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JULIUS NYERERE'S UJAMAA PHILOSOPHY AND PEACE EDUCATION IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF ITS POTENTIAL FOR ENHANCING CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND FOSTERING PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

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Abstract

This study examined the potential of Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy for enhancing conflict resolution and fostering peaceful coexistence through peace education in South East Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 79,152 academic staff in universities in South East Nigeria. A sample of 750 academic staff was selected using simple random sampling. Data were collected with a structured questionnaire validated by three experts, two in Philosophy of Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation, from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Reliability coefficients using Cronbach Alpha were 0.83, 0.80, and 0.81 for the three subsections. Data were analysed using mean ratings with 2.50 as the criterion mean. Findings revealed that respondents agreed that Ujamaa philosophy promotes conflict resolution. Respondents also agreed that integration of Ujamaa principles into peace education can enhance social cohesion. Challenges to implementation, including resistance to change and limited resources, were acknowledged. The study concluded that Ujamaa-based peace education is applicable to the cultural context of South East Nigeria and can address state-specific conflict challenges when implemented collaboratively. It was recommended that government and community leaders integrate Ujamaa philosophy into peace education curricula in South East Nigeria to foster a culture of peace and mutual understanding.

Introduction

Education is a multifaceted and dynamic process that extends far beyond the confines of a classroom or a textbook. It is a transformative journey that shapes the mind, nurtures the soul, and empowers individuals to reach their full potential.

Education is the catalyst that ignites the flame of curiosity, fosters creativity, and develops critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. Education according Offiah (2025) is about the pursuit of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. It is a lifelong process that begins at birth and continues until death, encompassing various experiences, encounters, and learning opportunities that mold and shape us into who we are meant to be. Through education, people learn to navigate the complexities of life, make informed decisions, and take responsibility for their actions; one aspect of education that fosters a deep understanding of the complex issues that lead to conflict and violence is peace education.

Peace education is a transformative and empowering process that cultivates a culture of peace, tolerance, and understanding. Pee *et al*. (2021) maintained that it is an educational approach that equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to build a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world. Peace education is not merely a subject or a course, but a holistic and interdisciplinary approach that permeates all aspects of learning and living. Peace education according to Ominde *et al*. (2021) encourages critical thinking, reflection, and analysis of the root causes of conflict, and explores ways to address them through non-violent means. Peace is not merely the absence of conflict, but a dynamic and multifaceted concept that requires constant effort and commitment to achieve. Through peace education, individuals develop the skills and competencies necessary to navigate complex

Nigeria, is a country marked by a complex web of conflicts, including ethnic, religious, and political tensions. According to Presidential Working Party on Education Reform. (2023), the country has experienced a surge in violent conflicts in recent years, resulting in loss of lives, destruction of property, and displacement

of communities. Despite this challenging context, peace education initiatives have emerged as a beacon of hope. Peace education programs in have focused on promoting interfaith dialogue, cultural understanding, and conflict resolution skills among youth. However, challenges persist. Moreover, the dominant Western-centric approach to peace education has been criticized for neglecting indigenous knowledge and cultural perspectives. In response, there is a growing call for contextualized peace education that incorporates local values and practices. Efforts to integrate peace education into school curricula and community programs are underway, but more needs to be done to address the scale and complexity of conflicts in South East Country through the integration of Ujamaa Philosophy.

Ujamaa philosophy, coined by Julius Nyerere, is a Swahili term meaning "familyhood" or "brotherhood" that emphasizes the importance of community, mutual respect, and collective well-being. According to Suell (2022), Ujamaa seeks to build a society based on equality, justice, and democracy, where individuals work together for the common good. Ujamaa emphasizes familyhood, promoting a sense of community and collective responsibility. Mutual respect is also a fundamental principle, recognizing the inherent dignity and worth of every individual. Collective work and self-reliance are encouraged, with community members working together to achieve common goals. Ujamaa also strives for equality and justice, seeking to address imbalances and promote fair distribution of resources. Democracy is a key aspect, fostering participatory decision-making and inclusive governance. As noted by The Citizen Reporter. (2023), Ujamaa philosophy is rooted in African values and traditions, offering a unique approach to development and social organization. By emphasizing collective well-being and mutual respect, Ujamaa provides a framework for building harmonious and equitable societies.

In South East, Nigeria, where ethnic, religious, and political tensions often simmer just below the surface, Ujamaa's message of unity and solidarity is particularly relevant. By fostering a sense of shared citizenship and collective responsibility, Ujamaa can help to build bridges across divides and promote a culture of peaceful coexistence. As Ulimwengu (2023) notes, Ujamaa's emphasis on collective work and self-reliance can also help to address the economic and social inequalities that often fuel conflict. Nonetheless, despite the rich cultural heritage and history of peaceful coexistence in South East, Nigeria, the country has witnessed recurring conflicts and violence, threatening social cohesion and stability. Meanwhile, Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy, which emphasizes community, mutual aid, and social solidarity, has been recognized as a potent tool for promoting peace and conflict resolution in Africa. However, there is a dearth of research on the applicability and potential of Ujamaa philosophy in enhancing conflict resolution and fostering peaceful coexistence in South East, Nigeria. This study seeks to critically examine the potential of Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy in promoting peace education and conflict resolution in South East, Nigeria, with a view to identifying its relevance, challenges, and opportunities for fostering peaceful coexistence in the country

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria continues to experience recurring conflicts driven by ethnic, religious, and political factors, which undermine social cohesion and national stability. Various peacebuilding and peace education interventions have been implemented, yet reports indicate persistent limitations in scope, sustainability, and contextual adaptation. In South East Nigeria, recent escalations in communal clashes and violence have intensified concerns about declining social stability despite the region’s strong communal traditions. Julius Nyerere’s Ujamaa

philosophy, which emphasizes community, mutual aid, and social solidarity, has been proposed as a framework for promoting peace and conflict resolution in African contexts. While Ujamaa has been examined in Tanzanian education and development discourse, there is limited empirical evidence on the application of Ujamaa philosophy in peace education in South East Nigeria. This gap restricts understanding of whether Ujamaa's principles of solidarity, social justice, and participatory engagement can be effectively adapted to address conflict in the region. This study therefore critically examines the potential of Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy for enhancing conflict resolution and fostering peaceful coexistence in South East Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to determine the potential of Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy in promoting peace education and conflict resolution in South East Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. examine the role of Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy in conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence among diverse ethnic and religious groups in South East Nigeria.
2. identify the challenges of integrating Ujamaa philosophy into peace education initiatives in South East Nigeria.
3. determine strategies for addressing these challenges to promote sustainable peace and social cohesion.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What are the role of Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy in conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence among diverse ethnic and religious groups in South East Nigeria?

2. What are the challenges of integrating Ujamaa philosophy into peace education initiatives in South East Nigeria?
3. What are the strategies for addressing these challenges to promote sustainable peace and social cohesion?

Literature Review

Overview of Nyerere's Ujamaa Philosophy

Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy, also known as African Socialism, emphasizes community, mutual aid, and social solidarity. According to Okanda (2024), Ujamaa is the basis of African socialism. Current authors have continued to explore and build upon Nyerere's ideas. Hickel *et al*. (2022) notes that Ujamaa is "a philosophy of community and mutual support" that prioritizes the well-being of all members of society. Ujamaa is "a communal approach to development" that emphasizes collective effort and shared responsibility. Ashu (2021) highlights the importance of social solidarity in Ujamaa, stating that it "provides a sense of belonging and identity" for individuals within the community. Additionally, Ayiro *et al*. (2023) emphasizes the role of mutual aid in Ujamaa, arguing that it "fosters cooperation and reciprocity" among community members. East African Community (2024) explores the relationship between Ujamaa and African culture, noting that it "is rooted in traditional African values of community and sharing". So far, it appears that researchers continue to emphasize the core principles of Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy, including community, mutual aid, social solidarity, and collective development.

The principles of Ujamaa philosophy, as a concept of African socialism, emphasize the importance of community, mutual support, and collective well-being. According to Nigerian scholar, Kibona and Woldegiorgis (2018), Ujamaa is about building a society that is inclusive, equitable, and just, where everyone has

access to resources and opportunities. Ujamaa is rooted in the African values of familyhood and communalism, where the well-being of the individual is tied to the well-being of the community. As noted by Kigotho (2023), Ujamaa is a philosophy that prioritizes the common good over individual interests. Mutual support and cooperation are key principles of Ujamaa. Mbogoma (2018), argues that Ujamaa encourages collective effort and shared responsibility, where individuals work together to achieve common goals. Ujamaa also emphasizes collective ownership of resources and means of production. Nigerian economist, Adebayo Mkonongwa (2018), notes that Ujamaa seeks to eliminate exploitation and promote economic equality, where resources are owned and controlled by the community. Self-reliance and independence are also core principles of Ujamaa. Mohale (2023), argues that Ujamaa encourages African societies to take control of their own development and destiny, rather than relying on external forces.

The Role of Julius Nyerere's Philosophy in Conflict Resolution and Peaceful Coexistence

Julius Nyerere's philosophy has played a significant role in conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence, both in Tanzania and globally. His philosophy of Ujamaa, which emphasizes community, mutual respect, and collective well-being, has been instrumental in promoting peaceful coexistence and resolving conflicts. According to Suell (2022), Nyerere's philosophy of Ujamaa is rooted in the principles of African humanism, which prioritizes the well-being of the community over individual interests. This approach has been effective in resolving conflicts and promoting peaceful coexistence in Tanzania, as it encourages dialogue, mutual understanding, and collective problem-solving. The Citizen Reporter (2023) notes that Nyerere's philosophy has also been influential in promoting pan-Africanism and regional integration. His emphasis on African unity

and solidarity has helped to reduce conflicts and promote peaceful coexistence among African nations. Ulimwengu (2023) argues that Nyerere's philosophy of Ujamaa has been effective in promoting peaceful coexistence in Tanzania because it emphasizes the importance of community and collective well-being. This approach has helped to reduce ethnic and religious conflicts, and has promoted a sense of national unity and identity. Okanda (2024) notes that Nyerere's philosophy has also been influential in promoting social justice and human rights. His emphasis on equality, justice, and human dignity has helped to promote peaceful coexistence and resolve conflicts related to social and economic inequality

In Nigeria, Julius Nyerere's philosophy has also been influential in promoting peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution. According to Hickel *et al*. (2022), Nyerere's emphasis on community and collective well-being has inspired community-based initiatives aimed at promoting peaceful coexistence and resolving conflicts in Nigeria. Kibona and Woldegiorgis (2023) notes that Nyerere's philosophy of Ujamaa has been applied in various conflict resolution initiatives in Nigeria, particularly in the Niger Delta region. The emphasis on community and collective well-being has helped to promote dialogue and mutual understanding among conflicting parties. Kopnina and Bedford (2024) argues that Nyerere's philosophy has also been influential in promoting interfaith dialogue and peaceful coexistence in Nigeria. The emphasis on mutual respect and understanding has helped to reduce religious conflicts and promote peaceful coexistence among different religious groups. In conclusion, Julius Nyerere's philosophy has been influential in promoting peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution in Nigeria. His emphasis on community, mutual respect, and collective well-being has inspired various initiatives aimed at promoting peaceful coexistence and resolving conflicts.

Challenges of Integrating Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa Philosophy into Peace Education Initiatives

Integrating Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy into peace education initiatives poses several challenges, despite its potential to promote peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution. According to Ashu (2021), one of the major challenges is the lack of understanding and misinterpretation of the Ujamaa philosophy. Many educators and peace practitioners may not fully comprehend the principles and values of Ujamaa, leading to superficial or incorrect application. Ayiro *et al*. (2023) notes that another challenge is the cultural and contextual relevance of Ujamaa. While Ujamaa is rooted in African humanism and communalism, its application in diverse cultural contexts may require adaptation and contextualization. Failure to consider these factors may lead to resistance or ineffective implementation. East African Community (2024) argues that the emphasis on individualism and competition in modern education systems also poses a challenge to integrating Ujamaa. The focus on individual achievement and competition may contradict the communal and cooperative values of Ujamaa, requiring a paradigm shift in educational approaches. Kibona and Woldegiorgis (2019) highlights the challenge of balancing the role of the country and community in promoting Ujamaa. While Ujamaa emphasizes community and collective responsibility, the country's role in promoting peace and security cannot be ignored. Finding a balance between country and community efforts is crucial for effective integration. Kigotho (2023) notes that the challenge of resources and funding also hinders the integration of Ujamaa into peace education initiatives. Implementing Ujamaa-based programs requires significant resources, including trained personnel, infrastructure, and materials. In conclusion, the integration of Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy into peace education initiatives in Africa faces several

challenges. Addressing these challenges requires careful consideration of cultural and contextual factors, critical pedagogy, and decolonizing education systems.

Strategies for addressing the challenges of Integrating Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa Philosophy

According to Mbogoma (2018), one strategy for addressing the challenges of integrating Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy is to promote critical pedagogy. This involves encouraging critical thinking, reflection, and dialogue among educators and learners, and creating space for indigenous knowledge systems like Ujamaa. Mkonongwa (2018) suggests that contextualizing Ujamaa within local cultures and values is another effective strategy. This involves adapting the principles of Ujamaa to suit diverse cultural contexts, rather than imposing a one-size-fits-all approach. Mkonongwa (2018) emphasizes the importance of community-based initiatives in promoting Ujamaa values. This involves partnering with local communities, organizations, and stakeholders to develop and implement Ujamaa-based peace education programs. Mohale (2023) argues that participatory and inclusive approaches are essential for promoting Ujamaa values. This involves engaging learners, educators, and community members in the development and implementation of Ujamaa-based peace education initiatives. Pee (2020) highlights the need for policy and institutional support for Ujamaa-based peace education initiatives. This involves advocating for policies and institutional frameworks that support the integration of Ujamaa into peace education initiatives. By way of synthesis, integrating Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy into peace education initiatives can help promote peaceful coexistence and address socio-economic challenges in the country. By adapting Ujamaa principles to local contexts, involving local stakeholders, and emphasizing community and collective well-

being, peace education initiatives can help build stronger, more resilient communities in Nigeria.

Thematic Discussion of Ujamaa Philosophy

Recent scholarship frames Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa as an African epistemology that integrates community, social responsibility, and self-reliance into development and education. Nyerere's original conception of ujamaa (familyhood) rejected individualism and exploitation, grounding social and economic life in collective welfare. Contemporary authors extend this in three strands: (1) citizenship and social responsibility, (2) moral-political leadership, and (3) sustainable development.

Citizenship and social responsibility: Kibona and Woldegiorgis (2023) argue that Ujamaa provides a conceptual framework for citizenship education in African universities by foregrounding social responsibility, deliberation, and civic action. They position Ujamaa as countering "intellectual arrogance that disregards African ontology" in higher education, with Nyerere insisting education must serve social justice and community service.

Moral integrity and leadership: Waitherero (2023) directly links Ujamaa to moral integrity in African socio-political leadership, contending that Nyerere applied Ujamaa in Tanzania to impact leadership ethics. The philosophy is treated as a normative code for resisting corruption and inequality, a theme that reappeared in Tanzania's public sphere after Nyerere's death as a symbol of "humility, integrity, and incorruptibility" against elite corruption.

Sustainable development and economics: Pasara (2023) analyses Ujamaa as a "spirit and philosophy of socialism and family or brotherhood" and assesses its tension with contemporary economic projects like the African Continental Free Trade Area and COVID-19 isolationism. Similarly, Njaico (2022) reconstructs

Ujamaa as a moderate communitarianism that fuses local knowledge with modernity, arguing it promotes "justice, peace, freedom, unity, and solidarity" as foundations for sustainable well-being.

Kibona and Woldegiorgis (2023) used in-depth interviews with 30 Tanzanian university graduates to explore how Ujamaa informs citizenship and social responsibility. Their findings suggest graduates link university education to community engagement when Ujamaa values are embedded in pedagogy, supporting the claim that African universities can "nurture and cultivate citizenship values" through Ujamaa. In South Africa, community development practitioners are re-evaluating Ujamaa as a culturally resonant model. A 2023 reflection argued that Ujamaa's principles are "crucial for fostering patriotism, social harmony, and sustainable development" and provide a "practical framework for addressing South Africa's socio-economic challenges". The study employed secondary research but underscores a regional turn to Ujamaa for decolonising development practice. For conflict and peacebuilding, a 2022 chapter on nonprofit organizations identifies Ubuntu and Ujamaa as African humanistic ideologies that "make it possible to harmonize the differences that exist within organizations" and can be harnessed to promote "cohesion, peace, tolerance, inclusion, and elimination of hate speech and tribalism". While conceptual, it signals Ujamaa's relevance to conflict management in organisational settings.

Studies from 2020–2023 converge on Ujamaa as a moral and epistemic resource for social responsibility, ethical leadership, and culturally grounded development. They differ in application: higher education in Tanzania, community development in South Africa, and organisational conflict management. Methodologically, most are qualitative, conceptual, or secondary reviews. Quantitative, longitudinal data on Ujamaa-based interventions remain scarce.

Critically, there is limited empirical evidence on the application of Ujamaa philosophy directly to peace education and conflict resolution in South East Nigeria. This gap justifies the present study.

Methods

The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of lecturers in the two universities in South East Country. Hence, the study population comprised of 79152 academic staff in public universities in South East Country. In composing the sample, Simple random sampling technique was used to select two universities which include Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, and University of Nigeria Nsukka. Five faculties were sampled in each of the universities using simple random sampling technique, in each of faculty, three departments were also sampled using simple random sampling. In each of the departments 50 lecturers were sampled amounting to 750 academic staff. A structured questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by three experts, two in the area of philosophy of education and the other in measurement and evaluation, all from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. To establish the reliability of the instrument, trial testing method was used on 50 academic staff of University of Porthacourt which is outside the study area. The reliability was calculated using Cronbach Alpha for each of the subsections. At the end of the analysis, the scores obtained were 0.79, 0.81 and 0.80 for each cluster in the questionnaire. The results showed high reliability of the instrument. The instrument has three parts, A, B and C. Part A sought information on the respondents. Part B sought information required to answer the research questions. It has 1, 2 & 3 and these were concerned with information regarding research questions one, two and three. Part A contains 10 items, part B contains 10 items while part B also contains 10 items, making a total

of 30 items. The four-point response mode of strongly Agreed (SA = 4 points), Agree (A = 3 points), Disagree (D = 2 points) and Strongly Disagree (SD = 1 point) was adopted in the study. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of 10 research assistants, who were paired for each of the five faculties. All copies of the questionnaire distributed were collected back because of on the spot delivery method and collection technique applied. Mean was use to analyze the data. The four-point response mode used, informed the use of mean 2.50 as the cut-off point for decision. The decision rule was that mean scores of items of 2.50 and above were regarded as agreed while mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as disagreed.

Results

Table 1: The role of Julius Nyerere's philosophy in conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence among diverse ethnic and religious groups

S/N	ITEMS	$\bar{X}$	DECISION
1.	Promotes interdependence and mutual respect among diverse groups.	2.88	Agreed
2.	Encourages collective responsibility and ownership for peace and development.	2.92	Agreed
3.	Advocates for non-violent conflict resolution and rejects violence as a means of resolving disputes.	2.67	Agreed
4.	Fosters social justice and addresses underlying causes of conflict.	2.59	Agreed
5.	Develops inclusive and equitable institutions that reflect the diversity of the society.	2.68	Agreed
6.	Encourages dialogue and understanding among different groups.	2.78	Agreed
7.	Builds trust and bridges the gap between diverse ethnic and religious groups.	2.85	Agreed
8.	Provides a framework for resolving conflicts through negotiation and mediation.	2.96	Agreed
9.	Promotes a sense of shared identity and collective purpose among diverse groups.	3.44	Agreed
10.	Empowers marginalized communities and promotes their participation in decision-making processes.	3.13	Agreed
	Cluster mean	**2.63**	**Agreed**

In Table 1, all the items including the mean of means obtained mean rating (2.63) above the criterion mean of 2.50 indicating that all the respondents agreed that the items in Table 1 are the roles Julius Nyerere's philosophy plays in conflict

resolution and peaceful coexistence among diverse ethnic and religious groups in South East country.

Table 2: The challenges of integrating Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy into peace education initiatives in South East country

S/N	ITEMS	X	DECISION
11.	Adapting Ujamaa to diverse cultural and contextual settings is difficult.	2.99	Agreed
12.	There is lack of familiarity with Ujamaa principles and values among educators and learners.	2.86	Agreed
13.	Balancing individual rights and interests with collective well-being and community needs is a difficult task	2.78	Agreed
14.	It is difficult to address power imbalances and ensuring inclusive participation in Ujamaa-based initiatives.	3.11	Agreed
15.	There is limited resources and funding for implementing Ujamaa-based peace education programs.	2.78	Agreed
16.	Incorporating Ujamaa principles into existing curricula and educational frameworks is ineffective.	2.89	Agreed
17.	Providing educators with the necessary training and support to effectively integrate Ujamaa into their teaching practices.	2.78	Agreed
18.	Engaging local communities and stakeholders in Ujamaa-based peace education initiatives.	2.77	Agreed
19.	It is difficult to translate Ujamaa principles and materials into local languages and dialects.	2.56	Agreed
20.	Long-term sustainability of Ujamaa-based peace education initiatives is not guaranteed	2.84	Agreed
	Cluster mean	**2.83**	**Agreed**

In Table 2, all the items including the mean of means obtained mean rating (2.83) above the criterion mean of 2.50 indicating that all the respondents agreed that the items in table 2 are the challenges of integrating Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy into peace education initiatives in South East country.

Table 3: Mean rating of respondents on how can these challenges be addressed to promote sustainable peace and social cohesion

S/N	ITEMS	X	DECISION
21.	Government should collaborate with local communities to adapt Ujamaa principles to their cultural context.	2.68	Agreed
22.	Government should provide educators with comprehensive training on Ujamaa principles and their application in peace education.	2.73	Agreed
23.	Government should develop curricula that incorporate Ujamaa principles and values, ensuring inclusivity and relevance.	2.54	Agreed
24.	There is need for government to foster partnerships with local	2.78	Agreed

	communities, engaging them in the development and implementation of Ujamaa-based peace education initiatives.		
25.	Community leaders should translate Ujamaa materials into local languages and dialects, ensuring broad accessibility.	2.59	Agreed
26.	Government should develop strategies for long-term sustainability, including community ownership and resource mobilization.	2.89	Agreed
27.	All stakeholders should addressing concerns and building support for Ujamaa-based peace education.	265’	Agreed
28.	Government should develop context-specific evaluation methods, assessing the impact and effectiveness of Ujamaa-based peace education initiatives.	2.75	Agreed
29.	Government should foster partnerships among educators, researchers, and practitioners to share best practices and address challenges.	2.73	Agreed
30.	All stakeholders should develop materials and resources that reflect local contexts, making Ujamaa principles more relatable and applicable.	2.59	Agreed
	Cluster Mean	**2.63**	**Agreed**

The content of table 3 indicated that all items are rated above the acceptable mean of 2.50. In addition, the cluster mean (2.63) also indicated agreed. This result therefore shows that all the items are the possible solutions to the challenges of integrating Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy into peace education initiatives in South East country

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that Julius Nyerere’s Ujamaa philosophy has relevance for conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence among diverse ethnic and religious groups in South East Nigeria. The results showed that respondents agreed that Ujamaa principles promote solidarity, mutual aid, and participatory engagement. As noted by findings from Kibona and Woldegiorgis (2023) that Ujamaa can serve as a conceptual framework for citizenship education and social responsibility in African universities, the findings of this study are consistent with the findings by Kibona and Woldegiorgis (2023) who found that Ujamaa values enhance deliberation and civic actions for human development. The study’s findings also suggest that the philosophy’s emphasis on community and

collective well-being is perceived as applicable to the cultural context of South East Nigeria.

The study's findings also revealed that the integration of Ujamaa philosophy into peace education in South East Nigeria faces identifiable challenges. According to findings by Nzemeka (2021) that contemporary application of Ujamaa requires overcoming institutional and structural constraints inherited from colonial systems and misrule, the results showed that resistance to change, limited resources, and weak institutional structures were acknowledged as constraints. The study's findings are consistent with the findings by Nzemeka (2021) who found that indigenous solutions like Ujamaa face implementation barriers despite their philosophical relevance.

The study's findings also revealed that respondents agreed on several strategies to address the challenges of integrating Ujamaa into peace education in South East Nigeria. The findings by Pasara (2023) that sustaining the spirit of Ujamaa requires adapting the philosophy to modern economic and social realities support the study's findings that curriculum reform, stakeholder collaboration, capacity building for educators, and context-specific adaptation can help to mitigate the challenges. The study's findings also suggest that collaborative efforts between government, educational institutions, and community leaders can support the successful application of Ujamaa principles to enhance dialogue and mutual understanding, particularly among youths. The findings of this study have important implications for policymakers and stakeholders in the education sector. Education is a critical component of national development, the study highlights the need for the government and other stakeholders to prioritise context-specific peace education frameworks that reflect local values and address conflict in South East Nigeria.

One limitation of the present study is that it focused only on academic staff in universities in South East Nigeria, excluding other stakeholders such as students, community leaders, and policymakers in the region. This may limit the generalizability of the findings to other groups and contexts. Another limitation is that the study relied on self-reported data from respondents, which may be subject to bias and may not accurately reflect the actual situation on the ground. Additionally, the study's cross-sectional design may not have captured the dynamic and complex nature of Ujamaa philosophy's applicability to peace education, and a longitudinal study may have provided more nuanced insights. Furthermore, the study's reliance on a survey questionnaire may have limited the depth and richness of the data collected, and may have missed important contextual factors that could have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the issue. Finally, the study's scope was limited to the role, challenges, and strategies of Ujamaa in peace education, and did not explore other important aspects such as the impact of Ujamaa-based peace education on measurable conflict reduction or changes in student behaviour.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy has relevance for peace education and conflict resolution in South East Nigeria. Respondents agreed that Ujamaa principles contribute to conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence among diverse ethnic and religious groups. The philosophy was also perceived as supportive of social cohesion through its emphasis on community, mutual aid, and participatory engagement. However, the integration of Ujamaa into peace education faces specific challenges, including resistance to change, limited resources, and weak institutional structures. Respondents identified strategies to address these challenges, such as curriculum reform, stakeholder

collaboration, capacity building for educators, and adaptation of Ujamaa principles to local contexts. The study concludes that Ujamaa philosophy provides a culturally congruent framework that can enhance peace education in South East Nigeria when implemented with context-specific adaptations. Successful integration depends on collaborative efforts among government, educational institutions, and community leaders to address identified constraints. The application of Ujamaa principles has potential to improve dialogue, mutual understanding, and conflict management, particularly among youths, thereby contributing to social cohesion in the region.

Implications for the study

The implications of the findings of the study is very important to the society. If the Ujamaa philosophy is neglected, the consequences for societal development in South East, Nigeria, and beyond, will be far-reaching and devastating. Without the guiding principles of community, mutual aid, and social solidarity, the fabric of society will begin to fray, leading to a breakdown in social cohesion and an escalation of conflicts. As the bonds of community weaken, individuals will become increasingly isolated and disenchanted, leading to a rise in poverty, inequality, and social injustice. The absence of mutual aid and support will leave the most vulnerable members of society exposed and exploited, further entrenching the cycles of poverty and despair. Neglecting Ujamaa will also undermine the prospects for peace and stability, as the lack of a shared sense of purpose and belonging will create an environment conducive to conflict and division. The region will become increasingly fragmented, with different groups and interests pitted against one another, leading to a descent into chaos and violence. Moreover, the neglect of Ujamaa will also stifle social and economic development, as the absence of a collective approach to problem-solving and development will hinder

progress and innovation. The region will become mired in stagnation and decline, unable to tap into the collective potential and creativity of its people. Ultimately, neglecting the Ujamaa philosophy will lead to a society that is fractured, divided, and incapable of realizing its full potential. It will be a society marked by conflict, poverty, and despair, where the bonds of community and mutual support have been irreparably broken.

Recommendations

Based on the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government and community leaders should integrate Ujamaa philosophy into peace education curricula in South East, Nigeria, to foster a culture of peace and mutual understanding.
2. Government and community leaders should promote community-based initiatives to enhance Ujamaa values of community, mutual aid, and social solidarity.
3. Government should make policy reforms that would support Ujamaa-based peace education and community development initiatives.
4. Government and community leaders should organize capacity-building programmes for educators, community leaders, and policymakers on Ujamaa philosophy and its application.
5. There should be collaboration between government, civil society, and community organizations to promote Ujamaa values and principles.

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