

INFORMAL PEACE EDUCATION AND THE PREVENTION OF RADICALIZATION OF TEENAGERS IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the role of informal peace education in preventing the radicalization of teenagers in Borno State, Nigeria. The study was motivated by the increasing vulnerability of teenagers to violent extremism in conflict-affected environments, particularly in areas impacted by the Boko Haram insurgency. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and data were collected from 250 respondents comprising teenagers, parents/guardians, religious leaders, and community leaders using a structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The findings revealed that family-based informal peace education significantly influences the prevention of teenage radicalization by promoting moral values, emotional stability, and behavioural guidance. It was also found that religious institutions play a major role in promoting peace education through sermons, counselling, and moral teachings that discourage violence. Furthermore, traditional and community leaders were found to contribute meaningfully through indigenous practices such as storytelling, mediation, and communal dialogue. The study also identified parental guidance, religious instruction, storytelling, mentorship, and community dialogue as the most effective informal peace education practices in reducing teenagers' vulnerability to radicalization. The study concludes that informal peace education is a vital and sustainable strategy for preventing teenage radicalization in Borno State. It recommends strengthened family engagement, enhanced religious peace teachings, revitalization of traditional leadership roles, and integrated community-based peace education programmes.

Keywords: Informal peace education, teenage radicalization, religious institutions, family influence, community leadership, violent extremism.