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Abstract

Many African states have been tagged “insecure” or “states in conflicts” globally. These African states such as, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan are notable countries where there are armed conflicts which involve citizens fighting against the government or each other. Armed conflicts against the government in some African countries are as a result of a lack of respect for fundamental human rights and/or inadequate access to fundamental rights and basic needs such as food, water and education. Considering that the youths are the largest populace in many states, it is argued that quality accessible education, where available, may help foster peace and understanding such a society. This arguably may also bring about a more civilized way of addressing issues for growth and development in Africa. The internationalization of African universities through collaborations, linkages and mobility are proposed ways of addressing insecurity in African states. Exchange of students and faculty from one African state to another would help foster understanding of culture and religion which may help address the challenges of conflicts. This research adopts a multidisciplinary comparative approach and proffers recommendations to the challenges of insecurity in Africa.

Keywords: Africa, human rights, peace and security, internationalization

INTRODUCTION

The intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society’ is what is referred to as internationalization.¹ University education no doubt helps in the development of individuals in terms of cognitive, emotional and psychomotor areas with the aim of inculcating virtues of integrity, honesty, hard work, and brotherhood of mankind.² Internationalization in African universities creates opportunities for interaction amongst people of different culture, race, language and social interaction that will lead to peaceful and united African

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¹ De Wit, H., & Hunter, F. Howard. L. and Egron-Polak. E.(2015) *Internationalization of higher education*.

² Maiwada D.A. issues on peace and environmental education. Being a paper presented at the 2001 national conference of school of education FCE Kano



continent.³ While it is believed that the world is a global village because of the interconnectedness and relationship of people, it is more factual with Africa as the way of life of the people are quite similar, particularly in culture and traditions. Communal living for example is more common in traditional Africa and South Africans propounded the ideology of “Ubuntu” (“I am because you are”- signifying oneness amongst the people). Unity as it is often said is the central governing law of life and once unity is established conflicts are often prevented or easily resolved since the animating force of unity is love which is expressed variably in different conditions of coexistence.⁴ Again, peaceful coexistence between people brings about unity and development. It is for this reason that Abdullahi maintains that peaceful coexistence is necessary for the preservation of the centrality and integrity of the society’s common interests.⁵ He further postulated that peace is not just a state of the human mind which is personal, but also that which could be interpersonal, inter communal, inter regional, international and therefore global. By this assertion, it is obvious that the state of peace and security in African continent will greatly enhance development, which arguably may be achieved through internationalization in African Universities. Internationalization encourages the exchange of students and faculty from one African state to another this in the long run would not only help in fostering the appreciation of various African cultures and religious practices but will aid in addressing the challenges of conflicts in African states. This work therefore attempts to showcase internationalization in African universities as a means to reducing insecurity and promoting peace and unity in African states.

INTERNATIONALIZATION AND THE CONCEPT OF PEACE AND SECURITY

While the term internationalization varies in its use, it refers to the action or process of bringing a place under the protection or control of two or more nations. Under the educational sector it is a process of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institutions in order to improve the quality of education and research for students, faculty and the society in its whole. In this instance, internationalization can be viewed as the process of bringing foreign students into another country and particularly tertiary institutions (specifically in Africa) for the purpose of expanding knowledge in culture, religion, language and growing a larger communal village, through integration, collaboration, exchange of students and

³ Abdullahi M. Education as an instrument of peaceful coexistence, unity and stability in Nigeria (2006) Vol. 4 No.4 *the Nigerian Journal of education review* pg 1-8

⁴ Ibid

⁵ ibid



faculties. This type of collaboration will not only expand our knowledge but it will form a bond that transcend borders.

b. The concept of peace and security

Numerous studies have been undertaken in order to explore and understand the meaning of Internationalization of Universities or Higher Education by different authors and scholars which many writers agree is that Internationalization in education sector is a process of integrating an International and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institutions in order to improve the quality of education and research for students, faculty and the society in its whole.⁶ In other words, internationalization of Universities is a process of integrating institutions and its key stakeholders such as students and staff into rapidly changing and globalizing world.⁷

The concept of internationalization is not a new one for African Universities. One of the main events following the establishment of universities in sub-Saharan Africa as independent countries in the 1950s and the 1960s was the UNESCO Conference on the Development of Higher Education, held in September 1962 in Antananarivo. One of the key topics discussed at that conference was “the national and international mission of an African university.” Back then, the conference recognized the benefits of internationalization for African universities as “increasing their chances of collaborating with other universities in Europe and in Africa as well as helping their students to have a world-class training which would enhance their ability to compete with graduates from across the world.”

In practice, however, the internationalization agenda of African universities has not been fully pursued, chiefly because most post independent governments pushed for the “Africanization” of university curricula and other key activities in the context of their nationalist agenda. It is only in the late 1990s that the concept of globalization became relevant for national governments. The emergence of the world university rankings after the launch of Shanghai Jiao Tong University’s Academic Ranking of World Universities in 2002 gave more meaning to the need for African universities to pursue an international agenda, explaining why it has become a core mission since then. It can still be argued that the benefit of this concept is yet to be actualized in Africa.

⁶ Knight J. Internationalization: Element and checkpoint (1994) *Research Monograph 7*, Ottawa, Canadian Bureau for International Education

⁷ Hawawini 2011



Peace is not just the absence of war but the presence of conditions that foster cooperation, understanding and well-being within a nation and among nations. Security on the other hand refers to a condition of safety and freedom from threats. In summary, peace and security are not only ends in themselves but also essential means for the well-being and progress of humanity. They go hand in hand, ensuring a world where nations can thrive without the scourge of war and conflict.

CAUSES OF CONFLICTS AND ITS EFFECTS IN AFRICA

For several years, African states have been in conflict against one another and within their countries. As a result of these conflicts and civil wars in Africa, many have lost their lives, property and there has been economic meltdowns. The causes of conflict range from political to cultural causes.⁸ There are also religious conflicts around the world and particularly in Nigeria. According to Religious: religious wars and conflicts are found in different African states. In Nigeria there have been several clashes between Christians and Muslims.⁹ There are also cultural conflicts such as that of Ile-Ife and Modakeke disputes of which are related to land. We also have the Education and political disputes which leads to Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) – strike.

These disputes do not only lead to a loss of property and lives but may lead to a loss of roots, delayed development and growth; increased distrust amongst the people and an enabled environment for corruption and plundered resources.

COMBATING INSECURITY IN AFRICA THROUGH EDUCATION

The issues of security in Africa continent have since been looked in to and have remained persistently and carefully perched at the top of the political agenda of most African nations the sources of insecurity in Africa continent are diverse and dynamic raging from political conflicts, conflicts over access to resources and the mismanagement of political process has been reinforce by corruption and intra-elite division. These have become major sources of insecurity in Africa. This reasons made security issues to be a concern to all humanity at all level from individual to

⁸ V E Sithole (2023) Reviewing the Causes of Civil Wars and Conflicts in Africa, and the Role of the African Union: An Analysis by available at

⁹ E T Eyeh (2020) Violent Religious Conflicts in Nigeria, 1980-2020: Causes, Mitigation and Mngement Strategies The International Journal of Humanities and Social Studies vol 8 issue 6, pp216-223



community. It is also a problem of all time and no society has found a permanent solution to its security problems.¹⁰

Historically, the search for security has been an unending pre-occupation of humanity since the Stone Age. Undeniably, the origin of organized community has been linked to the search for security. Until recently the centrality of the state to questions of security has rarely been challenged as a principle of international relations. This view as shared by both realists and idealists who share a common concern with war and differ largely in the assessment of prospects for peace and ways of achieving it the supremacy of realism and late Neo-realism in security and strategic studies after World War II, further reinforce these suppositions about the source of threat with regard to security. However, since the Second World War the suppositions of Neo-realism have come under intense attack as a result, the security framework put in place this school of thought has increasingly been losing ground since the end of Cold War to alternative frameworks of security.¹¹ Galtung then postulated what he calls the Alternative Security Doctrine (ASD) and defines it as one which perceives invulnerability in terms of the level of self sufficiency of total system internally and within the international system. Self-sufficiency is here seen in terms of the social welfare needs of the people as well as in military-industrial production. At the intra- national level, invulnerability is seen as being promoted by overcoming cleavages caused by injustice, inequality and inequity. This approach to security analysis has also come to be known as the idealist or liberal approach. Though this approaches remains state-centric and challenges the military emphasis of conventional security analysis.¹² Importantly, there has been a movement to shift from the narrow, state –centric definition of security to a more human centric one called “human security”¹³ which encompasses economic, health and environmental concerns as well as military power. The human security approach is “integrative” as opposed to a merely “defensive” concept, and includes the security of the individual as well as territories and states.

To this effect the Marxist conception of interest posits that the objective of security interest of respective states would tend to reflect the interest of the dominant segment of society.¹⁴

¹⁰ Bozeman A.B “Human right and national security” *Yale Journal of world public order* vol. 9 (1982-1983) p.9

¹¹ Bakhit K “security and what people make of it: the African great lakes and security debate” A publication of global political network

¹² Lustgarten I. and Leigh I. *in from the cold national security and parliamentary democracy* (London Oxford clarendon press 1993) P. 27-30

¹³ Thomas C. and Wilkin P. *Globalization human security and African experience* (London Lyone Rienner publishers inc . 1999) p. 211

¹⁴ Balbus I.D. “the concept of interest in pluralist and Marxian Analysis” (1971) *Politics and Society* p. 151-177



Unfortunately, most of the African's country are yet to come in terms with this concept called "human security", it is therefore suggested that since the exchange of goods, services and people seems unstoppable, international human resources with the necessary skills for the new world economy need to be provided in Africa. This will bring about a well-functioning economy where all citizens will be engaged and can contribute not only to the well-being of their immediate surroundings but also to the whole world which will lead to peaceful and secured Africa continent. Hence the easiest and most effective way of achieving this is to internationalize African youths through the various African's universities currently in place by doing this opportunities and possibilities are bound since university education inculcates virtues of integrity, honesty and hard work as well as developing individuals to becoming a better person.¹⁵

Internationalization of African universities will not only lead to an improvement of faculty students, or only bring about research collaborations and academic programs¹⁶ but will enable Africa youth to learn the way of life of the host countries, build intercultural management competencies and promote universal knowledge which in the long run will promote peace and development.¹⁷

THE ROLE AND BENEFITS OF INTERNATIONALIZATION IN AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

Education plays a pivotal role in crystalizing peace and security and through internationalization, Africans can learn from one another. Embracing internationalization in African universities brings on board the key players (the educational leaders and the political leaders) and gives them an opportunity to explore and work together.

Internationalization expands the platform for learning and for reaching out to more people of diverse backgrounds. It should be noted that there is no one way of solving issues. Internationalization no doubt creates a platform for our leaders to unite.

According to a peace education writer "Education is the instrument for uniting kingdoms or nations bringing human being closely together" in many part of the world particularly Africa, civil society

¹⁵ Maiwada G. "Lectures' perception of student evaluation in Nigerian university" (2005) Vol. 6 No. *international. Education journal's*. 619-625

¹⁶ Mohammad A. The Role of Internationalization in Higher Education in Industry *International Journal of Economic & Strategic Management of business process (ESMB)* pp 86-99 (2016)

¹⁷ Daily University of South Australia (2011) *Australia Journal of Research in International Education*. Vol 10, P.58-70



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suffers because of the situation of violent, conflict and wars is now become necessary to recognize the crucial role of education through Internationalization of African Universities in building a culture of peace, unity and condemning a situation where education is undermined in order to attack peaceful existence and development.

Internationalization of African Universities shall be a key tool in converting poverty, in promoting peace, social justice, human rights, democracy, cultural diversity and environmental awareness. This will expose African youths to the true concept of peace through value, life skills and knowledge in a spirit of quality, respect, empathy, understanding and mutual appreciation among individuals, groups and nations which in the long run will leads to peace and development in the African development. Other benefits also include but not limited to the following: Internationalization increases awareness among students about global issues including cultural diversity and making students open-minded and global citizens.¹⁸ Learning and teaching activities including core-curricular and co-curricular activities are adjusted to international standards. Also, curricula can be jointly developed by international partners and thus offering international curricula to national students as well as offering national curricula to international students¹⁹

Sharing knowledge, experience, and best practices improve gradually and definitely the quality of teaching and learning both for the institution and the students²⁰. Internationalization strengthens institutional research and knowledge production capacity by complementing resources, skills and knowledge through a variety of inter-universities alliances and collaborations.²¹ Internationalization is considered as an effective strategy in order to enhance the international presence, brand, profile, reputation and ranking of the university²². Academic institutions develop their internationalization in order to benchmark and measure their positions in the context of international standards and consequently improve their practices and performance comparatively to their competitors and peers²³.

¹⁸ Denson, Loveday T. & Dalton H. Student evaluation of courses: what predicts satisfaction, *Higher Education Research Development* (2010) Vol. 29 no. 4, p. 339-356

¹⁹ Luijten-Lub A., Choices Internationalization, *Higher Education Institutions Respond to Internationalization Europeanization and Globalization Enschede: CHEPS* (2007)

²⁰ Van Der Wende, (2006) The Challenges of University Ranking. Presentation at the seminar at Leiden University

²¹ Internationalization plans for Higher Education Institutions. *Journal of Studies in International Education* 13 (3): 289-309 (Knight, 2009)

²² Chan W. W., and Dimmock, 2008; The Internationalization of Universities Globalist Internationalist and translocalist models. *Journal of Research in International Education* 7 (2): 184-204

²³ Knight, J. & de Wit, H. (1995). Strategies for internationalization of higher education: historical and conceptual perspectives.



RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

Internationalization in African Universities will create opportunities for interactions among people of different culture, race, and language. Partnership between universities across countries will create a security bond amongst countries.

Interaction, mobility and exchange builds stronger alliances which brings about better understanding amongst the people

Internationalization of African universities will no doubt improve academic equality and enhanced learning environment for the benefit of domestic African students. It also has the potential of changing the lives of our youths as it will help in producing graduates who are internationally and culturally sensitive, knowledgeable.

The internationalization in African universities through collaborations, linkages and mobility are proposed ways of addressing insecurity in African states. Exchange of students and faculty from one African state to another would help foster understanding of culture and religion which may help address the challenges of conflicts. Furthermore, bringing in foreign students to study under the umbrella of another institution puts leadership (Heads of States or Presidents) of these countries on the platform of awareness and the need to protect and be responsible and responsive to the foreign nationals within their shores.