AFRICAN CONCEPT OF 'INOCHI': A NEW PARADIGM FOR PEACE EDUCATION IN THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

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Abstract: What should constitute the core of peace education curriculum has become a thorny issue among scholars of peace studies. This controversy has resulted to mottled curricular. Being divided in disciplines, orientations, methodologies and interests, scholars have proposed biological, sociological, philosophical, political, anthropological and traditional approaches to the building curriculum for peace education. These approaches as good as they may be, have not really proffered solution to peace needs of the contemporary society. This is because they emphasize partial and disintegrated aspects of human reality. Thus they fail to touch on the core aspect of existence that is shared by all. Hence they anchor peace education on aspects of peace making, peace keeping, peace enforcing, peace arbitration etc. Notably, these methods fail to yield the expected dividends and the overall consequence has been tension, crisis and avid violation of human and non human members of the world community. It is therefore against this backdrop that this paper proposes a new paradigm for peace education, which emphasizes peace building. It also takes seriously the common factor that is shared by all as the core of peace education. The new approach is centered on *'Life'* as the nucleus of all existences. This idea is anchored on the African '*Inochi'.* 'Inochi' is a Japanese word for life and its equivalence is '**Ndu**' in Igbo ontology. African Inochi embodies the idea of cosmic unity of all things and all beings. It underscores the sacredness of life and does not see life merely as material. The concept projects the idea of human responsibility, protection and care as it underscores the fact that all lives have a mono-origin. The paper therefore opines that if peace educators shall adopt the Inochi paradigm as the core of peace education curriculum, the ideal new world order of our dream will soon be realized as the conflict and crisis that have created a schizophrenic situation in the minds of global citizens will soon diminish.

1. Introduction

The world obviously is at the crossroad, without knowing where to turn to garner peace and peaceable society. This situation is created by the invincibility of wars, violence and social

crisis that have almost became a social norm and have also affected our social behaviours as global citizens. However, several attempts have been made to inculcate peace attitudes through intensive training, teaching and workshops. These programmes gave birth to peace and conflict management studies that have come in vogue in the recent academic researches. The field of peace and conflict studies therefore became exploited not only by peace experts but also by non-experts known as informal peace brokers//workers. Consequently, peace studies shifted emphasis from other forms of peace brokage – like conflict resolution, conflict management, peace enforcement, peacemaking, peace keeping etc to peace building. (Okoro 2010: 136-139). It was John Gultang, who first distinguished between peace keeping and peace building and this was test run in Namibia in 1978 by the United Nation (Erim 2007:58)

Notably, the field of peace building is quite complex and diverse and has elicited diverse controversies, which of course are akin to scholarship, more especially in an interesting and virgin area like peace building. The controversies centered mainly on methodology. Thus the field is broadly delineated into two spheres, formal and informal methods (Okoro, 2010: 136-139). Generally, peace building as a concept in conflict and peace management is defined as a means of preventing the outbreak, reoccurrence or continuation of armed conflict and as well as emergencies in the wide range of political development, humanitarian and human rights mechanism (Karame 2004:12, Okoro 2012 26-33). The process of peace building by the scope of the above definition comprises all stages of conflict from pre-conflict to post conflict stages. Peace building as a phase in the field of peace study aims at laying the foundation for sustainable peace in conflict torn society (Okoro 2010[b] 20-33). While peacemaking as distinct from peace building concerns itself with intervention of experts – elites in the decision making level of the society, peace building is concerned with social, economic and psychological universe of the ordinary people at the grassroots (Karame 2004:12). Thus actors in the field of peace building are recruited from all strata of the society.

Against this backdrop, peace education becomes an essential part of the peace building spheres. In the words of Gumut (2009), peace education is a deliberate attempt to educate children and adults on the dynamics of conflict and the promotion of peace making skills at home, schools and communities throughout the world, using all the channels and instruments of socialization (164-183). Peace education thus traditionally aims at providing education for global society. A focus on direct, organized violence, particularly the institutions for war and armed

conflicts, employing the framework based in recent theories of human society (Gumut 2009: 164-183) Specifically, peace education is seen as the process of acquiring the value, the knowledge and the developing of attitudes, skills and behaviours to live in harmony with oneself, others and with the natural environment (Braham 2006: 1-6)

Therefore, peace education programmes are organized around conflict resolution and focus attention on the social behavior, symptoms of conflict and training individual to resolve inter-personal disputes through techniques of negotiation and (peer) mediation. It teaches on how to manage anger and the norms of "fair fighting" and the improvement of communications through skills such as listening, turn-talking, identifying needs and separating facts from emotions. These approaches aim to alter beliefs, attitudes and behaviours from negative to positive attitudes towards conflict as a basis for preventing violence. (Harris, Lan M and Mary Lee Morrison 2003: 27). Against this backdrop, Braham (2006) maintains that peace education would be described as co-existence education and it involves the use of teaching tools designed to bring about a more peaceful society (1-6), Hence peace education programme are somewhat organized around democracy education, or is embedded in democracy education. This focuses attention on the political processes associated with conflict and as such postulates that an increase in democratic participation, the likelihood of society resolving conflict through violence and war decreases (Corkalo 2002: 177-186)

This postulation is based on the fact that every democratic society needs the commitment of her citizens, who accepts the inevitability of conflicts as well as the necessity for tolerance. Thus, the programme of peace education attempts to foster a conflict-positive orientation in the community by training students to view conflicts as a platform for creativity and growth (Corkalo 2002:177-186). Therefore peace education equips the people with the skill of ethical thinking, debate and coalition building and promotes values of freedom of speech, individuality, tolerance of diversity, compromise and conscious objection. Hence the overall aim of peace education, by extension, democracy education is to produce responsible citizens, who will hold their government accountable to the standard of peace, primarily through adverse social process. The programme is designed to groom students//citizens to assume the role of the citizens that choose, make decisions, take positions, argue positions and respect opinions of others (Braham 2006:24). This should generate or rather support multiparty democracy. Accordingly, Braham (2006) maintains that based on the assumption that democracy decreases the likelihood of

violence and war, it is therefore sustained that these are the skills necessary for creating a culture of peace.

Peace education, despite being a democracy education is also known as human rights education. Here the emphasis is on raising awareness of human rights. It places premium on the level and nature of policies that human beings ought to adopt in order to move close to a peaceful global community. The aim is to engender commitment among participants to a vision of structural peace in which all individual members of the human race can exercise their personal freedom and being legally protected from violence, oppression and dignity (Tidwell, 2004: 463-470). Accordingly, peace education under the panoply of human rights education familiarizes the participant with the international covenants and declarations of the United Nations system. It trains students to be aware of the implications of violations of the universal declarations of Human Rights. It further inducts the students into the consciousness of promoting the effect of tolerance, solidarity, autonomy and self affirmation at the individual and collective levels. In summary therefore, we shall adapt the definition of peace education by Harris Lan, which he adopted from MS Schmdt, the founder of peace work in Miami Florida, as he writes, Peace education is all about empowering people with skills, attitudes and knowledge:

> ➢ To build, maintain and restore relationships at all levels of human interaction
> ➢ To develop positive approaches towards dealing with conflict from personal to the international
> ➢ To create safe environment, both physically and emotionally that motivate each individual
> ➢ To build a sustainable environment and protect it from exploitation and war
> ➢ To create a safe world based on justice and human rights (2003:72)

Thus, peace education is based on a philosophy that teaches nonviolence, love and compassion, true fairness, cooperation and reverence for human family and all life on our planet.

Now having discussed the history, nature and purpose of peace education, the next challenge peace educators face is the content of the curriculum. To this, many peace educators suggest diverse and varied curriculum contents and this has caused scholars to delineate peace

education into two spheres – negative and positive peaces. According to IPRA report from Conference held on Durham, South Africa on June 23, 1998

> Traditional distinction in peace education is couched in terms of negative and positive peace. These distinctions can be seen in peace through studies, which use peacekeeping to deter violence, peacemaking, which helps disputants to resolve their conflicts and peace building which tries to motivate students want to be peaceful. Negative peace education tries to put out fire while positive peace education tries to stop fire from breaking out in the first place (1-18)

The discrepancies in curriculum content of peace education were saliently observed in the IPRA official report of 1998 conference as follows, 'Further distinction in peace education come from the content taught, the pedagogy or teachers' style and the skill that the students leaned in order to become peaceful people (1-18).According to this report, peace education content started out discussing the causes of wars and the attempts of international system to avoid wars. In Japan for instance, peace education was originally defined narrowly as "anti-atomic bomb" education. More recently, largely influenced by third world perspective, there has been a broadening of the notion of peace education to include the study of the origin of Japanese militarism, structural violence, cultural violence, personal violence, racism, environmental destruction, etc (IPRA 1998 official report 1-18} In the idea of Braham (2006) peace education since the early decades of the 20th century around the world has represented a spectrum of focal theme including but not limited to the following"

- Anti nuclearism
- International Understanding
- Environmental responsibility
- Communication skills
- Non violence
- Conflict resolution techniques
- Democracy
- Human right awareness
- Tolerance of diversity
- Co-existence

- Gender equality (73-74)

Some other scholars address the issue of spiritual dimensions of inner harmony or synthesized a number of foregoing issues into a programme on world citizenship. The theory or philosophy of peace education often has been based on Kantian motion of duty, while James Page (1997) maintains that the rationale for peace education might be located in virtue ethics, consequentiality ethics, conservative ethics, aesthetics ethics and the ethics of care (Porah 2006:75) In his own contribution. Kidder (2000) maintains that topics addressed in peace education include philosophical and practical issues. These issues focus on income, health and power disparities between man and women as well as examining the tradition and structures that have led to the disadvantaged position of women. However, at its core, peace education emphasized empowerment and non violence and also involved building a democratic community, teaching co-operation, developing moral sensitivity, promoting self-esteem and stimulating critical thinking (207-220)

Notably, as good and as elaborate the content of peace education may have been, it is a general observation of global citizens that, it has not addressed the core issues in human conflict and as such has failed in its prospect of creating a peaceful society. In his own assessment of the content of peace education, Swee-Him (1997) observes that each of the various streams of peace education inevitably have their own dynamics and autonomy in terms of theory and practice (22). Accordingly, Solomon (2002) has described how the challenges, goals and method of peace education differ substantially between the area characterized intractable conflict, interethnic tension and relative tranquility (11) Solomon went further to lament the problems of the content of peace education as he says;

> Firstly, too many profoundly different kinds of activities taking place under the same wide array of contexts are all lumped under the same category label of peace education, as if they all belong together. Secondly the fields of scholarship in the forms of theorizing, research and programes evaluation badly lags behind practice. Hence in the absence of clarity of what peace education really is or how its different realities relate to each other, it is unclear how experience with one

variant of peace education in one region can usefully inform programes

in another region (24)

In the idea of Clark-Habbi (2003), a general or integrated theory of peace is needed, one that can holistically account for interpersonal, intergroup and international dynamics of peace, as well as its main principles and prerequisites.

It is therefore this needed integrated and holistic approach that this paper is poised to present. It is couched in the African concept of "Inochi" which develops from cosmic or mystic nature of human origin. While the present contents of peace education are centered on socio-political, economic, gender and other exigencies of human needs, the new approach depends on the core of human origin which binds all life to one source. This is defined in the 'Oriental Thought' as the Brahman. This cosmic content of peace education as couched in African Inochi, takes seriously the fact that individuality is simply an illusion of the modern era and thus proposes a cosmic unity that binds all lives to common source and common fate to be the centerpiece of modern peace education curriculum if the contemporary society must experience her dreams of a peaceful community.

2. African Concept of Inochi: Towards an Understanding

The word "*Inochi*" pronounced "**ee-know-chee**" is actually a Japanese word for life (Masahiro 1991:83-115) and is the most commonly used among the ordinary Japanese to describe life or in the idea of Masahiro to refer to everyday phenomenon concerning life, death and nature (83-115). This idea of life squares up with African vernacular as Ndu, Ubuntu, Ujanma, Botho, umuthu, Utu. These African ideas of inochi, just like its Japanese equivalent, took a cosmic nature of life more seriously and object vehemently to any form of materialistic consideration of life. Ansah (2000) stroke a cord of the nature of African Philosophy of "Inochi" as he writes, 'Africans recognize that all beings that exists are made of forces. The Africans believe that the force of the creator is present in creatures and in all things' (2). The various African terminologies used in various African communities to describe life find a unity of expression in the concept of inochi and this informs its adoption by the paper as a matrix to discussing African philosophy of life.

Historically, Inochi in modern Japanese has three linguistic origins – Chinese, Buddhism and ancient Japanese. Ming in ancient Chinese corresponds to Inochi. The original meaning of Ming is to order someone to do something. The well known phrase Tiang Ming (Man's destiny determined by the transcendent beings) is a derivation from the meaning (Masahiro 1991:83-115). The common idea of Ming includes destiny, lifespan and ones nature. Notably, the Ming, which appears in Buddhist sutras, written in Chinese characters incorporates the concept of energy or power of living into its meaning. In some sutras, one can still find expressions that contains "Ming" which stands for the principles of power that makes something alive from behind that being (Calscoft and Ames, 1989: 47) Thus, Inochi in ancient Japanese has incorporated such meanings as "life span" and "power of living" having been influenced by the meaning of "Ming" imported from nearby Asian countries like China and India. Etymologically, the word Inochi is made up of I and Chi. The letter I stands for 'breath' while Chi stands for 'Inside' or dynamic energy. In modern Japanese, the idea of Inochi has adopted four standardized meanings, namely:

- Inochi connotes a mysterious power that keeps creatures and human alive. Here there are such expressions as "*wash one's inochi*" which means the recovery of powers that keep us alive, '**at *the height of inochi'*** this means the peak of a creature life and '**burn up *one's inochi***" which means to burn up ones energy of living (and die). These meanings have close relationship with the meaning of inochi as the energy or breath. Overtly, it is breath that makes an individual creature alive inside its body. However, it is noted that within the ambit of the conceptual discussion of inochi, that breathe also flows out of an individual and slips into another individual's body. In this way Inochi, in the form of breath incessantly interconnects all living creatures on the earth synchronically and diachronically (Masahiro 1991:83-115). Using the concept of force in Africa to describe the "inochi" reality, Ansah (2000) writes, 'It is because all being is force and exist only in that it is force, that the category includes of necessity all beings – God, men-living and departed – animal, plants, minerals etc*' (28)*

- The second modern Japanese meaning of inochi points to the period between birth and death to the state of being alive. Inochi here contains expression which stands for dying such as "**Inochi ends**" and to drop ones inochi. Other expressions includes "**Inochi shrinks**" which means to encounter danger, '***one's inochi is short'*** which means that one has a short time to

live or leave one's destiny under somebody's control. 'Inochi is limited in time and space'. In other words, Inochi has its beginning and ends and as such inochi being must surely die sooner or later. The first meaning of Inochi as life energy seems to contradict, the second of being alive. We shall attempt to clarify the difference in the course of the paper.

- The third meaning is the essential part of an object. For example to take away something's Inochi does not mean to kill it but to take away an important and essential quality of something

- The last meaning of Inochi is eternal life

Overtly, Inochi is an irreplaceable thing equally present in human, animal and plant. Inochi therefore is the only thing that all humans and perhaps non-humans possess equally. In Igbo category, inochi means Ndu! Ndu does not simply mean life as in English concept. It means the essence of existence; hence we have "Akwukwo Ndu" Living Leaves, 'Mmiri Ndu' living water, nma ndu. (Madu) "Living Beings, 'Oku Ndu' living fire, 'Anu Ndu' living animals etc. Ndu-Inochi is what inhere all things, material and non material components of life. Thus all living creatures, including humans, animals and plants have Inochi and this is given in equal proportion to all (Masahiro 1991:83-113). In other words, humans and all creatures are equal from the view point of Inochi. So we live, simply because we have Inochi. Inochi keeps everyone and everything alive. (Ohama 1984:17) Against this Background, Africans, just like Asians-Japanese, accept that the life force of the creator is present in all creatures. This idea is aptly described in the words of Davidson (1969) thus:

> The overall relationship of God, man and nature constitutes an
> integrated whole. It is not that God breath life separately into each
> individual who then goes off by him or her. Rather the creative
> divine breath continues to flow, as it were (28)

It is this flow of thought that made Africans to accept that the fundamental notion under which 'being' is the essence of life is conceived lies within the category of force. Temple Placid gave impetus to this ideology of force in his study of Bantu Philosophy as he writes that "force is a category of being, it is not just an attribute (431). In his own words

> We can conceive the transcendental notion of being by separating
> *it from its attributes 'force', but the Bantu cannot. 'F*orce in his
> *thought is a necessary element in being and the concept. "Force"*

is inseparable from the definition of being. There is no idea of *being divorced from the idea of force, without element of 'force'* being cannot be conceived (430-431)

Thus the major concern of the African metaphysics is the study of this reality – 'force' as it exists in everything and in every being in the universe. Hence, Africans underscore the basic fact that it is by virtue of this reality that all beings have something in common, thus, the definition of the reality – force-may be applied to all existent form of being (Ansah 2000: 42). According to Ansah (2002) to arrive at the force common to all beings or rather which is identical in all beings, it becomes necessary to eliminate all forms of reality; these belonging to one category only among beings. To be specific, the concept of force in whatever terms or description – inochi- or Ndu – is bound to the concept of being even in the most abstract form. Thus, the Africans conceive being as that which have force. Accordingly, Ansah (2000) notes that Africans speak, act, live etc as if being were force (72). Hence, Africans do not consider forces (NDU – Inochi) as an adventitious accidental reality, for it is reality itself in African ontology. In fact, force-Ndu- is even more than a necessary attribute of being. Force – (Ndu-Inochi) is summarily the nature of beings. Therefore, force (Ndu-Inochi) is being and being is force (Ndu – Inochi).

Africans thereto regard being exclusively or essentially as a principle of activity. Comparatively, where the Europeans propose a conception of being, Africans conceive force. Where the Europeans see concrete being, Africans see concrete force. Europeans say that beings are differentiated by their essence or nature; Africans hold that force differs in its essence or nature. Africans therefore hold that there are categories of forces (Ndu-Inochi), ranging from divine force, celestial force or terrestrial force, human force, animal force, vegetables force, mineral force etc (Ansah 2000:42). It is because all inochi are force and exists only at that level – the category of force include of necessity all Inochi, God, men – living and departed – animal, plants, minerals etc, since inochi is force and force is inochi, all things appear to the Africans as inochi. However, Africans make clear distinctions and understand the essential differences between different inochis (being). In other words, though Inochi flow from one source to all Inochis, there is still differentiation in category of Inochi, Hence Temple (1983) underscores that:

Being with greater force ranks higher in the hierarchy, God is the highest force, beings higher up in the hierarchy strengthens or enfeebles those lower down. The created universe centered around human forces, hence the hierarchy of being is largely anthropocentric (Njoku 2002:21).

The clear distinction of being (inochi) in their hierarchy aided Africans to recognize unity,   and individuality – but the individuality is understood as meaning the individuality of forces. That is why it is necessary to reject the foreignness to and the imposition of western dualism of good versus evil to African philosophy

However, in the category of visible beings, Africans distinguish that which is perceived by the senses and the 'thing in itself'. By the thing in itself, they indicate its individual inner nature or the inochi of a particular thing. Often, Africans express this ideologies figuratively, for instance, when they say, "in everything, there is another' and 'in every man a little man, they simply express the differentiation made between the contingent, the visible phenomenon of beings or of force (inochi) and the intrinsic visible nature of that force (Inochi). Thus, when the European differentiates in man the soul and body, they are at loss to explain where 'the man has gone after these two components have been separated. This is part of the difficulty in explaining certain concepts in western philosophy that has made Africans to reject expressing themselves in such western categories. Thus, Africans instead of distinguishing man as body and soul do distinguish man as body, shadow and breath. Accordingly, breath (inochi) is assumed as the manifestation, 'the alter ego', the evident signal of life. Though the breath is mortal and does not in any way correspond to Western concept of soul, however, when the body and the shadow and its breath have disappeared, what therefore lives on after death is 'the man himself' or 'the little man' the breath and this is not described as part of man but simply as the man himself or the little man, who was formerly hidden behind the perceptible manifestation of man (Ansah 2000: 47)

Notably, in Western philosophy, it is said of a man that he grows, develops, acquires knowledge, and exercises his intelligence and will and that in doing so, he increases them. Europeans do not hold that by these acquisitions and by this development, he has become more a man, at least not in the sense that his human nature has changed. One either has human nature or does not. . Human nature is not something that can increase or diminish in Western ontology.

Thus development only operates in a man's qualities or in his faculties. However, the African ontology or the African theory of force is radically opposed to such western conception. Hence, when an African says, "I am becoming stronger" he is thinking of something quite different from what the westerners mean when they say that their powers are increasing. When an African says that a force is increasing or that a being – (Inochi) is being reinforced, this thought must be expressed in European languages and according to their outlook, as his inochi has grown as such. His nature has been made stronger, increased, made greater. Ansah (2000) observes a resemblance of this ideology within the Catholic theology, when he points out thus:

> Catholic theology teaches the supernatural realities of grace, that as a supernatural reinforcement of our being – inochi – that is able to grow and be strengthened in itself is similar to what African accept in the natural order as true of all beings – Inochi (121)

Accordingly, it is this sense in which one should understand the following expressions. It therefore shows then that the behaviour of Africans centers on the ideas of vital energy – inochi – to be strong', 'to reinforce your life', 'you are powerful', the strong or again your vital force is declining has been effected. It is in this sense also that one must understand Fraser when he says in the Golden Bough "The soul-like the body can be fat or thin, great or small.

> The diminution of the shadow is considered to be the index of a parallel enforcement in the vital energy of its owner. For the African existence is a thing of valuable intensity and furthers when he maintains the diminution or the reinforcement of being (Ansah 2004:12)

The origin, the substance or the annihilation of being or of forces –inochi is expressed and exclusively attributed to God the source of all inochis. The term to create its proper connotation of 'to evoke' from not inochi or not being is found in its full significance in African thought system. Against this backdrop, the Africans see in the phenomenon of conception, a direct intervention of God in creating all life – inochi. Summarily, the two basic realities are God, who is mysterious and breathes life into humans and other creatures, who are seen as both essentially related to God by the gift of life and creativity with regard to nature. Huddleston

(1997) aptly summarized the inter-relatedness of all humans and situates the only source of human origin as he writes

> We are sons and daughters of one father, our original nature though has been beclouded by our human passions and depravity, our differences in colour are ordered by geographical and environmental overture and the variation inherent in the material universe. Nevertheless, amid all the differences, we still share the unchangeable essence – Inochi- of our father (the creator). This informs our notion of common origin and common humanity (Okoro 2011: 273)

3. **Hermeneutical Discourse on African Concept of Inochi**:

Against the background of the preceding discussions, this session maintains that while Inochi in African ontology underscores the idea of mono-reality; that is the presence of one reality as the absolute manifestation of all other Inochis (lives), however, African Inochi does not square up with pantheism of Benedict Spinoza, in which God is identical with nature, nor does African Inochi agrees with the Upanishad- the Hindu Philosophy, which adopts monistic and absolutistic view of reality (Edet 2002: 7-8). On the contrary, Inochi concept maintains the interconnectedness and absolute inseparability of origin and common sources of existence. Therefore, it is illusionary to think of individual self existence in African concept. The life of man, without the discrimination of color, race, nationality, religion, sex etc with the life of animal, plant and of course the entire natural environment share common origin and common source of existence and returns to life (Inochi) at the expiration of the temporary existence. It is in consonance with this idea that Masahiro (1990) writes.

> We have realized that all Inochis are connected and formed into one, while each individual Inochi is voluntary and independent, that all Inochis are equal in value, that every Inochi exist in its adequate position giving life to every other, that human attitude towards nature is the same as human attitude towards humans themselves and that our Inochi gets sick and die when greenery gets sick and dies. (99).

The idea of Inochi presents dialectic of the independence and interconnectedness of life and this is seen in the dynamics of giving life to each other, the inner relationship between our attitude towards nature and ourselves and the relationship between Inochi and greenery (Masahiro 1990:99-100). Wasa (1989), in agreement with the foregoing concept of Inochi writes:

> Buddhism preaches living and walking with all Inochis. The words, *"all Inochis* mean not only humans Inochis but also all the Inochis living on this earth. And they also mean not only the present Inochis, but also those of the future, in thirty, fifty and a hundred and a thousand years. These Inochis are friends whom we have met, are meeting, and sure to meet in the future, at the bottom of the identical Inochi. We love and treasure our own Inochi before anything else. Therefore we must love and treasure all Inochis and must live, praying to be able to walk together. (72-3).

The basic recurrent ideology of Inochi in almost all religio – cultural traditions is that we need to love all Inochis. This ideology emanates from the assumption that Inochi spreads from human to all creatures, from past to the future and all these Inochis are our friends, and an extended part of our personal Inochi. Here, Michelle (2011) writes, "There is a basic oneness in the universe and beyond and in our search for the transcendent is precisely this oneness that we are seeking, oneness that unifies all creation (143). It is on this direction that Mick Collins (2011), presents a mind burgling question on the present state of the global village and how to realize the ideal common humanity as he avers, 'a central question that is allied to tackling these global difficulties, concerns how humanity will approach the task of walking together productively in order to manage such a vast and complex transition. To this he presents a stalking answer that touches on the origin of common humanity as expressed in African Inochi ideology thus.

> A starting point for addressing the monumental understanding needs begin with the recognition that all forms of life are connected to the central life support system: the earth. Therefore it is important for greater planetary whole, the recognition of which could create a shift in thinking that leads to the emergence of holistic consciousness (214-223).

The idea of holism in Mick Collins ideology is similar to the African concept of Inochi. Mick Collins "Holism' derives from the Greek word holos- which means, whole and inclusive of connection between body, mind, spirit and nature. Therefore, the current ideology presents a challenge of healing the fragmentation in the modern world, requires a new understanding of consciousness that encompasses a more holistic outlook. This outlook has been described by Ervin Laszio (2004), as she writes, 'The New holism tells people they are not machines, however, complex and sophisticated and truly separated from each other and their environment. Humans are conscious elements in the dynamic universe, interacting with each other as well as the biosphere (39-52).Similarly, Okoro (2011) notes.

> What is the truth about this world? It is not in the mass of substance, not in the number of things but in their relatedness, which neither can be counted nor measured, nor abstracted. It is not in the materials, which are many but in expression which is one. All our knowledge of something is knowing them in their universe, in that relation which is truth. A drop of water is not a particular assortment of element; it is the miracle of harmonious mutuality in which the two reveals the one …. There is the dancing ring of season, the elusive play of lights and shadows, of winds and water, the many colored wings of erratic life flirting between birth and death.. The importance of these does not lie in their existence as mere facts but in their language of harmony, the mother-tongue of our soul, through which they are communicated to us (255-277).

It is against this backdrop that Togore writes:

> To be human is to try to go beyond oneself, to join with a greater sphere of life in sacrifice, love and friendship, men must find and feel and represent in all their creative works, man the eternal, the creator, … for reality is the truth of man, who belongs to all times. Man is eager that his feelings for what is real to him must never die. Here it must find an imperishable form (Wallow 2008: 1-5).

It was Togore's aspiration to creating and maintaining common brotherhood of all men. Togore defined his life goal, which later became the motto of "Sanitikan" (Education Centre) "where the world makes its home in a simple nest" (Okoro, 2011:255-277). His aim was to create such a synthesis of the local and the universal. This ideology is reflected in this excerpt from of his poems:

> 'Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high, where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls, where the clear stream of reason has not yet lost its way into the dreary sand of dead habit into heaven of freedom, let my country awake ((Wadlolw 2008; 1-5)
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In his works, "Towards the universal man" Tagore proposed his idea of global consciousness or cosmic consciousness, which must transcend all narrowly defined identities. Here, he underscores the fact that human individuals are simply a unit of consciousness in the cosmic or universal consciousness. The cosmic consciousness ideology embodies the essence of universal mind, the universal man and the supreme personality or even the god of humanity in his cosmic consciousness, Tagore concludes that a bond of spiritual unity binds the whole of mankind.

Therefore, Africans assign some property to the concept of Inochi. According to Masahiro (1990), the first property of Inochi is irreplaceability. The replaceablitity concept of Inochi bequeaths humanity with great responsibility and care of all Inochis. The property of replaceability of Inochi underscores the fact that one only has one Inochi in his/her/its earthly existence and when lost by whatever means, it cannot be replaced by any other Inochi. Thus, it is stressed that every Inochi, including those of humans and other creatures, is equally irreplaceable. This belief is expressed in the Igbo adage "Ndu adighi abuo". (Life has no duplicate).

Masahiro (1990) highlights on the second property of Inochi, using Japan's category as he avers, "the second property of Inochi is the process of being born, growing, ageing and dying (99-102). This property is a general condition of all lives whether humans, animals or plant. This understanding is the most basic way of grasping Inochi. The next property of Inochi defines the concept as being beyond the power of humans. Here Inochi beings lack the propensity to evolve into existence on their own will nor do they continue in existence through their own will. Thus the existence of Inochi beings is quite dependent on certain transcendent powers beyond the

power of humans, and the transcendent power is considered the true source of all Inochi beings in African ontology. Therefore in African ontology, all Inochi beings are inseparably related to the transcendent being-God- who is the supreme soul or life from whom all lives – Inochis – emanate and subsist.

Against this background, Inochi acquires a fourth property, which defines its relationship with other temporary Inochi beings. Thus, living together in mutual support becomes a natural way of living in African traditional society. Here it is underscored that Inochi beings cannot live without mutual support networks of other Inochis spread all over the earth. This network means on the one hand, synchronic mutual support, such as human relationships in the family and food chains in the ecosystem (Masahiro 1990: 99-105). Here a popular African proverb comes to mind to buttress this sense of community and mutual support living, which says, "Go the way many go, if you go alone, you will have reasons to lament" (Okoro 2010:145-167). African idea of security and its values depend on personal identification with and within community. This concept has been vividly expressed by Ifemesia (1999), thus:

> This community also, within this transcendental term of reference (God–made), becomes the custodian of individual ideas. This is why, beyond the community - the clan- for the African, there stood the void in strong and ever present contrast? Outside this ancestrally chartered system there lay no possible life, since a man without lineage is a man without citizenship, without identity and therefore without al*lies or… a man outside his clan* is like a grasshopper whi*ch has lost its wings. The clan here is, "clan vital"* *'that is living cla*n (Ifemesia, 1979:25-27, Danson, 1969:3).

On the other hand, the network of relationship in African ontology means diachronic mutual support in passing of generation from parents to their children. In African traditional society, the community offers its members the psychological and ultimate security as it bequeaths her members both physical and ideological ideality. It must be noted here, that in African mentality, the community as an entity remains while the individuals, as persons, come and go. Therefore, Africans emphasize community life and communalism as a living principle, which the basic ideology is community–identity. Its aim is to produce and present an individual

as community–culture bearer. Culture is thus a community property and must be community protected (Okoro 2010:145-167).

From the Synchronic point of view, the concepts of living together and symbiosis are stressed. From diachronic point of view, the concepts of succession and taking over of Inochi are stressed (Masahiro, 1990:99-107). The fifth property of Inochi is personality. Every Inochi being possesses its own personality as well as individuality. This is subsumed in the fact that there is no creature with completely the same figure and appearance as another, hence every Inochi is irreplaceable. Since every Inochi is considered to posses all the property as an essential part of its being, it therefore suffices that certain norms are couched to protect Inochi property from violation. According to Masahiro (1990) there are three of such norms.

The first of the norms is to treasure Inochi. Accordingly, these norms make particular emphasizes that every Inochi on earth have the inalienable right to be loved, cared for and treasured. This is because each Inochi is irreplaceable, valuable and no Inochi can exist independent of other Inochis. Notably, our attitude of treasuring Inochi will change into a spirit of respect for Inochi and in the end will lead us towards reverence for the great existence that support Inochi and nature. This African norm aimed at protecting the property of Inochi is similar to modern cliché that emphasizes respect for life or dignity of life.

The second norm is to support each other. As Inochi beings, we ought to support and help each other in community and in the ecosystem because we live in the midst of the web of all living things. This is because, one's Inochi does not only belong to oneself but also to the family and society and therefore it is important to live for others. According to Ifemesia, (1999), 'the individual in African community is in the "clan vital" protected. His individual identity is not emphasized at the expense of his community identity. This is why individualism and materialism as ideology and principle of life are not encouraged in African, though they may not be discouraged. In the words of Steve Biko (1978),

> We regard our living together not as an unfortunate mishap
> warranting endless competition among us but as a deliberate act of
> God to make us a community of brothers and sisters jointly involved
> in the quest for a composite answer to the varied problems of life,
> hence in all we do, we always place man first and hence all our

actions is usually joint community oriented action rather than the individualism (42).

This norm does not preclude the animals and plant. Thus there is an insistence in the African traditional society that the significance of living together with animals and plants are jealously protected and this could be found in the traditional architectural design of the African traditional home where, both animals and plant have copious spaces.

The third norm is to do the utmost in one's power. Accordingly, our Inochi is finite thus Inochi being must die sooner or later and hence we should do our best at every moment of our life. Taylor (1985) gives an apt explanation of the norm thus.

> As a cicada lives its short life and gives birth to a new Inochi with all its power, so should I live with all my powers in order to hand over my Inochi to the next generation. I think of treasuring my irreplaceable Inochi, I think of living always concentrating on this moment in time. Then will I be able to be content with my Inochi and hand it over to the next Inochi. I want to live at this moment with all my power and give my Inochi radiant light (28-30).

The emphasis here is that we concentrate on this moment and do the utmost in our powers in order to participate in the continuity of Inochi. In these sentences, we find a logical tension between the continuity of Inochi on a large scale and a bright Inochi condensed into the moment in time (Kakahashi 1989, Yamamoto 1988, Masahiro, 1999). From our discussion so far, we could underscores the basic fact that in African ontology, Inochi is simply an energy, which keeps all creatures alive and at the same time Inochi connotes the state of being alive. The imagery of Inochi has close affinity with birth, growth, ageing and death. Thus, one's Inochi is irreplaceable, important and beyond our powers. It is finite and at the same it is connected to others in space, time and eternality (Masahiro, 1990: 99-107).

Collorary to the foregoing assumption, Inochi must be a phase not an object, nor an entity. Inochi is not an object, just as book, a flower or a rabbit but a phase which a flower and rabbit enjoy. Thus, Inochi beings are concept which includes the sea, the air, the ecosystem, the earth and the universe at its fringes. Thus, Inochi is a phase in which all things are born, grow, give birth, age and die. Inochi beings are those things in the universe that are viewed in this

phase. For example, if we regard a rabbit jumping in front of us as an animal in a growing stage, we have grasped it as an Inochi being, similarly, if we regarded a star as a being, which was born a long time ago, grows, gives birth to planets, ages to become a neutron star and dies, we have grasped it as Inochi being. If we accept that all creatures were born through intercourse between North Pole liquid and South Pole liquid of the earth (Masahiro 1990: 99-100). Therefore Inochi in the modern term is observer-related concept but not so with African traditional society, where Inochi beings are considered as interrelated with one another. Here Africans unlike the western world, accept that Inochi is interwoven in an infinite network in space and time. Inochi beings are interrelated in the universe

4.   Implications of Inochi for Peace Education in the Modern World

The Inochi paradigm defines life and its sources, relationships, interconnectedness with other lives and ultimate goal of living in the world. To this end, Inochi defines life within the universe of people, animal, plant and the entire ecosystem. Inochi paradigm moves life from the sphere of materiality and gives it a transcendent reference. Therefore, if the peace educators and scholars and/ or educationists and curriculum designers will begin the programme of peace building from the point of view of African Inochi paradigm, which maintains that all lives in the planetary system inhere from one source, it will bring about a paradigm shift in our current thinking pattern. The result will be that the young citizens of global family, who will be the benefactors of such programme, will not only stop considering themselves from an individualistic stances but also from materialistic stances, a tradition the modern socio-economic paradigm has bequeathed to us . It is against this background that Africans pay great respect to the sacredness of not only human lives but all lives. In avid support of this assumption, Amadi (1982) opines, "Africans do not like violence per se. This is because shedding of blood is abhorred (58). In his own contribution, Onwubiko (1988) writes.

> In many African tribes the killing of Kinsman, the antithesis of caring
> for him, was not only a crime but also an abomination. In this light,
> unborn children are protected and abortion is tabooed, sources of life
> are sacred. Trees and animals are believed to facilitate reincarnation
> are also sacred (21)

Accordingly, the sanctity attached to Inochi beings in African ontology makes it an abomination for anyone under any circumstances to take his own life, suicide was never permitted. Punishment for suicide was that the person was not to be buried since his corpse was also believed to be abominable to the mother earth and the second punishment was that the person will be refused entrance into the guild of ancestors, thus he/she becomes a wandering and homeless tramp without the prospect of rest, spiritual influence and reincarnation. Therefore, Africans prize life above every other thing. This assumption has its justification in the Igbo popular saying, Nduka –life is supreme – is expressive of the Africans regard for life – Inochi. Thus any form of materialism, which may lead to the destruction of life is alien and destructive of African culture and concept of Inochi and is always avoided.

So if the global citizens, like traditional Africans, are taught the moral aspect of Inochi paradigm, it would have suppressed the detrimental facts of our global existence. Some of the facts are:

- We usually waste the Inochi of animals, fish and vegetables, as the function of our highly industrialized society depends on these wastes of Inochi for energy. We treasure our Inochi and take care of that of our community but we do not care about human Inochi in other communities/ nations.

- Our modern civilization has dominated nature and destroyed innumerable Inochis, instead of supporting them. We have been using a great deal of fossil energy for our own sake and live an affluent life without regard for future generation. The global citizens shut away senile aged people and handicapped people into old peoples' homes.

- There is security threat in every quarter of our world, wars, conflicts and terrorist attacks, genocide and homicide are just our contemporary experiences. The cheap labour, exploitation, human trafficking, prostitution and child labour are all our contemporary experiences

Notably, these are the facts that the moral paradigm of our society would want to conceal behind the curtain of poetic discourses, in case it fails to put them right. However, the Inochi paradigm is sacred norms that signal our contemporary society of its wrongful and destructive ways it has been handling life related matters. Therefore, if we must reorder the global

community and avert the impending danger of destruction, we therefore have to start a programme of mental reconstruction of the modern man through moral education that centers on common humanity rather than common community. This new education program will create what Mick Collins (2011) call "holistic consciousness" (214-233).

Notably, a central issue in the development of holistic consciousness, according to Mick Collins, is linked to exploring man that goes beyond ego – identification, where human potential connects to the transpersonal view of reality, which has spiritual and ecological significance (214-223). This transitional potential for developing people's relationship to holistic consciousness can be cultivated between personal and transpersonal spheres of human experiences. Noting that personal experience of consciousness are located within the context of individual ego and body identifications (self–references), while transpersonal experience of consciousness go beyond individualism (trans) and are reflective of a wider and deeper connections to life as a whole (Mick Collins 2011:214-223).

However, the opportunities for developing a creative synergy or interface between personal and transpersonal experiences could have a far reaching implications to holistic consciousness. Thus the cultivation of transpersonal potential could have deep implication for how people feel about life and how they respond to new consciousness (opportunities) as planetary citizens. In this case, Erum (2004) opines:

> When people evolve transpersonal consciousness, they become aware of their deep ties to each other, to biosphere and to the cosmos. They develop greater empathy with people and cultures near and far and greater sensitivity to animal, plants and the entire biosphere. As a result, a new civilization can see the light of the day (125).

The evolution of holistic consciousness has a great concern with the participatory approach in the engagement of transpersonal for the tackling of the growing global crises. It was Forge Ferrer (2000), who first defined this transition in vivid terms thus, 'The translation of transient spiritual states into actual spiritual transformation of self and the world' (213-253).

Against this backdrop therefore, transpersonal experiences can inspire humankind to engaging in holistic consciousness based on the recognition that the planet and all life are sacred

as vividly expressed in African Inochi paradigm. This perspective is quite inclusive, naturalistic and transcendent (Mick Collins 2001:214-223). Thus, the human beings integration of transpersonal potential within daily life and living is linked to doing and participating. Consequently, Bache (2000) maintains as follows:

> As the inherent wholeness of existence becomes a living experience
>
> for more and more persons, individuals will find themselves
>
> empowered by new orders of creativity that could not have been
>
> anticipated as long as we were trapped within the narrow confines of
>
> an atomistic self referent mode of consciousness (256).

Consequently, humanity could meet the challenge of tackling the global crisis through cultivation of holistic consciousness which is linked to purpose directed action for the co-creation of a sustainable and improved future. Such a shift in human development through education should be a great turning point for action as it supports the management of the world's natural resources, which includes taking action to offset the growing demand for food and fuel (due to over population). It is on this note that African Inochi paradigm maintains that humankind needs to change behaviours and cultivate altruistic deeds and compassionate acts that counter the escalating trends of social instability due to corruption and violence.

The transformative actions, that might occur when African Inochi paradigm is adopted in the formative stage of the global citizen, are linked to the creation of holistic consciousness through the sublimating self-saving interests which are redirected towards global well-being (Mick Collins 2011:213-223). This proactive position is based on the development of a collective understanding that the future is co-created as it is lived through our daily action. The transformative value of people making personal changes within everyday activities and relationships at home, in neighbourhoods, towns and cities etc. reflects possibilities for developing transpersonal potential collectivity, transpersonal ways of participating in life are based on an understanding that all lives are connected – what we do in our everyday activities to one another and the planet - we also do to ourselves.

The holistic consciousness as mirrored in African concept of Inochi reflects a new view of life that takes account of the part human beings play within a greater planetary whole. Thus, the new model--African Inochi paradigm –insists on a global need for people to begin to assert and as well as express their human potentials collectively as a form of service, which is directed

towards renewing our connection to the earth as a sacred source. This transpersonal view of human potential reflects how life is interconnected, which should inspire changes in behaviours that make important contribution to the well being of the world and all forms of life. Thus, if we base the foundation of peace education on the African concept of Inochi, it will not only curb violence but it will also eliminate entirely in the minds /mental construct of the global citizen the idea of individualism, which is the base of competition, exploitation, oppression, domination, violence, terrorism, wars etc. Corporate humanity should occupy the epi-centre of citizenship/democratic education; by so doing, the universal consciousness would have been acquired. This will in turn generate humanity, community, love, care and respect for human life and opinions.

5. Conclusion

This paper has made attempt to chart a new path for peace building through education and curriculum development. It observes that in spite of concerted efforts and avid research made in the field of peace building, that our world has not understood the language of peace. The paper situates the reason to be that the curriculum of peace building education is quite technical and theoretical. It is also based on materialistic and atomistic nature of man in the world. Thus, this paper attempts to redefine the content of peace education by injecting a moral/spiritual imperative into the content of peace education programme. The paper finds a ready tool for this redefinition in the African concept of Inochi which has a unified opsis of the universe. African concept of Inochi underscores the fact of unitary/spiritual origin of all things and maintains the interconnectedness of all lives as a dictum and as the only model that can guarantee a peaceful a world.

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