Teacher Empowerment Strategies for Conflict Transformation and Peace Building in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The effects of violent conflict on education are enormous, and provision of quality education cannot be realised if teachers are not adequately trained to teach in conflict-prone areas. This reality prompted the study to investigate strategies to empower teachers in conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Guided by the Conflict Transformation Theory which proposes to identify the root causes of a conflict, and the use of creativity to transform the causes based on relationships and sub-systems that surround the conflict over time, a cross-sectional mixed methods study was conducted in Mt. Elgon region, Kenya. The study found that: for teachers to participate in conflict transformation there was a need for training in peace education and implementation of Life Skills Curriculum through various methods including distance education. Since then the government has developed education sector policy on peace education which provides for policy and curriculum initiatives, collaboration and partnerships to address challenges in peacebuilding and violent extremism. Initiatives to train teachers and education officers in peace education and implementation of the Life Skills Curriculum have been instituted.

However, despite the efforts, peace education is not effectively taught in many schools due to inadequate teacher training. Equally, life skills education, one of the main subjects to promote peace education, is not effectively implemented. To mitigate this, the government has made several efforts to identify best practices to promote peace education and implement life skills, among them, teacher training on how to enhance peace education through mainstreaming and implementation of Life Skills Curriculum. There is need for further investigation on the current gaps in peace education in the wake of the curriculum review to Competency Based Curriculum in Kenya.

Keywords: Conflict, Conflict transformation, Life skills, Peace building, Violence

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Introduction

Violent conflicts escalating into wars and civil strife are on the increase, especially in the developing world. According to Einsiedel (2014) major civil wars almost tripled from four to eleven between 2007 and 2014. These were experienced in Iraq, Afghanistan, DRC, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Libya, Ukraine, Pakistan, and Nigeria. The structures and processes that turn intolerance into violence are varied and highly complex with factors such as historical forces, economic tensions, bad governance, perceived threats to cultural identity, and formal, non-formal and informal educational processes being the main contributing factors to such strife (Fund for Peace,2012; Ohlson, 2008).

In Kenya a serious and unique incursion of violent conflict occurred in the Mount Elgon region and for a period of about two years (2006 to 2008), the region was under siege of local militia gangs until the government intervened and forced a ceasefire (Wakhungu *et al.,* 2008). As a result of the violent conflict, schools were greatly affected; some schools absorbed displaced pupils, and this created large classes in the accommodating schools. Such classes posed challenges of class control to teachers. Equally, the few teachers who remained after some sought transfers, were displaced or killed, were unable to cope with the heavy workload (Ndiku, 2017). The school calendar and syllabus coverage were also affected. Psychological effects of the violent conflict on the children and teachers were also evident. Displacement from homes and schools and living in congested camps was traumatising. Signs of such trauma were manifest through children who had emotional and behavioural disturbances including low self-esteem, withdrawal and aggression. Aspects of post-traumatic stress disorders were also manifest. The effects of violence on children especially among those attending school required keen attention by teachers yet the teachers may not have had the skills and competencies to address the challenges hence the need to establish the skills the teachers required to enable them intervene on the effects of the violent conflict (*ibid*). As part of the communities affected by the violent conflict, teachers were also traumatised, and they required help to manage the trauma and effectively perform their duties in this difficult environment (Ndiku, Achoka and Onkware 2013) hence the need for training in conflict transformation.

After a ceasefire, a violent conflict graduates to the final stage of the conflict cycle; the post-conflict stage. This stage is characterised by reconstruction and reconciliation including the healing of psychological wounds and the re-establishment of relationships (Frazer and Ghettas, 2013; Paffenholz, 2009; ACTION, 2003). In the post-conflict stage, the effects of the conflict abound, and if the issues and problems that caused the conflict are not addressed, the events in this stage can easily lead to another conflict, and the conflict cycle continues. Therefore, there was need to help the societies experiencing the effects of the violent conflict in Kenya to come out of them through conflict transformation processes. In conflict transformation, action of several players is enlisted. Among the local players in conflict transformation are community groups, community leaders, professional groups, churches and individuals who represent majority of the population and can be reached through a wide range of peacebuilding approaches among them implementation of peace education programmes in schools and capacity building for peacebuilding actors (Paffenholz, 2009; ACTION, 2003).

Education plays a critical role in promoting sustainable peace, hence, the role of teachers (Novelli, Mieke Cardozo and Smith, 2017). As professionals and opinion leaders, teachers play crucial roles in influencing change in conflict situations through: peace education, change in attitudes, perceptions, behaviour and constructed beliefs of the learners and other persons and agencies that they interact with (Kangethe, 2015; Opongo,2009). Teachers are perceived as the most important care-givers outside the child's home. They have the potential to help children recover from the trauma of conflict through, the return to normalcy provided by the opening of schools. They also manage the classroom environment and provide learners with a safe place where they are heard. Teachers also identify learners requiring additional support, make referrals and model peaceful resolution to conflict, children learn how to manage the conflicts around them at interpersonal, classroom and community levels (Horner, Kadiwal, Sayed, Naureen and Novelli, 2015).

Despite the enormous task on teachers in conflict transformation and peace building, peace education and life skills have not effectively taken root owing to lack of teacher

training in this area as life skills is not part of the teacher education curriculum (Kangethe, 2015). Indeed, teachers in Kenya require support through regular training and provision of appropriate materials to support them to deliver peace education and life skills lessons (Kangethe, 2015; World Bank, 2002; Nicolai, 2009; Penson and Tomlinson, 2009; UNESCO, 2006). Where it may not be possible to reach out to all the practising teacher and train them, distance education offers the best mode of instruction for them. Owing to the challenges posed by the violent conflict in Kenya and in Mt. Elgon in particular, there was need to establish the training needs for teachers to empower them to effectively handle conflict transformation and peace building along with the most effective methods of training them hence the motivation to undertake this study.

Theoretical framework: Conflict Transformation Theory
This study was hinged on the Conflict Transformation theory. Conflict Transformation was re-conceptualized from conflict management and conflict resolution theories with contributions of many scholars such as Azar (1990), Vayrynen (1991), Galtung (1996), Rupesinghe (1995), Lederach (1997;2003), Miall (2004) among others (Miall,2004). Conflict Transformation theory attempts to identify the root causes of a conflict and uses creativity to transform the causes (Nicolaides, 2008). Lederach (1997) argues conflict transformation should be seen as process of peacebuilding based on the relationships and sub-systems that surround the conflict over a time. He proposes four elements of conflict transformation that is: personal, relational, structural, and cultural and each of these representing different levels that influence conflict. Personal change reflects change on the individual level in emotional, perceptual and spiritual ways. Relational change affects areas of life that are interdependent with others, mainly communicative and interactive changes in relationships. Structural change influences a broad range of areas from basic human needs to decision-making structures. Finally, cultural change deals with, among other things, the patterns of how conflicts arise and how they are handled within group culture (Moiese and Lederach, 2009). Conflict transformation, according to Lederach (1997) is not interested in 'ending' something that is not desired but building relationships that form new patterns, processes, and structures. Therefore, peacebuilding through constructive transformation of conflicts is a visionary and a

context-responsive approach. The conflict in Mt. Elgon which was the basis of this study was intra-state pitting two sub-groups of the same ethnic group. In this study the factors which contributed to the conflict were analysed and the capacities and support required of them to effectively participate in the conflict transformation processes.

Methodology

This study was conducted in Mt. Elgon region in 2010/2011. The region is located on the South-Eastern slopes of Mt. Elgon in Western region of Kenya. The study adopted a mixed methods research design. Cross-sectional research approach was used to collect data. The target population of this study were primary and secondary school teachers (1293), education officers (34), school management teams of Boards of Management chairpersons (28), primary school committees' chairpersons (104). Proportionate stratified sampling was used to select the survey universe which was divided into sub-populations where the four divisions of the region namely: Kapsokwony, Kaptama, Kopsiro and Cheptais were identified to get representation of teachers from all the four divisions. Further strata of primary and secondary schools were identified to get representation of primary and secondary school teachers.

The study sampled Two Hundred and ten respondents (210) distributed as follows: Eight education officers who were purposively selected; Eight Boards of Management (BOM) representing the secondary schools; twelve school committee members representing the primary schools and One Hundred and Eighty two (182) teachers comprised of 117 primary and 65 secondary school teachers. Regarding the teachers' qualifications, 78 had a primary teachers' certificate, 57 were diploma holders and 47 were Bachelor of Education degree holders.

Data were collected through questionnaires, interview schedules and Focus Group Discussion schedules. The questionnaire administered to teachers had closed ended items with responses on a Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Undecided (U), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA). Open spaces were provided for the respondents to comment freely on any other issues related to the study which were

not covered in the closed section. Closed forms of questions in questionnaires were preferred because they are easy to administer and fill out, assist the respondents mind to be focused on the subject and facilitate the process of tabulation and analysis (Mouton and Prozesky, 2010).

An interview schedule was used to collect data from education officers where individual officers were interviewed. Interviews were chosen to collect information from the education officers because they provided in-depth data that may not be possible to get when using a questionnaire (Bordens and Abbott, 2005). During the interviews, the researcher was able to probe the respondents and seek clarifications to the responses made.

Two separate focus groups were constituted one group was composed of a combination of Boards of Management representatives (8 members) and primary school committee representatives (12 members). These are critical persons in governance and shaping policy at school level. Focus Group Discussion were used because of their ability to yield accurate information through probing (Lindlof and Tylor, 2002). Though focus group discussions have some weaknesses such as being less representative of a large population and the researcher being unable to control the discussions compared to an interview (Tracy, Lutgen-Sandrik and Alberts, 2006), they were used in this study to triangulate and clarify views and opinions given by the teachers and the key informants. Qualitative and Quantitative data were collected concurrently. This served triangulation purposes in this study. Data were analysed through cross-tabulations, and percentages were computed and presented in tables. Qualitative data obtained from the open-ended sections of the questionnaire, interviews and FGDs were analysed through themes (Gibson, 2006).

Findings

This section presents the findings of the study articulating the strategies to empower teachers to effectively participate in conflict transformation. This was borne out of the fact that violent conflict and the need for conflict transformation brought new challenges which called for new capacities to address them. To establish the requirements for empowering teachers to be effective in conflict transformation, teachers were requested to respond to statements on a Likert scale and the findings were presented in tables. Table 1.0 presents teachers' responses against the statement which enquired whether the teachers themselves needed training in skills in handling children affected by the violent conflict. From the findings, majority of the different categories of teachers strongly agreed and or agreed with the statement. These findings implied that teachers felt that they needed more training to be able to handle children who were affected by the violent conflict.

Table 1.0: Skills in handling children affected by violent conflict

Respondents	SD	D	U	A	SA
P1 Certificate holders	0	0	3%	40%	59%
Diploma holders	0	0.5%	0.5%	15%	84%
B. Ed Degree holders	0.5%	0	0.5%	41%	58%

Related to skills in handling children affected by the violent conflict was the statement to measure whether there was a need for skills in handling parents affected by the violent conflict. From the findings presented in table 1.1, the majority of the teachers of different levels of professional training strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 1.1: Skills in handling parents affected by the Violent Conflict

Respondents	SD	D	U	A	SA
P1 Certificate holders	8%	6%	8%	20%	58%
Diploma holders	2%	0%	3%	30%	65%
B. Ed Degree holders	10%	6%	3%	35%	48%

Teachers were also asked whether they needed additional skills in counselling. These findings were presented in table 1.2 below. From the findings, it was established that most of the teachers required enhanced skills in counselling where they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. An interesting scenario, however, was noted among the degree holders where those who agreed with the statement were more than those who strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 1.2: Skills in Counselling

Respondents	SD	D	U	A	SA
P1 Certificate holders	4%	6%	10%	30%	50%
Diploma holders	2%	0	3%	35	61%
B. Ed Degree holders	17%	0%	3%	42%	38%

Teachers were also asked to respond to a statement which enquired whether they needed enhanced skills in implementing the peace education curriculum. From the findings presented in table 1.3, it was established that teachers required enhanced skills in the implementation of the peace education curriculum as majority of them strongly agree with the statement. This was also the opinion of the education officers and the other stakeholders who participated in the Focus Group Discussions.

Table 1.3: Skills in Implementation of Peace Education Curriculum

Respondents	SD	D	U	A	SA
P1 Certificate holders	0	1%	3%	36%	60%
Diploma holders	1%	0%	0%	38%	61%
B. Ed Degree holders	1%	1%	8%	40%	50%

Table 1.4 presents findings on whether teachers required enhanced skills in conflict resolution and peace mediation as a strategy to enhance teacher participation in conflict transformation. From the findings presented, it was established that teachers needed additional training in conflict resolution and peace mediation because those who strongly

agreed with the statement were more than 50% among all categories of teachers. Further responses through the interviews and FDGs confirmed the need for training of teachers in new skills. One key informant observed:

Training programmes for teachers, learners and the community to promote peace, safety and security are important … teachers and other education personnel should be provided with the skills to give psychological support and promote learners' emotional well-being.
(Education officer, DEOs office, Kapsokwony).

Table 1.4: Skills in Conflict Resolution and Mediation

Respondents	SD	D	U	A	SA
P1 Certificate holders	0	0	2%	20%	78%
Diploma holders	0	0	1	24%	75%
B. Ed Degree holders	1	0	0	40%	59%

Through the interviews and the FDGs it was established that some action in training had been taken to empower teachers in peace building. A senior education officer who was interviewed observed that teachers were trained on peace education in six centres where over 300 teachers participated in a programme run by UNICEF. In the training, teachers were sensitized on the implementation of the Life Skills Curriculum, peace education and how to set up peace clubs in schools and training of peer counsellors. The officer however, noted that, further training on peace education, effective teaching methods to handle children affected by the conflict and counselling skills to empower teachers to handle both affected parents and pupils was required. From the findings it was clear that though some training had been carried out, there was need for more. This may have been occasioned by the fact that part of the teachers who were participants in this study may not have been among the 300 hundred who were reported to have been trained.

Another education officer observed that teacher empowerment through training was the only way to change the society in Mt. Elgon region. He said,

> … *to make strides in peace building and development, teachers should be trained to advocate for peace in and out of school… because teachers are opinion leaders and shapers in society in their own right and they form a critical mass of agents of change. (Education officer, Kapsokwony,).*

The interviewed education officers observed that there was need to enhance training and rehabilitation programmes which had been instituted by NGOs. According to the information shared by key informants namely Education officers and school management teams, NGOs and CBOs; UNICEF, UNDP, APHIA II Action Aid were involved in training and issuing supplies of food, clothing and sanitary towels to children affected by the violent conflict to facilitate their access to education. As it was observed, though some training had been instituted, it may not have been adequate hence the need for more training for the education officers and other education stakeholders in peace education. Commenting on the need for training, another education officer stated that, there was need for teachers to uphold professional ethics at all times. He observed that seminars to sensitise teachers on professional matters were crucial. He stated that:

> *Teachers need to be sensitised on teachers' code of regulations, the Education Act and the TSC Act … school managers like school committees need to be sensitised on their roles… head teachers should be sensitised on their duties and responsibilities in order to manage the resources under their care. (Education Officer, DEOs office, Kapsokwony,).*

The above comments were valid owing to the behaviour of some teachers who failed to attend to duty in the pretext that they were threatened during the violent conflict.

Another strategy required for effective conflict transformation was to ensure that the education offices created safe and conducive working environments especially in the schools which were vandalized during the violent conflict. The Key informants reported

that repairs of the vandalized schools to improve the teaching environment was required. The above views by the key informants were confirmed through the FGDs too. These views support the observation that teachers in the affected schools and other schools which were crowded required more space in form of instructional facilities. According to one of the senior education officers, efforts to repair schools in the affected areas had born positive results in that, the government gave grants through the Kenya Education Sector Support programme (KESSP) and Disaster Management funds to reconstruct vandalized schools.

It was also established that teachers required more support from the education officers especially the Quality Assurance officers to be able to perform their duties in conflict transformation. As presented in Table 1.5 below, the majority of the teachers in each category of teachers strongly agreed that teachers required support from Quality Assurance officers to be effective in conflict transformation. Through the interview, key informants affirmed this, that: during the violent conflict the Quality Assurance officers were unable to reach most of the schools. They also reported that there were additional duties in teacher supervision especially monitoring the way the affected schools were stabilising. It was observed that the schools which had closed were opening afresh with almost new pupils and teachers and that there was need to support them to start off under the new circumstances occasioned by the violent conflict.

Table 1.5: Support through Quality Assurance Services

Respondents	SD	D	U	A	SA
P1 Certificate holders	1%	2%	4%	33%	60%
Diploma holders	0%	2%	1%	32%	65%
B. Ed Degree holders	2%	6%	1%	41%	50%

The teachers who participated in this study had different teacher education qualifications. However, in their responses to whether they required training and support to participate in conflict transformation, they were in agreement that there was such a need. To test whether teachers of different levels of training differed significantly on the strategies

required to enhance teacher participation in conflict transformation, a Kruskal-Wallis test was computed as presented in table 1.7. From the Kruskal-Wallis computation, the P-value obtained 0.003 was less than the alpha 0.05 and the null hypothesis; t*here is no significant difference in the strategies to empower teachers to effectively participate in conflict transformation in Mt. Elgon region according to teachers of different levels of professional training* was rejected.

Table 1.7: Kruskal-Wallis Test on the significance of the difference of the Strategies Required to Empower Teachers to effectively participate in Conflict Transformation

	Qualifications	N	Mean rank
Strategies to empower teacher to participate in conflict transformation	P1	78	91.24
	Diploma	57	107.43
	Degree	47	72.62
	Total	182	

Test Statistics[a],[b]

	Strategies require to empower teachers to participate in conflict transformation
Chi-square	11.364
df	2
Significance	0.003

a. Kruskal Wallis test

b. Group variable: professional qualifications

From the findings, it was established that the level of training of teachers was significant among teachers in determining the strategies required to empower them to effectively participate in conflict transformation in Mt. Elgon region. The above findings may have been the case because of the prior training of teachers especially the capacity building seminars and workshops instituted after the 2008 rollout of the peace education and Life

Skills Curriculum (Kangethe, 2015). Some teachers may have had more training in some of the conflict transformation aspects compared to others hence the differences. The study having been conducted in a conflict area, and with the efforts by the government and NGOs to train teachers in Peace Education, the findings were valid. Thus, it was necessary for the education stakeholders to take more responsibilities in empowering teachers to effectively participate in conflict transformation and peace building in Kenya.

Discussions

Out of the need for further training and capacity building in conflict transformation, the government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education launched peace education in 2008. Peace education is meant to transform society from conflict stances to peaceful coexistence; to come up with interventions to counter the conflicts and escalation of the same. Peace Education and Life skills are aimed at equipping learners with psychosocial competencies that would help them make informed decisions, solve problems, think creatively and critically, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, create self-worth and self-awareness, help reduce gender inequalities and stereotypes, eliminate antisocial behaviour and criminal tendencies among others (KIE, 2008). Implementation of peace education subscribes to conflict transformation theory which denotes change. Educating people targets influencing them to change at personal level, changing the way they relate, and transforming the structures and the cultures to bring about peace. Such influence can be realised through peace education which can be passed in formal, non-formal and informal settings. According to the conflict transformation theory, personal change reflects change at the individual level by influencing the emotional, perceptual and spiritual ways. Relational change affects areas of life that are interdependent with others, mainly communicative and interactive changes in relationships. Structural change influences a broad range of areas from basic human needs to decision-making structures. Finally, cultural change deals with, the patterns of how conflicts arise and how they are handled within group culture. This is what peace education strives to achieve to bring about a transformed/changed society.

Informed by this need, it was realised that there was no capacity to implement peace education. The government took to capacity building education stakeholders in peace education, key among them; teachers, school heads and education officers (Kangethe, 2015) as peace education and training in life skills which is used to aid conflict transformation had not been common in Kenya owing to emphasis on examinations brought about by cut-throat competition for high grades on standardised examinations. Further, life skills had not been a taught subject in teacher education programmes in Kenya and those who handled it initially did it out of interest and or passion. However, since then life skills teachers have been trained through in-service in the cascaded model of training where education officers who were trained in turn trained head teachers and two teachers from every school (Irungu, 2015; Kandeli, 2014).

However, up to date, teaching of life skills has not been effective because most teachers in the school system have not been trained on Life Skills Curriculum and those few who have attended the in-service training argue that the in-service training gave them inadequate skills to handle it successfully. It has also been observed that teaching and learning resources to implement Life Skills Curriculum are inadequate (Irungu, 2015; Okech and Role, 2015; Abobo and Orodho, 2014; Kandeli, 2014). Due to the short period of in-service training of teachers, many teachers have not mastered the teaching approaches for life skills. Other challenges to implementation of Life Skills were inadequate time allocated to this subject and negative attitude of teachers and some students towards the subject because it is non-examinable. (Irungu, 2015; Okech and Role, 2015; Abobo and Orodho, 2014; Kandeli, 2014).

Other challenges facing implementation of the Life Skills Curriculum especially at primary school level were pupil related. Some of them lack confidence to discuss private matters such as sex issues in class especially in the presence of adults, with the teacher hence degrading the Life Skills Curriculum. Others succumb to peer pressure which pushes them to indulge in drug abuse and premarital sex even when guidance is given. Driven by this force and desire to be like their counterparts who are outside the school set up, they tend to ignore the teachings of the Life Skills Curriculum which they view as barriers

to the satisfaction of their needs and desires. There are also traditional beliefs, religion and initiation practices which interfere with smooth implementation of the Life Skills Curriculum. Traditional practices such as female circumcision may work against health awareness created through programs initiated by the Life Skills Curriculum. Equally, religious conservatism can bar the effective implementation of the Life Skills Curriculum through preaching against the teaching of sex education on the basis that it spoils the young generation. There are also administrative challenges related to inadequacy of the government financing of Life Skills Curriculum which to a large extent stalled further development in the Life Skills Curriculum implementation (King Stefan Writing Zone, 2017). Owing to the above challenges, the impact of implementation of the life skills curriculum has not been fully realised. There is, therefore, need for further training of teachers to enable them effectively implementation peace education and life skills in schools. This resonates with the 4th R of reconciliation in the peacebuilding process (Novelli, Mieke Cardozo and Smith, 2017) in post-conflict societies. It can be used to prevent a society from relapsing into conflict. It incorporates education's role in dealing with the past, truth and reparations, transitional justice processes, issues related to bringing communities together, processes of forgiving and healing, and the broader process of social and psychosocial healing. Teachers cannot effectively handle this if they are not effectively trained and empowered to do so (Nicolai, 2009).

The need to support and train teachers to participate in conflict transformation is critical as it addresses the challenges and conflicts experienced in society through training to build skills, knowledge, and motivation to transform the situations and lives of others. The findings of this study affirm this. This is the same argument advanced by Nicolai (2003) and UNESCO (2006). According to Nicolai (2003) and Ndiku (2007) teachers are the single most important shapers of student learning and provision of quality education. Well trained teachers are required in crisis and emergency situations because emergencies place new and different demands on children, teachers, their communities and the education systems in general. Training and support help teachers to respond to pressures mounted by violent conflict and enable them to cope with increased responsibilities in serving parents and pupils affected by the conflict and the crisis situation. Teachers in Mt.

Elgon region experienced the violent conflict just like other teachers in conflict-prone zones (Ndiku, Achoka, Onkware, 2013). Under such circumstances support from the education officers and other educational stakeholders to adjust to their work, perform additional duties in dealing with different students, parents, colleagues and communities affected by violent conflict is necessary. For instance, some teachers may have required additional time and space to be with their families, repair their homes, deal with changes in their livelihoods especially among teachers who were affected by the violent conflict. Such situations need understanding support and encouragement. The support can be offered by the school administrators and education supervisors through new ways of management and training.

Implementation of Peace Education and Life Skills Curriculum calls for different methods of instruction (King Stefan Writing Zone, 2017). Studies in Kenya since the introduction of the Life Skills Curriculum have shown that teachers are faced with challenges of implementing the curriculum due to lack of appropriate skills and competencies and attitude towards the subject (King Stefan Writing Zone, 2017; Okech and Role,2015; Abobo and Orodho, 2014; Kandeli, 2014; Kilonzo, 2013). Due to time constraint, many teachers often use the lecture method of teaching. This method limits implementation of the Life Skills Curriculum since it is to a great extent expository and pupils' participation in the lesson is very limited. Participatory teaching methods among other skills are important in this subject, yet most teachers are comfortable with lecture method and other conventional teaching methods. Lack of training in methods to teach life skills has greatly hampered effective implementation of life skills, hence, the need for enhanced teacher training in methods to implement life skills in Kenya.

To effectively handle teaching and learning in emergency situations teachers with the right knowledge, skills and attitudes are essential. Whereas the government responded to the challenges brought about by violent conflict through the implementation of the Peace Education and Life Skills Curriculum, its implementation has been hampered by low skill base among teachers despite the efforts to train teachers in a cascaded manner (Irungu, 2015; Kangethe, 2015). Owing to the challenges posed by violent conflict, it may

not be possible for teachers to create time to go for training. Equally, teachers may be overworked especially due to understaffing occasioned by violent conflict, thus, making it impossible to participate in in-service courses. There is, therefore, a need for schools to adopt new approaches to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for teachers especially in the implementation of Peace education and Life Skills Curriculum. Multiple training methods for practising teachers depending on their circumstances are critical. A variety of training modes to build the capacity of teachers in conflict transformation was and is still required. Such modes include face to face and distance e-learning modes. Seminars, workshops and distance learning along with self-study correspondence courses, radio education, and education with the use of computers and the internet are all possible delivery modes to enhance teacher capacities (UNESCO, 2010; ACTION, 2003). Such training which utilises new and improved technology enables trainees to take up training courses at locations of their convenience. Such modes may enable trainees to save money and support large groups of trainees at the same time. Web-based training is also important because materials are standardised as all trainees use the same program. The use of technology to train teachers in Peace education has been successful elsewhere. For instance, in Rwanda the Ministry of Education endorsed the use of TESSA materials in the National Retraining Programme for Primary School Teachers and the TESSA materials were integrated in the new retraining materials for the programme with a particular focus on core classroom teaching skills, subject teaching skills, creativity and innovation (UNESCO, 2010).

Conclusions and Recommendations

From the foregoing, it has been noted that Peace Education initiatives have been faced with many challenges despite efforts to mainstream peace education in primary and secondary school curricula and implementation of life skills in schools. Though teacher training has been done to counter this, there are many capacity gaps in the delivery of peace education and life skills in classrooms and schools. Kenyan schools have put much emphasis on academic subjects at the expense of value-based subjects like life skills. Communities do not attach much value to life skills and peace education either. This explains why there is weak coordination of psychosocial intervention due to a lack of a

response framework. There is, therefore, need to strengthen peace education at all levels including mainstreaming peace education in all teaching subjects. Peace education should be given special consideration in the curriculum reform process which is now ongoing in Kenya. Due to the dynamic nature of violence and conflict in society, there is also a need for new initiatives to counter emerging issues of conflict evident through radicalisation and violent extremism in schools. To bring about this change, peace education should be included in initial teacher training to build capacity for all teachers. Further, to reach the teachers already in-service a distance education intervention would probably be more appropriate to reinforce the other face to face interactions.

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