo States (Nolte et al., 2016). KEO discovered the slow growth of Christianity in southwest Nigeria Yorùbáland (*ibid*, p. 542), yet there is much work to be done in this region to examine how the Yorùbá manage conflicts and retain their peace.

KEO had surveyed Osun, yo (Ibadan North) and the Kwara States (Offa), while the author used different locations within y, Osun and Kwara States, namely Ògbómoso, Ibadan (a radio station); Sptri in yo; Ilorin in Kwara; and Ejigbo, Iwo and Ila-Orangun in Osun (states). While the author recognizes KEO's landmark and extensive survey, this study dwells on the qualitative method and use of thick description to obtain its findings with a focus on peacefulness.

C. Method

This study involves 27 participants in electronic qualitative surveys, 72 in three FG discussions sites and 27 interviews. The inquiry was conducted among the Yorùbá people of southwest Nigeria. It focuses peacefulness among the people; how the Yorùbá manage their disputes and conflicts whilst sustaining the peace. The following section contains a brief history of conflicts in Nigeria to situate the Yorùbá in peace discourse.

II. Conflicts in Nigeria

There have been repeated occurrences of violent conflicts in Nigeria since its independence in 1960, from etho-economic and ethno-political to ethnoreligious, and presently to terrorism and banditry, (Adamolekun, 2013; Adele & Oloruntele, 2001; Alabi, 2002; Alemika & Chukwuma, 2000; Lyons & Reinermann, 2003; Osaghae and Suberu 2005; Adegoke 2012, Ibrahim 1991, Mu'azzam and Ibrahim 2000; Sodipo 2013; Nbeta, 2012; Osaghae, 1995; Sklar, 2004). On religious grounds, Islamic *Shari'ah* is another point of dispute, while Adegoke (2012), Oba (2002), and Ibrahim (1991) argue for its implementation, Akinade (2002, 2012) and Lateju (2012) oppose it as having potential to infringe on non-Muslims Nigerians. A lot has been written on conflict and violence with some outlawed gruesome activities like ritual killings of people, (Agency-Report, 2020; BBC-News, 2014). Ritual killing is unacceptable by the larger Yorùbá community but considered a deviant from the acceptable *mluabí* societal norm.

A. A case for southwest Nigeria Yorùbá peacefulness

The author's focus is to seek how a peaceful community works to retain its serenity. How the Yorùbá community interact across religions to maintain harmony could, therefore, be explored here. Fabbro lists some criteria for assessing a community for its peacefulness like:

‘(1) The society has no wars fought on its territory; (2) The society is not involved in any external wars; (3) There are no civil wars or internal collective violence; (4) There is no standing military-police organization; (5) There is little or no inter-personal physical violence; (6) There is little or no structural violence; (7) The society has the capacity to undergo change peacefully; and, 8) There is opportunity for idiosyncratic development.’ (1978, p. 67).

The Peaceful Societies – PS (Peaceful-Societies, 2019) do not necessarily meet all the criteria but must have displayed many on the list. While Fabbro critiqued Melko for using only the first criteria for his study of the Semai, Fabbro used only the first five in his work. This implies the study of PS is in progress and scholars are forward looking in their research. So, which of these criterial do the Yorùbá meet?

The author suggests the Yorùbá met the criterial 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 to be considered as a peaceful society when placed by the PS criteria. For instance, the Yorùbá have not fought a collective war since the end of their civil war by mid 1800s, signing their treaty in 1886 (Balogun, 1985; Law, 1991). A hundred years after a major war is recommended before a community is reconsidered to be peaceful if they retained their harmony (Melko et al., 1983). The Nigeria federal government control both the police and army, whist, recently, the Yorùbá southwest governors constituted a local *Àmtekùn* security unit to complement the efforts of the police in protecting their people (Agboluaje, 2020). In response to criterion 3, although the Yorùbá have not had internal collective wars on its territory since the 1800s; two towns, however, Ile-Ife and Modákke fought for some years in the 1990s which was resolved without the involvement of the national or international military as mentioned earlier. Some communities sometimes have disputes over land and the leadership tussles but often settled their grievances locally.

There are reports of armed men identified as non-settled Fulani herders feeding their cows with Yorùbá farmer's crops, kidnapping, rapping, and killing residents in some parts of the Yorùbáland like Oyo, Ekiti, Ondo and Ogun states while some Ogun State Yorùbá villagers have escaped the violence to reside in the Benin Republic as refugees (Oludare, 2021a, Olatunji, 2021). The Yorùbá's century long 'peacefulness' has possibly hampered them from the self-defense they were known for, being warriors with their own Empire.

However, they are becoming more vigilant because of the violence meted on their region and some rising to self-defense wherever possible as seen in some form of activism demonstrated recently by Chief Sunday Adeyemo Igboho [Sunday *Igboho*] and the Oodua People's Congress [OPC] (Badru 2021, Omofoye 2019, Agboluaje 2021, Oludare 2021b).

Criteria 5 and 6 disturb the Yorùbá most. There are cases of physical conflicts like occasional fighting within homes, quarrel between spouses, violence of occultic practices outlawed in the society and sometimes reported to the police. Also, by late 2020, a protest about the police brutality tagged ENDSARS movement came to limelight in the region, (Ramon, 2020). The speed of the protest and maturity with which the protesters delivered their messages was praised by many including the president of Nigeria, General Muhammadu Buhari (rtd), before some thugs, the State along with the military became involved to turn it violent (Afejuku, 2020; Editor, 2020). Another kind of physical violence observed among the Yorùbá is associated with the national politics during elections. These occur periodically during the political campaigns and at election time. Similarly, structural violence is common but when its cause is beyond the control of an individual, the community meet to socialize and help one another to ameliorate the negative effects of such violence. Examples are the use of co-operative societies to cater for one another's needs like giving loans for part payment of their children's education cost, trading support and provision of social amenities in their communities.

Positive peace is difficult to attain in any human society globally, including Nigeria where political actors contribute to the structural violence among their people through corruption. However, where do we place a community like the Yorùbá that met some of the PS's criteria, a people within West Africa without a representation among the PS but seem to cope under structural violence and retain some level of harmony despite all odds?

Looking at the complex nature of Nigeria, it is not free of conflicts, however, religious-related conflicts with fully blown violence are less common among the Yorùbá as some scholars have testified, (Goddard, 2001; Ibrahim, 1991; Laitin, 1986). This is not to exaggerate the Yorùbá's peacefulness but to identify a reasonably harmonious sample to explore how they manage their concerns and often able to retain their peace. In the following section, I want to provide a survey of Yorùbá history covering from the last half of the 1800s onwards before peace studies emerged in the West, and prior to the Nigeria independence.

B. A Yorùbá History in Context

The Yorùbá are a large ethnic group with a distinctive language and culture that are found in southwest Nigeria, some other parts of West Africa, Cuba, and South America. Many scholars have written about this (Falola & Heaton, 2008; Falola, 2006; Eltis, 2004; Roberts, 2004; Law, 1991; Olupna, 1993; Atanda, 1996; Parrinder, 1947; Parrinder, 1959; Abiodun, 2001; Ogen, 2007). The idea of peacefulness in connection with southwest Nigeria where the Yorùbá are densely populated began to come to limelight by late 19th and early 20th century. The British abolished the slave trade and established other forms of trade around 1861 and noticeable at their base in Lagos in Yorùbáland, (Sklar, 2004). This perhaps began to raise human dignity.

Peace studies began to take root in America as well as Europe during the twentieth century (Boulding, 1978; Kelman, 1981), and some states in West Africa began to struggle for self-determination and independence from colonialism. Around the same time in the 1900s, Nigeria was born as a nation (Coleman, 1958, 1960), described as the amalgamation of the northern and southern areas of the Niger in 1914, headed by Lord Lugard (Adamolekun, 2013; Sklar, 2004). By the mid-1900s, some eminent Nigerians began to form nationalist movements, calling for the independence of Nigeria and forming political parties. Sklar suggests that this started in 1946 (2004), Coleman claims it began in 1952 (1960), while Peel puts the events between 1945 and 1951 (2000). The identity of Nigeria as a nation, could have evolved over a period and was defined by ethnicity, culture, and language before independence (Oтите 1991; Falola, 1998; Falola & Heaton, 2008). On the struggle for national identity, Coleman further suggests a call for independence from colonialism around 1920s in Asia as well as the Arab world, (1960).

In as much as works on PS have focused mostly agrarian societies, the author wants more variant commu-

nities examined for peacefulness and the Yorùbá fall into this category. According to Falola, the Yorùbá are among the best-educated Africans and include those whom Falola described as ‘prominent Yorùbá intelligentsia outside of the academy’ (1991, p. i). Olupna (1993) and Abiodun, (2001) describe the Yorùbá as the most studied ethnic group in Africa as Olupna reiterates the Yorùbá’s developed ‘arts, music, religion and oral literature’, (1993, p. 241). The Yorùbá were enthusiastic about literacy, translation, mathematics, and publications in their language, even in resistance to the British colonial authority by winning the support of the Christian Missionary Society (CMS) for their publications (Adetunji, 1999; Akinjogbin, 1996; Atanda, 1996). Ajiboye suggests that, although many languages including the Yorùbá have the additive and multiplicative methods, Yorùbá’s subtractive mechanism is a unique contribution to the numeral system (2016). What Abioye means is this: while eleven is called *mkànlá*, it literally means (10 add 1), *méjilá* means (10 add 2). However, sixteen is called *mrìndínlógún* meaning 20 minus 4, and seventeen is *mtàdínlógún* (20 minus 3). This counting goes on to multiple of tens and hundreds. With their wealth of history, enthusiasm, and exposure to the outside world, how have the Yorùbá kept their harmony or handled disputes over the years? The claim of good interpersonal relationships and tolerance mentioned by some scholars is taken further in this paper as it sounds distinct from the religious violence often reported in other parts of Nigeria and globally. A study about the Yorùbá could offer a viewpoint about conflict management strategies among non-offensive value cherished communities.

III. Yorùbáland compared with other Regions of Nigeria.

There are published data on the global peace index, Nigerian mineral resources, population, and Nigerian policing that the author wants to engage with in this discourse. The sources speak on the Nigerian situation regarding peacefulness, violence, and their natural resources.

A. Nigerian Peace Index and Violence Levels

The Global Peace Index (GPI) ‘measures peacefulness across the domains of safety and security, ongoing conflict, and militarisation’ (Editorial, 2019). Nigeria ranks 148th out of the 163 countries in the GPI indicators in 2019. In the GPI where 5 is the worst score, Nigeria is rated worst – 5 in the perception of criminality, 5 in political terror, 4.4 in terrorism impact, 4.5 in death from internal conflict, 5 in internal conflicts fought, 4.6 in United Nations peacekeeping funding, 3.1 in external conflicts fought, 2 in militarization, 3.3 in Safety & Security, and 3.1 in domestic and international conflict, (Global-Peace-Index, n.d.). At least two points came up clearly here:

1. The militarization that has a score of two can rise higher in the coming years if the security situation continues as it is, and the citizens are presented with no options other than to defend themselves.
2. Nigeria is not a peaceful nation when compared with many other countries globally. From the same source above (GPI), by comparison with another West African country, Senegal, although smaller in size and population was 58th while Nigeria ranks 148th out of the 163 countries on the list. Iceland in another continent has been the most peaceful country in the entire universe since 2008 followed by New Zealand, Austria, Portugal, and Denmark.

It has been observed, ‘[o]ver the last ten years, the average level of global peacefulness has deteriorated by 3.78%.’ (Statistic-Times). A Newspaper editorial argues that many farmers stopped farming due to the fear of armed bandit attackers, (Editorial, 2019). The general situation of Nigeria security is alarming as it has begun to affect the local agricultural productivity when people fear going to farm in southwest and the north due to insecurity and terrorism. Of recent, over forty fishermen were literally slaughtered in Borno State by Boko Haram terrorist group (Marama, 2020). The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reports, ‘7.1 million people in Nigeria need urgent, life-saving humanitarian assistance in 2019 and 6.2 million are targeted to receive aid [...]’ (OCHA). Going by the intensity of the violence and instability in Nigeria, the situation does not seem to be abating as 1.8 million are internally displaced,

(OCHA). The three Nigeria regions are subjected to kidnappers, while the south in addition has armed agitators for resources control.

The peace associated with the Yorùbá by some academics is not absolute. The region also has experienced harrowing situations as kidnapping has been on the increase while some parts of the Ìbàdàn, If, Ondo, and Èkìtì roads have become abductors' hideout. The editorial suggests that Nigeria is being ranked amongst the failed states, (2019). Nigeria as a country, therefore, is far from being grouped among the global PS. However, can a local community that is working to keep the peace be enlisted as a PS? The author further examines the claim of a lack of resources the Yorùbá could fight to protect as a cause of their relative peace.

B. Southwest Nigeria Mineral Resources

The scholarly debate on violence and insecurity in Nigeria has a soft spot for the Yorùbá. They found some level of peacefulness and implying a lack of mineral resources that the Nigeria Federal government can exploit as a reason for the absence of serious agitation and community generated violence among the Yorùbá. Such arguments do not go far as Yorùbáland has many natural resources. Going by the major mineral resources in Nigeria southwest, yo State is listed as having 'Aquamarine, cassiterite, clay, dolomite, gemstone, gold, kaolin, marble, silimonite, talc and tantalite' (Government-Agency). The state also has tantalum, quartz, iron ore and laterite, (Oyo-State). Some States including Èkìtì has extra in addition to the above list. Ogun has Bitumen, Ondo – [bitumen, limestone & oil/gas etc.], and sun [Columbite, Gold, and etc] (Government-Agency). All the southwestern states have families raising livestock and growing both food and cash crops like yam, beans, soya-bean, kolanut, cocoa etc., (Osun-State), although sometimes under the attack of non-settle Fulani herdsmen. Arguments for a lack of mineral resources to agitate to protect cannot be sustained.

C. Structural Infrastructure and Related Violence

The infrastructural development that has slowed down for many decades in Nigeria is attributed to uncoordinated military and political leadership of the country, which has led to serious structural violence on its citizens. The world population review puts the percentage of people having access to clean water at 68.5% (Nigeria-Population, 2019) while the Federal Ministry of Water Resource put access to basic water at 67.9% in 2018 (Federal-Ministry, 2018). The first put the figure of those struggling to get clean drinking water at 31.5%, while the latter put it at 26.7% (which I think is more than that). However, the author agrees with the data that as much as 71% are struggling to have 'improved sanitation' (Nigeria-Population, 2019). Only about 42% have personal household sanitation not shared with non-residents or outsiders, 19.2% used safely managed sanitation services and 24.4% do not have toilet facilities but practise open defecation, and it is estimated that half of the Northern Central Nigeria zone practice open defecation, (Federal-Ministry, 2018, 2019; Obiezu, 2019).

There have been continuous agitations in the country on the need to increase the minimum wage from 18,000 naira (about £36) to 30,000 naira (about £60) a month (if the exchange rate is 500 naira per British pound). One can imagine the level of structural violence as citizens struggle for basic life necessities like food, social amenities and good health for themselves and their families in such conditions. Thus, structural violence in Nigeria does not exclude the Yorùbá, but they often manage the situation to reduce its effects on their lives through social interaction, family connections and cooperative ventures.

D. Policing

Police records obtained from the Nigeria Crime Statistics on reported offences in 2017 shows a little lower level of crimes among the Yorùbá when compared with those in the north, but significantly lower when compared with the south/east. The author examines here, the level of violence recoded by the police in six states from southwest Nigeria [excluding Lagos][1] and six states from each of the other two regions, north and south/east Nigeria. The crime in Lagos state alone amounts to 37.85% of the national record, so, for a better examination of the crime distribution as reported within the regions, he dwells on the selected eighteen (6 x 3) states below, with reference to the National-Bureau-of-Statistics (2018):

* Yoruba southwestern Nigeria: Ondo 2.76%, Oyo 2.2%, Ogun 1.19%, Ekiti 1.02%, Osun 0.66%, and Kwara 0.62% (Total = 8.45%).

* Northern region of Nigeria: Kano 4.24%, Niger 1.98%, Plateau 1.94%, Borno 1.18%, Kaduna 0.8% and Zamfara 0.39% (Total = 10.53%).

* South/eastern Nigeria: Abia 9.21% Cross Rivers 9.17%, Delta 5.31%, Ebonyi 3.13%, Anambra 1.4% and Rivers 1.17% (Total = 29.39%).

Some states which are projected by the media as experiencing violence, arson, murder, retaliatory attacks, and displacement of people in the north such as Kaduna, Borno and Zamfara invariably have lower police crime reports documented for that year, which poses the question of what reportable conflicts to the police are in Nigeria.

Regardless, the cumulative records for each six selected states among the Yorùbá (8.45%) show a lower crime rate than the Hausa/Fulani north (10.53%), while the south/east has the highest reported crimes (29.39%) in the nation. The weaknesses of this figure, however, are based on the States not the population of the residents, and the Federal government's stance against some Southeast region' militant groups, which might increase both the violence rate and the reportable offences in the region. Those weaknesses notwithstanding, the crime record in each state provide material to make a representation for an informed discussion on the spread of violence within the selected states and Nigeria as a whole.

Going by serious violence leading to death, Campbell, through the Nigeria Security Tracker (NST), presents research suggesting a higher death record in the northeast, while the least occurrences are in southwestern Nigeria:

The Nigeria Security Tracker (NST) tracks violence that is both causal and symptomatic of Nigeria's political instability and citizen alienation. The data are based on weekly surveys of Nigerian and international media. (Campbell, 2020).

The cumulative death records from 2011 to 2020 are classified as originating from Boko Haram (17,115), Boko Haram and the State Actor (19, 096), Sectarian Actor (10, 591), State Actor (9,173) and other Armed Actor (5,489) (Campbell, 2020). The author decided to add up the number of recorded deaths in Campbell's research from the six states per region already used listed above. The cumulative number of deaths in the north (while excluding Borno known for terrorists' violence, which is exceptionally high 30, 269) is 10, 410. The number of recorded deaths in the southeast within the same period is 2, 849, while the death record in the southwest is 1,152. If Lagos that has the highest police recorded of violence is added to the death record in the southwest, the total will be 1,816 that is still the lowest of all the three regions mapped out here. The southwest Yorùbá still appear more peaceful than the rest of the country. However, could evidence from the published literature on disputes and conflicts provide further clues for this investigation?

VI. Some Local Religious Disputes

There are reports of occasional religious conflicts among the Yorùbá that have been resolved amicably. Mu'azzam and Ibrahim (2000) noted a conflict among Yorùbá Christians and Muslims in yo State when the Christians held a religious event/worship on government-funded school property and objections were raised by some Yorùbá Muslims. A Muslim organization, the National Council of Muslim Youths Organization, disrupted the event and the Muslim leader, Sanni was arrested by the police. Another Muslim group intervened to stop the conflict from escalating by pleading with the Christians for Sanni's release from police custody (Mu'azzam & Ibrahim, 2000). The crisis did not escalate further while the Christians and Muslims in the town are still able to manage their concerns to keep the existing harmony. This is an evidence of dispute resolution on display among the Yorùbá (alternative dispute resolution ADR).

In 2013, the sun State Government mandated the use of the *hijab* by Muslim female students in the State, which some schools pioneered by Christians raised an objection to. In 2014, both Makinde and Olarinoye

reported how this led to some Muslims protesting at the Baptist High School in Èjìgbò for banning Muslim girls from wearing the *hijab* to the Christian led school. They said this resulted in attacks on some of the teachers and the school principal in November 2013. During that same period, a similar conflict occurred among sun State students in Ìwó and the Christian students protested by putting on their church choir robes, while some indigenous worshipers put on their masquerades to their schools (Makinde, 2014; Olarinoye, 2014). The community leaders had to come in to manage the situation (Niyi, 2014) and the former Lagos State governor, a Muslims, Asiwaju Ahmed Tinumbu visited the sun State Government House to meet Christian leaders to mediate in the crisis, (Makinde, 2014; Olarinoye, 2014).

The Osun State government's meddling in the religious matter led to the crises in the state while religious leaders and the party leadership managed the crises. The Yorùbá intra-ethnic religious conflicts and the way they are handled, provide a contribution to conflict management and the conflict de-escalation process within their community. In that light, how peace is sustained in the Yorùbá community is worth studying further as well as any other seemingly peaceful communities as a contribution to peace and conflict studies. In this kind of interaction, [outside of politics] the Yorùbá often manage their crises from escalation especially in the religious sphere, which provides a guide for peace sustenance among a religious or cultural community.

V. Amiable Peacefulness.

There is an amiable commitment among many Yorùbá Christians and Muslims who display theological similarities for peacefulness. A continuous appraisal of this strength is a probable contribution to their peacefulness. I refer to Wiberg's concepts of detribalization and retribalization (1981), and whether they offer clues to the question on how the Yorùbá Christians and Muslims sustain the peace in their communities. Some values within the Yorùbá culture enhance the peacefulness between Christians and Muslims. While Christians seek to be tolerant and kind, the Muslims often respond with same gesture in most cases. There are situations in which Christian families care for their Muslim cousins through the idea of *fúnmi lmo wo* (children looked after by an extended family member). There are examples of Yorùbá Muslims showing kindness to their Yorùbá Christian cousins and neighbours. Significant to note is that while the source of peacefulness in Christianity is traced to their approach to the Bible with a focus on love, the Muslims reciprocate this with *Kidà-Doruuri* a local transliteration for *al-qai'dah-muamalat-darar* (Q-M-D), the act of practising Islamic rights in a sociable way without making life difficult for neighbours, the qualities not strange to the Yorùbá culture. The Yorùbá are known for being accommodating on religious and cultural grounds, as their kings generously offered land to the new religions to build places of worship, schools, and hospitals since the 1800.

Some non-Yorùbá cultures like foreign languages and dressing, have influenced the Yorùbá over the years and still remain in competition with other Nigerian cultures. While English is used as the official language, it has not been seen to threaten the peace enjoyed by the people. The use of Yorùbá is strong in markets, social functions, music, on the radio and television, and this is known to promote the Yorùbá virtues as a medium of dissemination of information. As a result, the Yorùbá have not been 'detribalised' in the sense of completely losing the values of their language, sayings, drumming and music, as they are still supported and promoted by the local media, albeit in competition with other languages and cultures from their neighbourhood and the social medial. The virtues expressed in the Yorùbá language translate into harmonizing the Yorùbá's interpretation of their religions by stressing the contexts of love, harmony, and care for one another. This supports Laitin's description of the Yorùbá's 'unnatural toleration' (1986, p. 9), which is ideally known to many Yorùbá Christians and Muslims as 'natural', although currently under the threat of the hijab discourse and structural violence experienced across the country. Wiberg, considering 'peaceful cultures', asks:

What characteristics do they have in common that seem to make for their peaceful qualities? On what dimensions do they differ, hence demonstrating that a given variable value is not a necessary condition for peace? To what extent do they contain what forms of structural violence? (1981, p. 113).

As the author considers a religiously tolerant community like the Yorùbá, Wiberg (1981, p. 113) comes to

mind calling for a multi-layered inquiry on peaceful cultures.

This study provides an answer to Wiberg's questions. One, the Yorùbá culture, as expressed in their tolerance and use of language, the way the culture is communicated through music, sayings and interpersonal relationships and their understanding and respect, all work together to harmonize the Yorùbá. Regarding Wiberg's second question, the Yorùbá are a mono-ethnic language group considered to live in harmony. Even though the common language has made contributions to community harmony, the way the Yorùbá use their language, sayings, stories, and music have all been found helpful in educating and promoting harmony and virtues among the people, irrespective of religion. It is the richness of the language that is profound – that is, its dynamics, usage, and structure – rather than just being unique. The Senegalese in a separate study (Senegal-n.a., 2009; UguccioniI, 2018), have many languages and found to live harmoniously. The harmony is produced by the way the Senegalese languages utilize the common values of hospitality (*teranga*) prevalent in the Senegalese communities. It is the use of the language(s) and contents that matter to peacefulness.

On Wiberg's question of structural violence, this study reveals both physical and structural violence among the Yorùbá. This is not strange as one form of violence or the other are found among the acclaimed PS (Kemp, 2004), although often being able to manage it. This, study, as well dwells more on the Yorùbá's coping strategies and maintenance of peace, especially between Christians and Muslims within the Yorùbá host culture. The way the Yorùbá manage their occasional religious conflicts is seen in their consciousness and references to eternal judgment and other aspects of their valued culture. This study, therefore, like PS, presents the need for appraisals of the positive values in relatively peaceful communities to enhance positive peace and de-escalate conflicts. Empirical inquiries among peaceful communities have the potential to provide further findings that can move conflict transformation and peace studies forward into the ideals of positive peace.

A. Togetherness

Features like social interactions found among the PS are prominent among the Yorùbá. [2] The PS maintain their peacefulness through a closed community interaction and returning to their local areas to maintain their harmony whenever they had reasons to contact the outside world. Conversely, the Yorùbá have travelled far and wide, and often interact with people of other religions and cultures. Many Yorùbá communities have been identified making efforts to retain their cherished peaceful values despite their exposure to modern civilization while the PS often retain a closed community. While the currently recognised PS comprise mainly of the agrarian communities that socialize through their culture, utilizing a controlled access to the modern world, the Yorùbá mingle with other cultures and civilizations, even in their homeland. So, by comparison, the Yorùbá are more educated and more exposed to modern civilization with their first university established in Ibadan about 72 years old (1948) and television 60 years (1959). The Yorùbá's example of peaceful features is an indication that the idea of peacefulness in human community should not be restricted to the agrarian community (as in the case of most of the identified PS) but can be further explored among modern societies like the Yorùbá.

With the similar peaceful features identified among the PS and the Yorùbá like social interactions and leadership roles in sustaining peace at the community level, the idea of humans, being helplessly violent, as often presented in the West requires a reassessment. In support of human potential for peacefulness, Sponsel's extensive reviews became useful, probing the works on conflict and war with little attention to peace or nonviolence, which Sponsel describes as reducing peace to the avoidance of war or violence (1996). From the study, Sponsel suggests humans are not just historically predisposed to violence contrary to ideas often projected by the West. This provides a clue to the query of the sustainability of peace in human community. Peace is sustainable in human society, although requires a hard work.

The harmony in human society has to do with many features promoted by the community, mostly supported by their local leadership (cultural and religious). Education, both formal and informal as promoted in the community thus play a major role in the societal peacefulness. Continuity in the form of education plays a significant role in the sustainability of any cherished value.

B. Informal Peace Education informing the Peaceful Society.

A long-term peace advocacy or education, not necessarily as an aftermath of war or conflict, but embedded within the social, religious, and cultural milieu, often delivered informally via a daily engagement using music, idioms, stories, literature, and legends have helped to sustain the peace among the Yorùbá. The make-up of the culture, leadership, social interaction, religious understanding, family unity, and the media, all communicate values and comprise features that support the Yorùbá to sustain their peace. A person who displays the expected virtues in the community is referred to as *mluabí*. The virtues are mostly unwritten but cherished expectations of the family and community, which are passed on informally, embedded in the Yorùbá practices, focusing harmony or peacefulness. This does not necessarily have to be an aftermath of a war, often no war ever envisaged in this context.

On peace education, Harris and Morrison suggest: '[E]ducators [...] influence the important values and beliefs of their students [who are] taught about peaceful responses to complex conflicts in the post-modern world' (2013, p. 3). The important words in that definition are 'influence', 'values', 'beliefs' and 'taught'. Other ideas of peace education both authors mention include the goal that future conflicts 'are resolved non-violently and build a sustainable environment', followed by attributes of 'love, compassion and reverence for all life' (2013, p. 11). In this study, values and beliefs are found in various contexts, seeking to resolve disputes before it escalates through communal efforts with the goal of sustaining the existing harmony. This type of intervention is informal but enhances peacefulness as also found among the PS like the Paliyans, Semai, Ifaluk, Chewong, (Gardner, 2000; Dentan, 2001; Howell, 1989). This idea of maintenance of harmony re-affirms Bond's suggestion describing peace, not as an end, but rather as a continuing process, (2014). Similarly, the PS are described, not as utopian in themselves but displaying abilities to defuse tension. The Yorùbá practise an informal peace education in an informal setting, with known but often unwritten curricula embedded in their daily activities. This education does not have to be in the aftermath of a serious conflict but a continuous learning process to sustain harmony in their community.

This study provides the Yorùbá's proactive support for peace through features within their culture, social setting, and religious milieu. Even though both formal and informal peace education can have written curricula, the method of delivery could differ: the formal in a structured setting following a war or conflict situation, whilst the informal is provided within the structures of the society such as homes, communities and through the media to maintain peace not necessarily as an aftermath of a conflict.

Harris and Morrison have suggested the benefit of peace education as its 'potential for inner transformation' and 'social change', which is taught in different settings (2013, p. 11). They add a pertinent feature, '[its ...] commitment to the way of peace' (ibid, p. 12). The maintenance of peace among the Yorùbá involves constant learning in different settings: homes, areas, and townships through the radio, immediate family, friends, in-laws, elders, and responsible older people in the vicinity. This takes place informally but potent for educating their community. This is a venture in which everyone learns, and all learners subsequently train others. This provides an insight into a harmonious society to sustain its peace through features they know to have the credibility to resolve disputes, de-escalate conflicts and retain their harmony towards positive peacefulness. This resembles the communal life among the PS (Peaceful-Societies, 2019). The author suggests a proactive support for this venture as informal peace education, a lifestyle of learning during peacetime. So, some Yorùbá communities are found to manage their conflicts and retain their peace through a lifelong informal education utilizing various features of their culture, religions, and social values as they reject aberrant intrusions.

VI. Conclusion

This review on peacefulness and the correlation with the Yorùbá community focus the dissemination of values to the society. The Yorùbá in this study emphasize certain aspects of their values and religions to strengthen their harmony. Just as scholars have identified the essence of peacefulness among the Senegalese as *teranga* [meaning hospitality], so, complimentary values are found to harmonise the Yorùbá communities.

Most peaceful societies (PS) are not exposed to modern education and civilization and where they do, often

seek to return to their communities to keep their culture. However, the author presents the southwest Nigerian Yorùbá that are more exposed to modern education and civilization along with their peace conservation features. He also presents the Yorùbá for further studies to unravel their journey towards becoming a peaceful society. Yet, in the wake of the violent bandits and/or terrorists' activities against a Yorùbá defenseless community and their existence threatened, could self-defence be considered as nonviolence; also, could modern or Western societies be studied for elements of peacefulness to contribute to peaceful societies?

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[1] Lagos has mixed cultural influence of other Nigerians and non-nationals and may not truly represent the pristine Yorùbá culture just as Abuja capital city cannot truly represent the Gbagyi (Gwari), Hausa, and Fulani culture.

[2] The author discusses more on his findings about the bí theory in a preprint article titled: Culture (Yorùbá) as a Means of De-Escalating Conflict and Maintaining Peace.