

## **Visual Representations as a Tool for Peace Education and Peace Promotion towards Sustainable Development**

### **A case of Dalori Camp, Maiduguri Borno State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

Frieden war und ist ein von vielen Menschen ersehnter Zustand. Vor allem von jenen, die in einer von gewaltsamen Aufständen geprägten Umwelt leben wie etwa in Maiduguri, Nigeria, mit dem Aufstand von Boko Haram. Nichtregierungsorganisationen und die Regierung haben in Nigeria viel Energie in verschiedene Friedensstrategien und die friedliche Koexistenz von Gemeinschaften, insbesondere von Binnenvertriebenen in Lagern, gesteckt. Die Forschung versteht sich in diesem Bestreben als Werkzeug und Treiber für eine Umgebung, die eine nachhaltige Entwicklung für unsere Gesellschaft über Friedensförderung und -erziehung ermöglicht.

Dieser Aufsatz nimmt gezeichnetes Bildmaterial in den Blick und reflektiert die kommunikativen Prozesse, die Bedeutung der Zeichnungen für die Binnenflüchtlinge und die Friedensförderung als transformativen Bildungsprozess. Der Aufsatz kommt zu dem Ergebnis, dass visuelle Darstellungen sowohl geeignet sind, um den Binnenvertriebenen die Relevanz der friedlichen Koexistenz in unserer Gesellschaft nahezubringen, als auch ihr Herstellungsprozess genauso wirkungsvoll ist wie die abgeschlossenen Darstellungen. Der Beitrag fordert Interessensvertreter und Einrichtungen dazu auf, vermehrt bottom-up-Ansätze zu unterstützen, bei denen dem künstlerischen Prozess des Zeichnens genauso eine Bedeutung beigemessen wird wie der vollendeten Zeichnung.

## **Original Abstract**

The concept of peace has been and still is a desired state for many people, especially those living in an environment like Maiduguri, Nigeria, with the Boko Haram Insurgency. Non-Governmental Organisations and the Government have invested a lot of effort and different strategies in advocating for peace and peaceful co-existence in communities, especially Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) living in camps. The research positioned itself as a tool and driver to create an enabling environment for sustainable development within the society through peace promotion and peace education.

Focus is placed on processes of drawing visuals, what it elicited from the IDPs and how peace promotion took place as a transformative educative process. The article concluded that not only are Visual Representations an effective means of communicating and educating IDPs on the importance of peaceful co-existence within our society, but the process of the designing is also as important as the finished visual. The article calls on relevant stakeholders to encourage more of a bottom-up approach where emphasis is placed on the artistic drawing processes as well as the final drawing.

## **Introduction**

Nigeria being one of the most populous countries in the world, has been battling with different challenges ranging from tribal, religious to political tensions. Such conflicts constitute various factors that have negatively influenced the development of the country and is unfortunately gradually becoming part of the national culture (Olowo 2016). Consequently, the situation and tension continue while the younger generations are not aware of the importance towards a shift from hate to that of a culture of peace. This assertion justifies the necessity of peace education and peace promotion within our societies.

The greatest resource at the centre of peace promotion processes are the people who are affected the most by the lack of peace, for it is through peaceful relationships and strong institutions that sustainable development is achieved. This makes it important for people to be educated on becoming peace agents which is central to the task of peace promotion. This article aims to educate Internally Displaced (IDPs) on how to live in peace by employing the use of artistic expressions drawn by (IPDs). In order to do this, the study tried to elicit a desired state of want for change towards a more peaceful society by creating an environment for sustainable development to thrive.

Education is widely acknowledged in Nigeria. It is the ultimate legacy a parent, state or country can transmit to children/citizens. However, due to the predominant insurgency especially in the northern part of the country where this research is centred, this has become quite problematic. Thus, this stresses the need for peace promotion and education within our communities, especially among those who have suffered direct effects of the Boko Haram crisis such as the IDPs living in more than 46 official and unofficial camps within the State of Borno.

The insurgency in the north-eastern parts of the country by the religious sect Boko Haram, challenges Nigeria. The group officially addressed as Jam'aatul Ahlul Sunna li-ddawa'ati wau-Jihad, is popularly and

most commonly known as Boko Haram (Cook 2018). 'Boko' means 'school' referring to Western style education, while 'Haram' means 'forbidden', 'ungodly', or 'sinful' (Ajayi 2012). Though a faction of the group currently refers to itself as the Islamic State of West African Province (ISWAP), the name Boko Haram will be employed throughout this study to refer to all aspects of the Sect.

As a result of the insurgency, there have been different intervention programmes by Nigerian government at both state and federal levels, aimed at restoring peace within the northeast region. The local, state and federal governments have continued to work in collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and other relief agencies, both foreign and domestic, to intervene by providing support to victims. This includes development projects, relief provision, infrastructure rehabilitation, workshops, radio programmes and many other numerous forms of assistance but the success rate has been slow. The slow process in attaining significant changes in the life of the affected people in the northeast has become a growing concern. While humanitarian attempts appear plentiful, the dynamics that usually surround areas of conflict continue to change, thus effecting progress of peace in general, making the need for a study focused on ways of promoting and sustaining peace within the zone of utmost importance. This brings up the issue of appropriate means to communicate peace adequately to the affected persons, thus forming the driving force of this research, which is to produce visual materials that promote peace amongst the internally displaced persons. The method identified for attaining and sustaining a culture of peace in Maiduguri, Borno State in this study involved the use of graphic materials in form of visuals, such as still images, which have been designed by the IDPs for easy comprehension using cultural cues. The messages within such communication materials include the need for attaining and sustaining peace, the need for peaceful coexistence, and the need for uprightness by citizens. It has been noted that in recent times, the use of visuals as a medium of communication is gradually on the increase (Mua'zu 2018).

## **Visual Representations for the Promotion of Peace**

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## **Theory of Sensual and Perceptual Visual Representation**

Visual communication is any communication that is aided with visuals for the conveyance of information and ideas in forms, which can be looked at as a whole or in part, relying on vision. It is largely expressed or presented with mostly two-dimensional images, which include, drawings, pictures/images, graphic designs, signs, illustrations and many more. This form of communication explores the idea that a visual message has a better ability to educate, inform or persuade an audience as well as address issues of literacy (Lisette 2012). In visual communication there are different theories, such as: (1) Sensual Theories which are raw data from nerves transmitted straight to the brain, such as; Gestalt (forms and shapes), Constructivism and Ecological theories. (2) Perceptual Theories which are received stimuli drawn from prior experiences compared with other senses and stored images.

For the purpose of this research, only the most relevant theories will be discussed which have direct correlation to the study and these are the Perceptual theories. Perceptual theory of visual communication

acknowledges the primacy of emotions in processing all communication, by particularly targeting visual communication as a paralleling perceptual process, which is largely an emotion-based system of response (Lisette 2012). According to Lisette (2012) perceptual theories or received stimuli are better understood through the sub-theories of semiotics and cognition, which is explained in practicality in the use narrations of representations of visuals by the IDPs. These theories work parrel for a holistic approach used in peace education, which are, as previously mentioned in the article conative, conation and affective.

## **The Concept of Peace**

The concept of peace in Nigeria delineates the integration of values, belief systems and forms of religion and spirituality, local knowledge and technologies, traditions and forms of cultural and artistic expression that contribute to the respect of human rights, through cultural diversity, solidarity and the rejection of violence to build democratic societies (UN 2005). For this to be achieved to its maximum, the concept of peace should be practicable within all communities, as it is the sum total of people which makes up a society. Seeing that peace and sustainability are closely intertwined, the importance of peaceful societies cannot be overemphasized as they serve as platforms for a sustainable development. It is well noted that conditions that promote peace, sustainability and equitable development also have the ability in ensuring peace and create the conditions for sustainable development (Surendra et al. 2015). For that to be achieved people have to be free from fear and violence, as it is a fundamental human right and the essential foundation for building peaceful and prosperous societies.

Emerson indicates that peace promotion, if addressed in cultural-sensitive terms, can be a source of identity formation and inclusion, particularly when mainstreamed within set strategies at the early stage. Cultural initiatives that recognize diversity within a human rights based approach may play a particularly important role in building tolerance and confidence among multicultural communities and in providing a common space for dialogue (UNESCO 2013). Omotola on the other hand postulates that area encouraging cultural activities and creativity in conflict areas affected by insurgency can enable the affected communities to reconnect with their identities and regain a sense of normality, enjoying art and beginning to heal the scars of war (Omotolo 2008).

## **Understanding Peace Education**

For peace education and promotion efforts to be effective it is necessary to discuss these concepts holistically. Peace education is an essential part of education that seeks to promote a culture of peace for transformative purposes (Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace 2010). It is a process where knowledge is cultivated based on the attitudes and values that seek to transform people's attitudes, mindsets and behaviours which have been affected negatively due to conflict. This process seeks transformation by promoting awareness creation and advocating for understanding among people, by developing concern for each other. It challenges social action that will help people relate, live and create conditions which actualize justice, active non-violence, unity, dialogue and tolerance, which are all subsequently discussed within this research. To achieve this, a cohort of adolescents IDPs (male and female) participated in the research, where they discussed the ramifications of the Boko Haram insurgency and how it had affected their lives. Through discussions, interviews and non-verbal techniques such as gestures, they were asked to draw or interpret 'what peace meant to each of them' on a piece of paper. The process elicited a different way of

communication which was quite transformative as it showed that communication of grievances and/or happiness can be done through nonviolent ways where everyone had an equal opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings.

This means that the learning process in peace education is a holistic one and tries to address the cognitive, affective and conative dimensions of an individual. Another vital means learning process in a holistic approach is the introduction of relevant or reinforced knowledge, which take into consideration a person's immediate environment as a learning platform. This is achieved by posing relevant questions during discussions and using participatory methods to elicit or encourage appropriate personal social action (Akinyemi 2015). Reardon posits that peace education has an important social purpose meant to serve a larger society. It seeks to transform the present state of human condition by "changing social structures and patterns of thought that have created it" (Reardon 1988; Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace 2010).

## **Qualitative Methodology in Dalori Camp**

The research design for this study is descriptive and interpretive in nature, which is analysed through qualitative methods. The descriptive method was used in analysing collected and collated data that was gathered through the following research instruments, such as participant observation, face-to-face interviews, and focus-group interviews/sessions.

Following the exploratory nature of the methodology, the researcher was able to grasp the underlying reasons, opinions and motivations that drove the experiences of the participant IDPs with regards to the effects of Boko Haram insurgent activities and how such phenomena had affected or reshaped their understanding of a culture of peace.

The essential processes in this study included observing and documenting in detail, the unique experiences of individuals in the complexity of the insurgent environment caused by Boko Haram. The researcher as a participant observer and a mediator in the study undertook all the processes that influenced these experiences and the analysis of the resulting descriptive data. This approach allowed for adequate, narrative descriptions and gave the researcher opportunities to take into account the views of the participants and the subtleties of complex group interactions with multiple interpretations in the group's natural environment. This research employed an inductive approach as it required the collation of data used from relevant theory or development of a theory after the data has been successfully collected.

The research was conducted using a phenomenological pattern, as it sought to understand the perceptions or experiences of participants in relation to a phenomenon through their own explanations and depictions (Patton 2002; Yildurum and Simsek 2005; Creswell 2009). In analysing the drawings with a phenomenological pattern, it was emphasized to be open to various meanings, context formed by meanings and the world-view of the draughts-man (Malchiodi 2005).

The purposive sampling and convenience sampling techniques were used in conducting this study. The purposive and convenience process simply involves purposely handpicking individuals from the identified population based on the researcher's professional knowledge and the availability and willingness of the people to participate in the research. The sample for this study therefore are 58 IDP participants, comprised of 20 boys (15 to 20 years), 20 girls (15 to 20 years) and six state and non-state camp officials. The

respondents' lowest educational level is primary school.



Figure 1: A Cross Section of Dalori camp 1 (Haruna 2019)

## **A Bottom-top Approach for the Generation of Visuals through Drawing**

This research employed the bottom-top approach for the generation of visuals. This was in form of drawing sessions, which were a process of bringing together a group of people in a brainstorming session that encompasses the conceptualization and eventual designing of intended visuals that represent the perception of the people. Drawing sessions of five groups with four individuals in each working group were conducted for the young women and the same for the young males. The groups further drew visuals based on their understanding of what peace and peaceful coexistence meant, coming up with five attributes of peace, which are love, unity, tolerance, respect and happiness. Three major themes (Unity, Happiness, Justice) were prominent during these sessions, which constituted values, norms and beliefs of the target population which are all related to the influences of cultural orientation of the respondents. The drawing session usually started with the researcher explaining the context of the research and giving brief information on the aims of the session.

The collection of data for the research was conducted within a designated area referred to as 'safe space' for the females within the camp premises in Dalori. This was changed for the males due to safety issues. In both cases, drawings were done on the floor due to lack of appropriate drawing facilities. Below are photos showing the workspaces for girls and boys during drawing sessions.



Figure 2: A Cross section of a work space for the female group (Haruna 2019)



Figure 3: A Cross Section of the work space for the boys (Haruna 2019)

### **Promoting a Culture of Peace through Visual Representation: Peace - Our way**

The focus of this section is to present the findings of the research and bring to the effective use of artistic approaches (drawing of visuals by the IDPs) as a tool to drive an enabling environment for sustainable development. This section presents findings on the presentation of data and the types of messages generated from the visuals created by IDPs for the promotion of a culture of peace during drawing sessions with short narratives, analysis and discussions accompanying the visuals. The findings obtained from the IDPs visual representations, drawing and verbal narrations are provided under the themes of peace, which are religion/spirituality, unity, happiness, respect, justice and peaceful co-existence. The peace definition by Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace was considered in the determination of the main themes and findings

((Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace 2010).

## Theme 1: Religion/Spirituality



Figure 3: Drawing by DCR 6G (Dalori Camp Respondent 6, Girl)

Within the camp, religion was identified as one of the predominant themes which the IDPs represented in relation to peace. The predominant religion in the camp is Islam, but there are also Christians. Seeing that the IDPs within the camp consist of Christian and Muslims, these symbols are represented here. Figure 3 is a simplistic illustration of praying hands. The respondent DCR 6G inferred that the act of prayer gives them a feeling of peace. To them prayer is the most sustainable cultural and religious tool to end the prevailing insurgency within the state. The illustrations show the respondents' familiarity with basic elements of art and also the presence of gender variations as evidenced by Figure 3. The illustration depicts the praying hands of a female by the application of the red hue at the tips of the fingers signifying the prevalent use of Henna by most women in Borno State. The central areas of the face up palm is left plain in both drawings as a symbolic representation of coming clean in the presence of the Almighty. According to DCR 6G: "I am trying to show hands that are praying. This is showing the importance of prayer during times of fighting because that is the only thing that our parents told us could keep us safe and can end this Boko Haram so we can have peace again" (DCR 6G). DCR 6G's narration expresses the innocence and simplistic approach to life and her experiences in the same manner as her illustrations does. It enhances the desire of the IDPs for a return to normalcy and the simplistic way of life.

This also emphasises the preceding arguments within this study that for a culture of peace to be relatively successful and sustainable, elements of the affected persons culture, traditions and value settings should be considered and included in the process of peace promotion messages that they are exposed to.

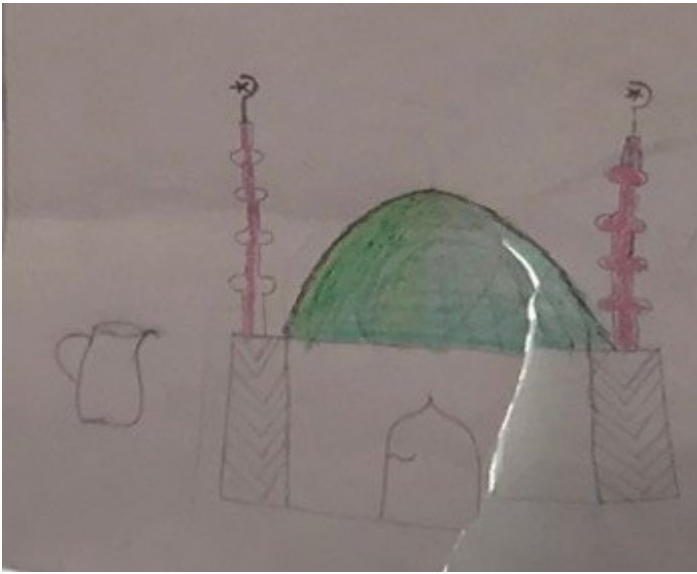


Figure 4: Drawing by DCR 10G

Figure 4 shows the illustration of religious symbols as suitable visual elements for the promotion of peace in an insurgent ridden area. Figure 4 is a group work by DCR 10G who explains that: "...if they can rebuild it, it will make people happy and will bring peace to us all. Every time they preach about staying in peace with your neighbours..." (DCR 10G). To them the image of the mosque, a worship place is a solid structure that represents peace and unity. DCR 10G expressed her belief passionately that the mosque is a place of peace, hence it's representation. In her narration, DCR 2G indicates that "only Allah can bring peace. So I have to be close to Allah in everything I do". For DCR 10G and DCR 2 access to places of worship, as depicted in their visual will, further enhance the desire to return to their indigenous communities and villages - places they call home. To DCR 10G her access to their cherished mosque is significant because "...where I find peace is in the mosque and when I pray" (DRC 10G).

## Theme 2: Unity

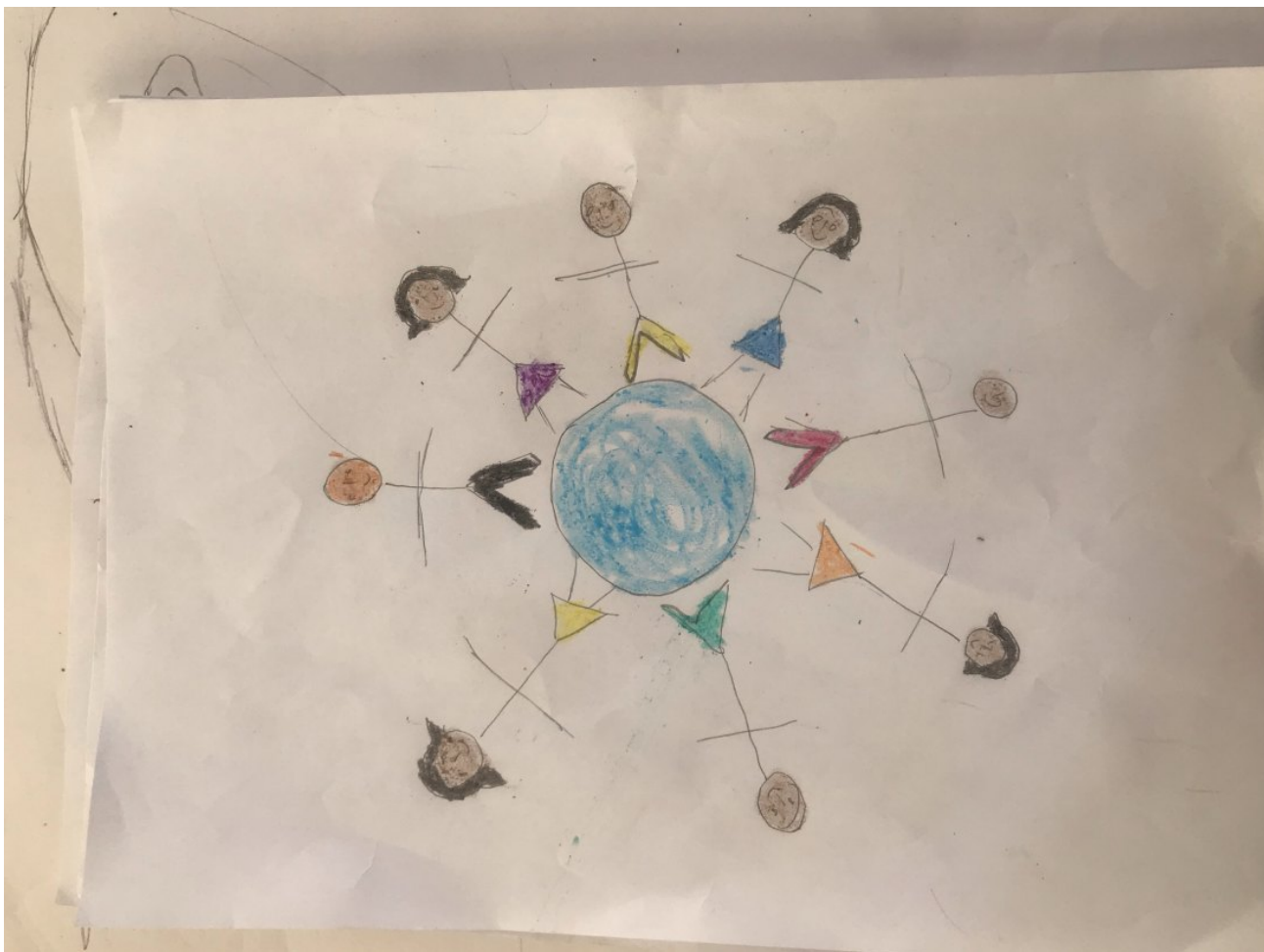


Figure 5: Drawing by DCR 4G

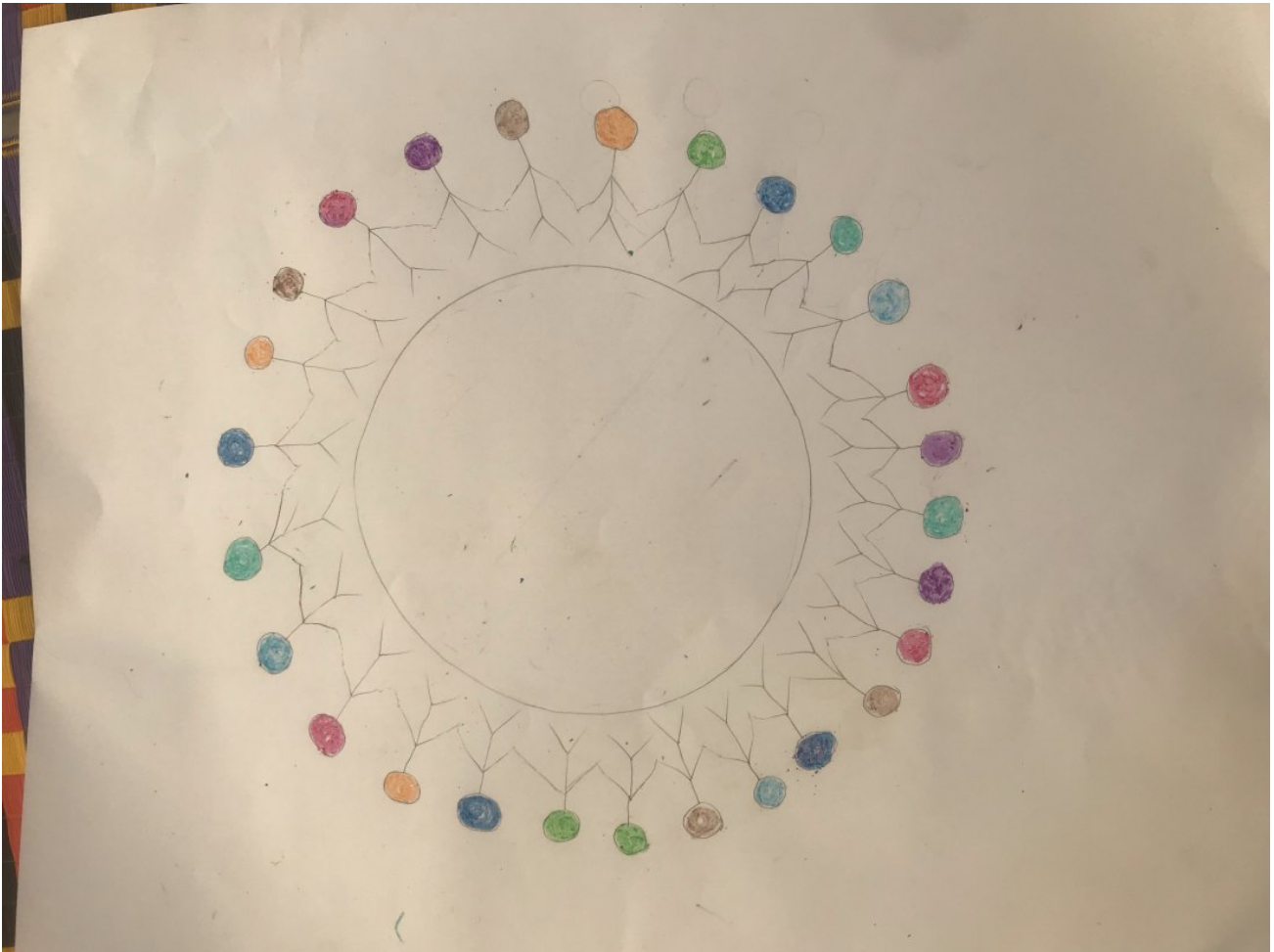


Figure 6: Group Drawing by DCR 7G, 8G, 20G and 14G

These two images show in a simplistic abstract form the concept of unity and oneness across races as a suitable tool for peace promotion. The joining of hands in all three visuals infers to a sense of continuum amongst mankind, while the use of many colours is also elementary yet symbolic in nature. All characters within the visuals are depicted holding hands in a circular formation around a larger circle illustrating the earth rendered in bright lines of blue (Figure 5) and plain white (Figure 6).

DCR 4G observes in her narration that, "...being each other's keeper is what brings peace. My parents always used to say let's look out for each other no matter what religion or who the person is" (DCR 4G). DCR 4G's narration regarding her visual illustration further highlights the urgency and importance of a combined effort towards peaceful co-existence. Her sensitivity to the difference in religions and idea that such should not matter, agrees with DCR 6G who mentions that: "...it is good to be together, respect each other, that how peaceful coexistence is established" (DCR 6G). In summary, the respondents expressed the need for increased peaceful coexistence by stating thus: "...we think coming together is what will bring peace and maintain peace in our communities" (DCR 4G and DCR 6).

Their assertions agree with UN's statement that where a culture of peace is a set of values promoting tolerance, justice, understanding, diversity and equal rights, sustainability is achievable (UN 2005). The concepts of tolerance, understanding, justice, diversity and equality amongst mankind are all symbolically

captured in the two illustrations.

### Theme 3: Happiness



Figure 7: Drawing by DCR 13G

During the drawing it was evident that happiness was one of the constructs that was widely depicted. In some of the drawings the respondents further demonstrated their desire towards being happy in non-verbal exercise. This made happiness is a construct that couldn't be ignored and is thus narrated by DCR 13G's (Figure 7) representation of a house that they used to live in back at home, which symbolizes peace and stability to her. In her narration, she indicates why she illustrates her former house and what it means to her: "My drawing is a house, the house we used to stay in back home. It has two windows and a door and then two plants that my mum made us plant. For me peace means going home, because that's where I find happiness and peace most. Here people are always fighting for food and want to cheat each other just so that they will have more than the next person. Whenever I want to forget what is happening I just enter the small house we stay in (she is referring to a tent) and stay there and I talk with my mum. She always tell us that we should not worry, we will go home soon. So when you ask me what peace means to me I will say being in a place that has no fights and where people respect each other. Peace is my home, where I was taught about living peacefully with people" (DCR 13G). The illustration of a structural building as a symbol of peace may seem absurd to anyone who has not experienced significant and continuous devastating experiences such as the Boko Haram insurgency, which serve to elevate what the person may have been taken for granted before the occurrences of such experiences.

## Theme 4: Respect



Figure 8: Drawing by DCR 24B

The practice of transferring key knowledge and doctrines by the older generation on the importance of attaining and sustaining peace is a key contributory factor to the process of peace promotion. This process has been a method that the older generation has used for peace education within the north-eastern communities. DCR 24B explores traditional community activities such as storytelling. His visual representation shows an adult seated on a high backed chair with miniscule stick figures lined in front of him. The variations in the proportion of figures within the image symbolically depict the respect and value accorded to elders within the region in Northeast Nigeria. He narrates the following: "...in my drawing you can see a man and children sitting in front of him. In my hometown, before we came here (Dalori camp) due to Boko Haram, there is this old man that used to sit with us and give us stories and tell us the dangers of fighting. He used to tell us we should not be wicked to each other, when you are wicked to one another, anything you do to others is what is going to be done to you. So he is teaching us peaceful coexistence with each other. He used to say we should stop fighting, stop showing difference amongst ourselves, no difference in language or religion. In this drawing the old man uses storytelling to tell us what to do and how to live in peace with each other.

Practices of transferring key knowledge and doctrines by the older generation have been stopped due to the environment that the people now live in. Further, Figure 8 succinctly illustrates the need for all community members to participate in the shaping of the younger generation to be mindful of peaceful

practices, through a heightened process in peace education.

## Theme 5: Justice and Peaceful Coexistence



Figure 9: Drawing by DCR 25B

Peaceful existence is the bench rock of every society, especially societies like that of Dalori IDP camp, where the inhabitants have gone through a lot of trauma. During FGDs with the young IDPs they mentioned a desire for peaceful coexistence to exist between them and the adult IDPs, claiming that most of the adults view them with suspicion. This is due to the fact that most attacks were done by young Boko Haram members. Thus it is important for the adults to intensify their efforts towards the younger IDPs in admonishing and teaching them more on the importance of peaceful coexistence. DCR 25B continues in the same line as DCR 24B in representing a conversation between an erring young man asking for forgiveness from the elder he has offended. For DCR 25B, asking for forgiveness when we do anything wrong, is a process of attaining and sustaining a culture of peace. He indicates in this narration that: "...if we want peace, we have to learn to punish the wrong doing of people, so that they will know that there are consequences to bad choice and action. This will bring peace in our communities" (DCR 24B). The fact that we ask for forgiveness should not absolve us from the consequences of our wrongdoings. This will help in establishing more the need for better consideration and positive behaviours.

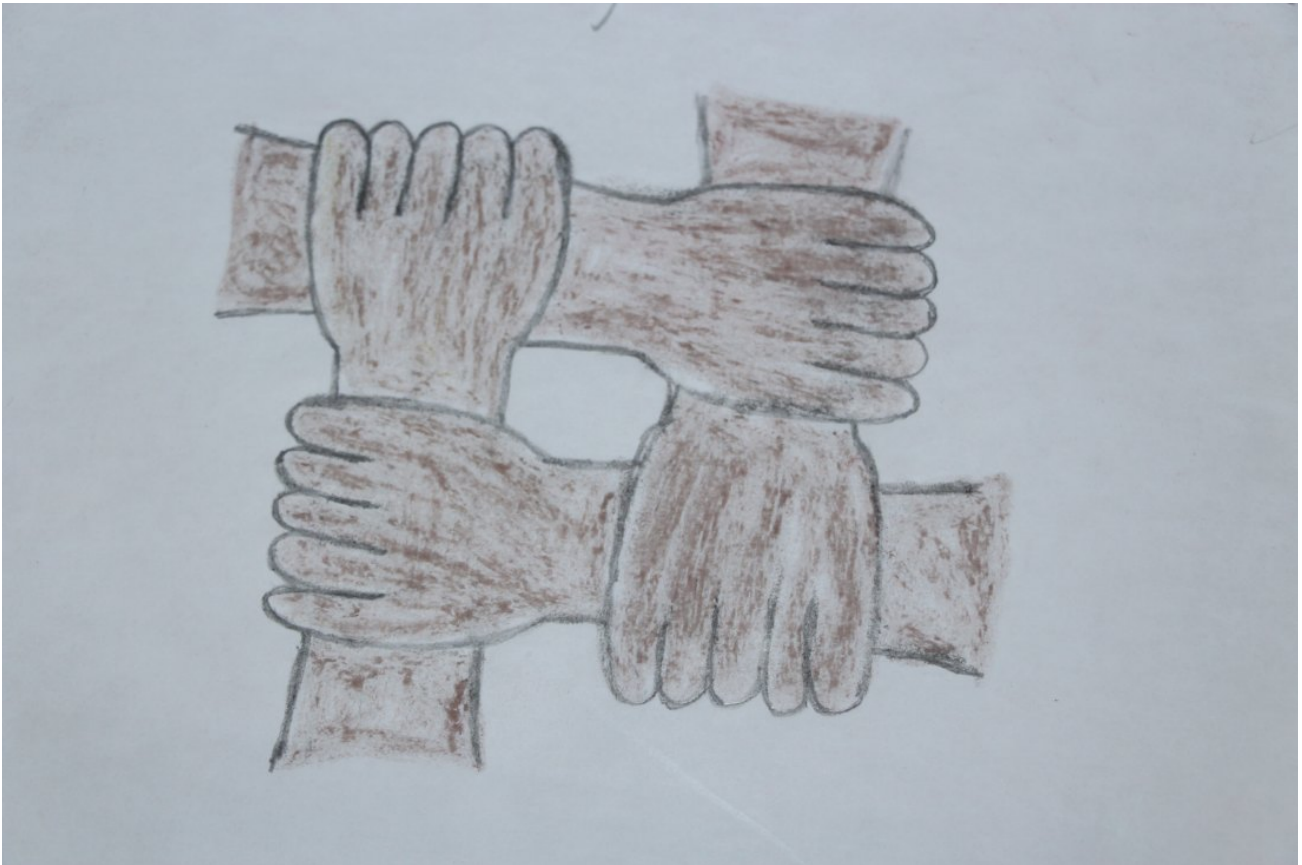


Figure 10: Drawing by DCR 26B

The interconnected hands and the heart shape are all familiar symbols which the respondents have encountered prior to the insurgency. They however provide different analogies when interpreting their work. DCR 26B explains that "...the reason why I did this drawing is because young and old people, when they come together in one place it will bring peaceful coexistence. Then another reason I drew these hands together like this is because when adults and children are facing each other and understand each other it will bring peaceful coexistence amongst them, so that's the reason I drew this the way it is" (DCR 26B). The respondent looks at the unity between the old and the young as an element and symbol of peace. To him a peaceful coexistence between them is crucial and necessary in driving out sources of evil and violence such as that of Boko Haram.

Reflections take various shapes depending on the individuals. Pictorial representations are considered as one of these reflections. Artistic drawings provide insight into the minds of people and make it possible to discuss their world of emotion and thoughts from a broader perspective (Yilmaz 2018). Drawing serves as the window to emotions and thoughts, so people can freely reflect their dreams on paper (Crook 1985; Burkitt 2004). To better understand what the pictorial expressions of people mean, one needs to listen to what they have to say about their drawings, as is reflected in this study. The reason is that people tend to draw "what they know" rather than "what they see" in their drawings (Toomela 2006). In this context, the best way to understand the message in such drawings is to talk to the people about their drawings/images and document the narratives given as done in this study.

## **Relevance of context-specific Peace Education and Personal Understandings of Peace**

The study shows that a new way of thinking about peace in a local context is important. The power of the people's own understanding and views of peace both as a condition and as a value cannot be underestimated. This is because the people's ideas shape their feelings and actions, as well as how they live and relate with others. In this study the concept of peace was determined through artistic visual representations and verbal narrations of the IDPs from the main constructs, which are religion/spirituality, unity, happiness, respect, justice and peaceful coexistence.

Peace education, from all the data gathered during the course of this study, mostly starts from the family and then gets grounded in schools and religious institutions. The religious perspective is a great scope in integrating peace concepts that people grow with as part of life. This is by being aware and sensitive towards social issues and ensuring social transformation, which have the power to maintain a systemic structure in the society. A close look at the original teachings of spiritual and faith traditions indicate that they are essential resources and wellsprings of peace. Individuals need to rediscover the values and principles that they uphold, to remind them of the essential goal of each faith tradition to seek peace.

Another stage of peace promotion is through the approach of peace education, which was actively prominent during this study, especially during the drawing and narratives sessions of the respondents. According to Harris and Morrison peace with a philosophical approach expresses a process that involves the acquisition of skills such as listening, reflecting, collaboration and problem solving (Harris and Morrison 2003). These traits were clearly exhibited by the participants of this study through the process of drawing. It was clear that not only the drawing session itself was an effective reflective tool but the process of artistically visualizing and creating the drawings, the interaction and the thought processes that the participants exhibited were also an expressive opportunity to the respondents. After the creative drawing sessions, some of the participants requested for more sessions. One of them stated: "I would like for us to continue with these drawings every day. It gives me a lot to think about and I go home thinking of ways and ideas of what I want to draw that will show peace and will teach about peace to people" (DCR 23B).

Another similar response is that of DCR 20G who observed, "malama (madam) these drawings I can do it always because it makes me happy and it makes me think a lot and miss how we used to live before all this fighting - can we continue doing it?" (DCR 20G). Such statements reinforce the importance of reflection and collaboration that takes place in peace education processes. The previous statement is reinforced by Haris and Morrison's (Haris and Morrison 2003) statement that, there is a high possibility of acquiring peaceful attitudes and behaviours that can contribute to ending violence before it becomes a conflict, by developing the competence of reflective and participatory thinking and further to these, to establish a sustainable environment. For these to occur in practice it is important to educate people on the principles of peace and spread peace promotion throughout different stages of growth and programs, until it becomes part of life in families, schools and religious institutions.

Peace education has an important place for providing the needed knowledge, skills and attributes to individuals that can be utilized in preventing violence that is or will be present in individuals or in societies and in settling conflicts. It is possible to acquire peaceful attitudes and behaviours that will contribute to

ending a conflict before it becomes violent, through possessing individual consciousness as part of the sociocultural life. This will enable people to develop the competence of reflective and participative thinking and further establish a sustainable peaceful environment. For all these to occur in practice it is crucial to spread peace promotion throughout local communities and include it in every aspect of daily lives. It is also important to include the bottom-up approach of designing and collecting information in instructional programs when working in IDPs camps and wider communities.

## **Visual Representations fostering Peace Promotion and Education for Sustainable Development**

Many of the major dilemmas in the communities relate to issues of peace and conflict. It is therefore significant that such types of research as this continue to be carried out. Although the challenges faced are enormous, it is important to learn to read the signs of the times as part of precautionary efforts in curtailing or managing outbursts of violence which usually have long lasting effects on the lives and livelihood of persons who find themselves in affected areas. Just as the negative signs are noted, it is also important that signs of hope such as the growth of social movement that works for the promotion of peace and justice in various ways and levels is also learned and transmitted increasingly to the people. This can facilitate an increase in confidence and resolve of the people to make their own contributions towards positive visions and peaceful environments.

Therefore, peace promotion and peace education are two core approaches. One of the necessary steps towards building a culture of peace is the use of visual representation as a tool for the promotion of peace centred messages. This is posited as a medium with a wide reach to people if used along with the unique bottom-up approach adopted by this study, that takes into consideration a variety of stakeholders and their perception towards peace.

Conclusively, the concept of peace is undoubtedly relative. It was discovered that peace in Maiduguri is tied to the people's cultural and traditional belief systems and way of life. Hence, the adaption of context-specific cultural inferences in the creation of the visuals for the subsequent promotion of peace visuals always needs to be considered.

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## Anmerkungen

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