

“Whoever Wants Peace Prepares Peace”: Impact and outcomes of International Panafrican University of Peace in Africa in Rwandan youth and society

Benjamin NIYONSHUTI^{1*}, Lucien HAKIZIMANA²

¹Independent Researcher.

²Catholic University of Rwanda / CUR.

***Corresponding Author**
Benjamin NIYONSHUTI

Independent Researcher.

Abstract: This study analyzes the systemic approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding of UPA’s program in Rwanda with the principle “*Whoever Wants Peace Prepares Peace*”. The main objective is to evaluate the impact of peace education in 1511 graduated in UPA related program, 35 first graduates in Rwanda and 1476 students and teachers trained in the same perspectives by Association des Jeunes de Saint Charles Lwanga (AJECL) in 45 schools. A sample of 43 respondents was selected using Slovin’s formula. Data collection involved a structured questionnaire, and the results were analyzed using statistical tools to present findings. The study reveals that 95% of respondents are aware of UPA, and 72% have participated in peacebuilding activities. Additionally, 78% believe the program significantly improves conflict resolution skills, while 81% report positive behavioral changes. 76% of teachers and students confirm a reduction of violence in school due to peace education. However, 40% cite resource constraints as a challenge in implementing the program effectively. In conclusion, UPA’s program has had a significant impact on fostering a culture of peace among students and teachers. Strengthening resources and expanding training can further enhance its effectiveness in conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Rwandan schools and beyond.

Keywords: *Peace, Peacebuilding, Conflict Prevention, Peace Education, UPA’s Program. Behavioral Change.*

ACRONYMS:

AJECL: Association des Jeunes de Saint Charles Lwanga

AU: African Union

EU: European Union

GBV: Gender-Based Violence

INOVAR: Intervention Non-Violente Active et Rapide

RAS: Rethinking African Security

UN: United Nations

UPA: Université de Paix en Afrique

UPABP: Union des Bâtisseurs de Paix en Afrique.

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I. Introduction

Since 1994, Rwanda has made significant strides in rebuilding its society and promoting national unity. However, challenges persist in strengthening social cohesion and ensuring long-term peacebuilding. One of the major challenges is preventing younger generations from inheriting divisive attitudes that could undermine national unity. Additionally, gender-based violence (GBV) and domestic violence continue to affect social harmony and family stability (Mukamana & Brysiewicz, 2020).

In line with Rwanda's commitment to sustainable peace, alternatively, the principle "*Whoever wants peace prepares peace*"—as opposed to the traditional notion that "*Whoever wants peace prepares war*"—guides efforts to educate younger generations. This principle, promoted by the *Université de Paix en Afrique* (UPA) for over 20 years, presents an alternative narrative focused on proactive peacebuilding rather than conflict preparedness. UPA has disseminated this philosophy through various programs designed to cultivate nonviolent intervention, continental peacebuilding networks, and new security paradigms for Africa.

One of these programs, INOVAR (*Intervention Non-Violente Active et Rapide / Non-violent Active and Rapid Intervention in (post-)conflict communities*), trains peacebuilders to intervene in active conflict zones, providing support to affected communities and engaging with key actors to de-escalate violence. UPABP (*Union des Bâisseurs de Paix en Afrique / Panafrican Union of Peace Builders*) fosters a Pan-African network of UPA graduates dedicated to transcending national boundaries and collectively strengthening peace across the continent. Meanwhile, RAS (*Rethinking African Security*) reexamines security approaches in Africa, emphasizing mediation between states and citizens, as well as advocating for peaceful solutions at international forums such as the UN, EU, and AU.

AJECL has adopted this philosophy and incorporated it into their training programs, which aim to shift mindsets and foster societal cohesion. By equipping individuals with peacebuilding tools and promoting a culture of nonviolence and tolerance, these initiatives contribute to long-term stability and unity in Rwanda. Through collaborations with organizations like UPA, Rwanda strengthens its commitment to sustainable peace, ensuring that future generations inherit a culture of dialogue, reconciliation, and mutual respect.

In that perspective, since 2003, UPA has developed a systemic approach to peace education and conflict prevention (<http://www.universityofpeacein africa.org>, retrieved on February 22, 2025). Currently, this initiative adopted by the Association des Jeunes de Saint Charles Lwanga (AJECL) focuses on primary and secondary school students, with plans to expand to university and higher education institutions in the future. UPA program aims to instill values of peace, tolerance, and nonviolent conflict resolution.

While 35 people in Rwanda initially graduated from the UPA program, it has since been implemented in 45 schools across Kigali City, Bugesera, Rulindo, and Gakenke districts, certifying 1,476 students and teachers. This brings the total number of certified individuals in Rwanda to 1,511. Given this expansion, there is a need to assess the program's effectiveness in promoting a culture of sustainable peace.

This research aims to evaluate whether the UPA program successfully prevents future conflicts by shaping young minds toward unity, reconciliation, and nonviolence. Additionally, it seeks to determine whether the program effectively shields youth from divisive ideologies that could threaten Rwanda's peacebuilding achievements over the past three decades.

Thus, the core problem this research addresses is whether UPA's systemic approach effectively fosters long-term peace in Rwanda by preventing conflict and strengthening national unity. The lack of empirical data on the long-term impact of such peace education programs highlights the importance of this study in providing insights into how education can serve as a tool for peacebuilding and ensuring that Rwanda's future generations remain committed to peace and reconciliation.

II. Methodology

This research adopts a mixed approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the impact of UPA program in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The main objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of the systemic approach used to sensitize and train people in the culture of peace.

1. Determination of Sample Size

The Slovin formula was used to determine a representative sample from the target population of 1511 students and teachers. With a margin of error of 15.05%, the formula:

Formula: Slovin's Formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

N= sample size

N=1511 (total population)

e=15.03% or 0.1503 (margin of error)

$$n = \frac{1511}{1 + 1511(0.15)^2}$$

$$e^2 = (0.1503)^2 = 0.02259$$

$$1511(0.02259) = 34,13$$

$$1 + 34,13 = 35,13$$

$$n = \frac{1511}{35.13}$$

$$n \approx 43,01$$

$$n = 43$$

Data Collection

Three main methods were used to gather data:

1. **Structured Questionnaires:** these were administered to 43 randomly selected participants. The questions focused on their perception of conflicts, the effectiveness of the program, and their commitment to peacebuilding.
2. **Semi-Directed Interviews:** a total of 4 interviews were conducted, including 2 UPA leaders and 2 AJECL managers. These interviews aimed to delve deeper into the challenges and successes of the program.
3. **Document Analysis:** internal documents, such as training modules and evaluation reports, were reviewed to complement the empirical data.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed, generating statistics and Figures of results in percentages. Meanwhile, qualitative data from the interviews and document analysis were studied through a thematic analysis, identifying key trends and perceptions.

This mixed methodology allows for an objective assessment of the impact of UPA on young people and teachers in terms of conflict prevention and peace promotion. The integration of both quantitative and qualitative methods ensures a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the educational and social dynamics involved.

III. Systemic Approach to Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

1. The Role of Peace Education in Conflict Prevention

Peace education plays a vital role in preventing conflicts and fostering peaceful coexistence. It aims to cultivate attitudes, values, and behaviors that promote peaceful resolution of conflicts and mutual understanding between people (Salomon & Nevo, 2002). Peace education programs are designed to equip individuals with the knowledge and skills to manage conflicts constructively, preventing the escalation of tensions into violence.

UPA is a panafrican international training program that impacted up to 35 Peace builders in Rwanda, all in particular responsibilities in civil society organizations and particularly in university and school education. The impact of UPA through its Laureates has an exemplary case of peace education aimed at the youth in Rwanda. The program's primary objective is to instill in students and teachers the values of peace, tolerance, and nonviolent conflict resolution. By targeting young people, who are often the most vulnerable to manipulation and involvement in violent conflicts, UPA contributes to creating a generation that is more resilient to the dangers of violent extremism and ethnic divisions (Schirch, 2004).

The survey results from the research provide valuable insights into the success of UPA and its role in promoting peace education. **Figure 1** shows that **95%** of respondents are aware of the program through UPA graduates who trained others, indicating that the outreach efforts have been successful in engaging the target community. This high level of awareness aligns with the work of Lederach (1997), who emphasized that the first step in effective peacebuilding is raising awareness and engaging the community in

peace efforts. Awareness is crucial as it helps individuals recognize the importance of peace and their role in building it. When individuals are aware of peacebuilding initiatives, they are more likely to participate and adopt peaceful behaviors.

Furthermore, **Figure 2** reveals that 72% of respondents have actively participated in peacebuilding activities, which demonstrates that UPA's philosophy is not only raising awareness but also fostering active engagement. Participation in peacebuilding activities allows individuals to practice conflict resolution skills and deepen their understanding of nonviolent approaches to solving disputes. This participatory aspect of the program is critical because it transforms theoretical knowledge into practical experience, making peacebuilding a lived reality for participants. Engaging students and teachers in these activities helps to reinforce the idea that peace is not just an abstract concept but a practical skill that can be applied in daily life.

Lederach (1997) further argues that peacebuilding requires long-term engagement and a deep commitment to transforming social structures that perpetuate conflict. In the context of the Great Lakes region, where conflicts have left deep scars, peace education initiatives offer an important avenue for societal transformation. By educating young people and teachers, the program is contributing to breaking the cycle of violence and hatred that has plagued the region for decades. UPA is preparing future generations to become active agents of peace, capable of resolving conflicts in a constructive manner and building a more peaceful and inclusive society.

In conclusion, the success of UPA, as reflected in the survey results, demonstrates the essential role of peace education in conflict prevention. By raising awareness and engaging participants in peacebuilding activities, the program is helping to cultivate a culture of peace among Rwanda's youth. These efforts are critical in preventing future conflicts and promoting sustainable peace in the region. However, for the program to have a long-lasting impact, it is crucial that peace education be expanded, integrated into school curricula, and supported by community initiatives.

2. Impact of UPA on Conflict Resolution Skills

One of the fundamental objectives of peace education is to equip individuals with the necessary skills to resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner. This objective has gained increasing attention in academic and practical fields, with peace education programs being recognized as essential for fostering harmonious societies. Boulding (2000) emphasizes that peace education is not merely about understanding theoretical concepts of peace but about enabling individuals to develop the practical ability to resolve disputes effectively and peacefully. In the context of Rwanda, UPA, with the principle of "Whoever Wants Peace Prepares Peace", rather than "whoever wants peace prepares war" designed as part of a peace-building initiative, plays a significant role in enhancing conflict resolution skills. The program's impact on participants' abilities to mediate and negotiate disputes is critical to both individual development and national peace-building efforts.

According to a survey conducted on participants of UPA (**Figure 3**), a substantial majority (78%) of respondents reported an improvement in their conflict resolution skills after completing the program. This finding is consistent with the broader literature on peace education, particularly Ramsbotham et al. (2011), who argue

that structured peace education interventions can significantly enhance individuals' mediation and negotiation skills. Peace education programs like UPA often emphasize practical, real-life applications of conflict resolution techniques, such as active listening, empathy, and collaborative problem-solving. These skills are crucial for managing interpersonal and community disputes in both formal and informal settings.

The high percentage of 78% suggests that the training modules of UPA are effectively equipping learners with practical, actionable skills that can be applied in real-world conflict situations. The program's emphasis on developing skills like negotiation, mediation, and understanding differing perspectives is particularly relevant in a post-conflict society like Rwanda, where social cohesion and peace-building are paramount.

However, it is also important to note that 22% of participants felt the impact of the program was only "Moderate" or "Low." While this percentage is relatively small, it highlights potential areas for improvement in the program's design and delivery. Participants who reported a lower impact may have encountered challenges in fully engaging with the material or in translating the learned skills into practice. As noted by Boulding (2000), peace education must be designed to be both intellectually stimulating and practically grounded to ensure its effectiveness. This could suggest a need for more interactive teaching methods, such as role-playing exercises, case studies, and peer mediation practice, to increase the applicability of the content. Additionally, reinforcement mechanisms, such as follow-up sessions, mentorship, or real-world conflict mediation opportunities, could further solidify the skills learned during the program.

In conclusion, UPA has had a considerable impact on participants' conflict resolution skills, with the majority of respondents indicating significant improvement. The program's structured approach to peace education aligns with findings from Ramsbotham et al. (2011), affirming that structured, practical training in peace education enhances conflict resolution abilities. However, the 22% of respondents who felt the impact was moderate or low underscores the need for continuous improvement in teaching methods and program delivery to ensure that all participants gain the maximum benefit from the program. Future iterations of UPA could explore incorporating more interactive and immersive learning strategies to address these gaps and enhance the program's overall effectiveness.

3. Behavioral Changes Resulting from Peace Education

Peace education plays a pivotal role in shaping attitudes, values, and behaviors that promote peaceful coexistence and nonviolent conflict resolution (Salomon & Nevo, 2002). In conflict-affected regions, educational interventions aim to instill the values of peace, tolerance, and cooperation in order to break cycles of violence and to create a culture of peace. According to Freire (1970), education should empower individuals not only by transferring knowledge but also by transforming their attitudes and behaviors. This philosophy underpins UPA, which has been instrumental in promoting these values through peacebuilding training for students and teachers.

The survey results (**Figure 4**) show that 82% of respondents reported experiencing positive behavioral changes following their peace education training. These findings indicate that UPA has

been effective in fostering the internalization of peacebuilding principles such as empathy, conflict resolution, and mutual respect. As Salomon & Nevo (2002) argue, peace education programs are effective in encouraging individuals to adopt peaceful behaviors and resolve conflicts through dialogue and cooperation. The majority of participants in the study showed an understanding of these principles, reflecting positive changes in their daily interactions, both in school and in their communities.

Freire (1970) argued that education should create "critical consciousness"—an awareness that leads individuals to act in ways that promote social change. UPA appears to have successfully promoted such critical consciousness, particularly among students and teachers in 45 schools across Kigali City, Bugesera, Rulindo, and Gakenke districts. When individuals internalize peacebuilding principles, they become more likely to exhibit nonviolent behavior, resolve disputes peacefully, and engage in community-building efforts. This aligns with Lederach's (1997) assertion that peace education serves as a foundation for societal transformation, fostering a generation capable of both personal and communal healing after conflict.

The success of the program in creating positive behavioral shifts is further reflected in the survey data, where 82% of respondents recognized improvements in their interactions with peers, teachers, and community members. These individuals reported adopting more peaceful and cooperative behaviors, signaling that peace education can influence not only individual attitudes but also broader social dynamics. This is especially significant in post-conflict settings, such as Rwanda, where the lingering effects of the genocide and ethnic violence have often fractured social cohesion.

Despite the overwhelming success of the program, 12% of respondents reported "Neutral" behavioral changes, while 7% reported "Negative" changes. These results suggest that peace education may not be equally effective for all participants. There could be several reasons for these mixed responses. As Lederach (1997) emphasizes, peacebuilding is a long-term process, and short-term interventions may not lead to sustainable behavioral changes for all individuals. Some respondents may face difficulties in integrating peace education principles into their daily lives due to personal or contextual barriers. Additionally, negative responses could indicate resistance to change or lack of readiness to engage in the peacebuilding process. Some participants might still be influenced by the divisive narratives and prejudices that persist in post-conflict societies.

To address these challenges, it is essential that peace education programs, such as UPA, incorporate follow-up interventions. According to Salomon & Nevo (2002), sustained engagement and continued reinforcement of peacebuilding principles are key to ensuring that participants internalize and apply these lessons in the long term. Ongoing support structures, such as community dialogue sessions, peer mentorship programs, and additional workshops, can help solidify the positive behaviors and attitudes cultivated through initial peace education training.

In conclusion, UPA, with the principle of "Whoever Wants Peace Prepares Peace", has proven to be effective in fostering positive behavioral changes among participants, with 82% of respondents acknowledging significant shifts in their actions. However, the 12% neutral and 7% negative responses indicate the need for continued support and tailored interventions to ensure lasting impact. Peace education is most effective when it is a continuous

process that includes follow-up and reinforcement. With this in mind, it is crucial that programs like UPA adapt their approaches to meet the diverse needs of participants, ensuring that all individuals are empowered to contribute to peace and conflict resolution in their communities.

4. Reduction in School Violence through Peace Education

One of the most significant outcomes of peace education is its potential to reduce violence in school settings (Galtung, 1996). Schools, particularly in post-conflict environments, can be breeding grounds for aggressive behaviors and conflict, stemming from historical tensions, peer pressure, and socio-economic stressors. Peace education programs aim to address these issues by fostering values of nonviolence, conflict resolution, and cooperation among students and educators. UPA, which incorporates peacebuilding techniques into school activities, serves as a valuable tool for reducing school violence and promoting a culture of peace.

The results from **Figure 5** indicate that a majority of respondents (76%) observed a reduction in school violence. This aligns with Galtung's (1996) assertion that peace education interventions, when implemented systematically and effectively, can foster environments of cooperation and nonviolence. By equipping students with conflict resolution skills, emotional intelligence, and the tools to manage disagreements peacefully, UPA appears to have had a profound impact on reducing aggressive behaviors in the surveyed schools.

Boulding (2000) supports this view, highlighting that structured interventions that target conflict-prone environments, such as schools, can significantly reduce aggression and promote peaceful problem-solving. In environments where violence is endemic, the implementation of peace education can serve as a catalyst for social change, teaching students alternative ways to handle conflicts rather than resorting to physical or verbal aggression. The reduction in school violence is a direct result of the peacebuilding techniques that emphasize dialogue, empathy, and collaborative problem-solving, which are central to UPA.

Furthermore, the survey results underscore the importance of continuous reinforcement to maintain these positive outcomes. While 76% of respondents observed a decrease in violence, 14% were unsure about the impact, and 10% did not observe any changes. These findings suggest that the reduction of school violence is not guaranteed in all instances and may require ongoing efforts to ensure sustainability. As Boulding (2000) emphasizes, peace education must be sustained and reinforced over time to prevent the resurgence of violent behavior. Without long-term commitment and school-wide engagement, positive changes may dissipate, leaving students vulnerable to returning to previous patterns of aggression.

The challenge of achieving lasting change in schools prone to violence is not unique to UPA. Studies have shown that peace education programs need to be holistic, integrating not only curricula but also school-wide policies and community involvement to be effective (Salomon & Nevo, 2002). Peace education is most successful when it permeates the entire school environment, involving teachers, students, and the wider community in creating a culture of peace. This approach requires

the participation of all stakeholders and should be embedded in the broader educational framework.

In light of these findings, it is clear that UPA has contributed positively to reducing school violence in the surveyed schools. However, the data also suggest that a broader, more sustained approach is necessary to ensure the long-term success of peace education initiatives. School leaders and educators must remain committed to reinforcing peacebuilding principles, engaging all stakeholders, and ensuring that peace education is an integral part of the school culture.

5. Challenges in Implementing Peace Education

While peace education programs like UPA have demonstrated significant positive outcomes in fostering peace and conflict resolution skills among students and teachers, their implementation is often hindered by several challenges. These challenges, as shown in **Figure 6**, must be addressed to ensure the program's broader and sustained impact. The three primary challenges identified were a lack of resources (40%), resistance from students and teachers (23%), and lack of administrative support (21%). These obstacles are not unique to UPA but are common in many peace education initiatives worldwide.

Lack of Resources: A significant 40% of respondents highlighted that the lack of resources is the biggest challenge facing UPA. Resources are crucial in any educational program, and their absence can severely limit the program's capacity to reach more schools or provide the necessary materials for effective teaching. Salomon & Nevo (2002) argue that peace education requires substantial financial investment to ensure that appropriate materials, such as textbooks, training manuals, and audio-visual aids, are available. Without these resources, teachers may struggle to effectively teach peacebuilding principles, and students may not have the necessary tools to internalize and practice the values being taught. A lack of funding also affects the quality of training, as teachers may not receive the professional development necessary to teach peace education effectively. In some cases, the absence of resources may lead to reduced program effectiveness, diminishing the potential impact of peace education on conflict resolution and social cohesion.

According to Boulding (2000), resource constraints are particularly significant in environments where conflict or post-conflict conditions prevail, and establishing sustainable educational programs requires external and internal funding, partnerships, and community involvement. There is a need for stakeholders, both local and international, to prioritize long-term financial support for peace education initiatives.

Resistance from Students and Teachers: Another notable challenge is the resistance from students and teachers, cited by 23% of respondents. This resistance often arises due to a lack of understanding or skepticism towards the goals of peace education. As Salomon & Nevo (2002) note, peace education programs frequently face challenges in gaining acceptance from teachers and students, particularly in environments with entrenched conflict or where peacebuilding is viewed with suspicion. In some cases, teachers may feel ill-equipped or uncomfortable teaching nonviolence or conflict resolution, especially if they themselves have not received adequate training in these areas. Similarly, students, particularly in post-conflict environments, may be wary

of peace education, associating it with ideological or political agendas rather than practical tools for peacebuilding.

Moreover, resistance can arise if students have had previous experiences that have not reinforced peaceful values, or if they believe that the proposed solutions are not relevant to their lived realities. To overcome this resistance, UPA must emphasize the practical benefits of peace education, highlighting its relevance to students' everyday lives. In addition, peace education must also involve creating a safe and welcoming environment that encourages participation, understanding, and engagement.

Lack of Administrative Support: The third significant challenge is the lack of administrative support, cited by 21% of respondents. Administrative backing is crucial in ensuring the program's integration into the school agenda, as well as for ensuring its sustainability. Without support from school leaders and policymakers, the program may struggle to gain the necessary visibility or institutional buy-in. According to Galtung (1996), institutional support at the school and governmental levels is necessary to create a conducive environment for peace education to thrive. Without this backing, peace education may not be prioritized, and its objectives may not align with other institutional or educational priorities.

Furthermore, lack of administrative support can result in poor implementation, particularly in environments where schools are already burdened with overcrowded curricula or a lack of trained educators. Boulding (2000) suggests that systemic support, which includes backing from educational authorities, is critical for overcoming these hurdles and ensuring that peace education becomes institutionalized.

Recommendations for addressing these challenges: to overcome these challenges, several strategies must be employed. First, increased funding should be prioritized to ensure that the program

has the resources it needs to operate effectively. Funding can be sourced from government bodies, international organizations, and private sector partners who are committed to promoting peace and conflict resolution in schools. According to Lederach (1997), international organizations play a critical role in providing technical assistance and financial resources to support peace education programs in post-conflict settings.

Second, policy support is crucial to institutionalizing peace education. Policymakers should integrate peace education into national curricula and ensure that it is supported by laws and regulations that guarantee its sustainability. In particular, educational policy reform at national levels can ensure that peace education becomes a core subject, with resources allocated for its implementation across schools.

Third, engagement with school leadership is essential. School administrators must be educated on the benefits of peace education and the ways in which it can improve the learning environment. As Salomon & Nevo (2002) suggest, school leaders should be instrumental in fostering a school culture that values peace and conflict resolution. Engaging with community leaders and local organizations can also help ensure the program's success and long-term sustainability.

Finally, building community involvement and fostering strong relationships with local leaders can provide the necessary support for peace education initiatives. By engaging parents, community leaders, and local organizations, UPA can create a broader support network that reinforces its objectives and helps overcome resistance at the grassroots level.

IV. Results and Interpretation

Below are the figures presenting the results obtained from the survey, followed by their interpretations.

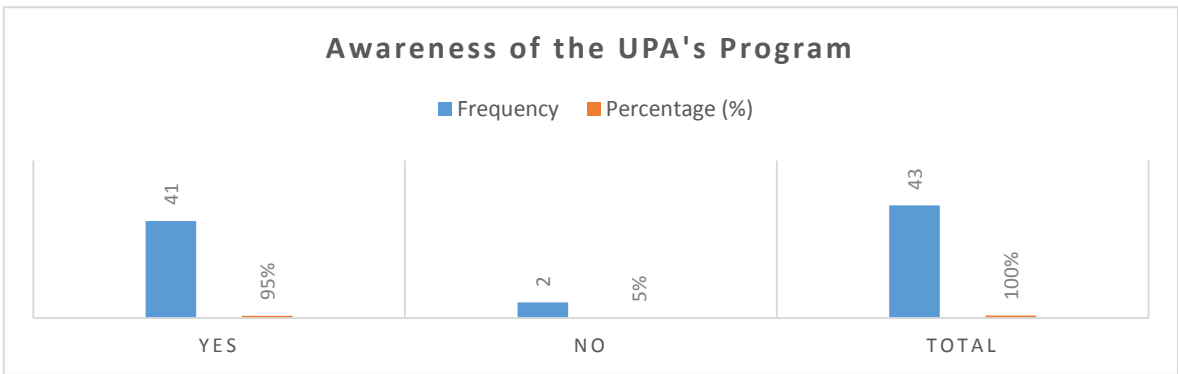


Figure 1: Awareness of UPA's program

The results indicate that 95% of the respondents are aware of UPA's program of *"Whoever wants peace prepares peace"*, while 5% are not familiar with it. This high level of awareness suggests that UPA's program has been successful in reaching students and teachers. According to Lederach (1997), awareness is a crucial first step in peacebuilding initiatives, as individuals must recognize the importance of conflict resolution before actively participating in it.

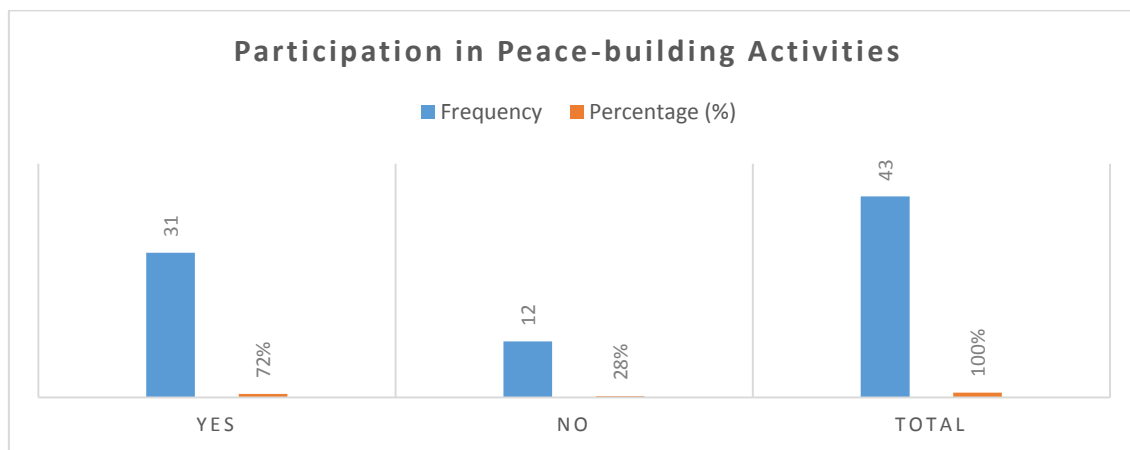


Figure 2: Participation in Peacebuilding Activities

A significant proportion (72%) of the respondents have participated in peace-building activities, while 28% have not. This indicates a positive engagement in the program, aligning with findings from Galtung (1996) that direct involvement in peace initiatives fosters long-term behavioral change and conflict prevention. The challenge remains to ensure that those who have not yet participated are encouraged to do so.

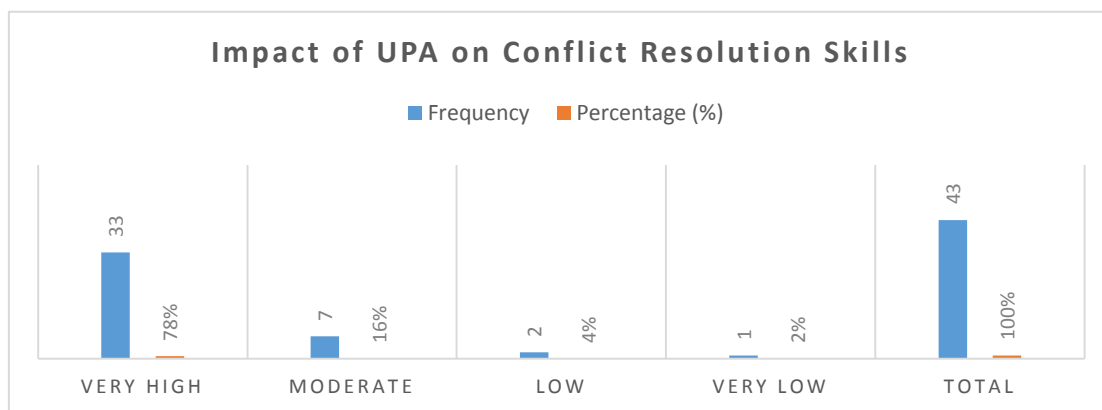


Figure 3: Impact of UPA on Conflict Resolution Skills

The 78% of respondents believe that UPA's program of *"Whoever wants peace prepares peace"* has significantly improved their conflict resolution skills. This supports the argument made by Ramsbotham et al. (2011) that structured peace education strengthens mediation and reconciliation capabilities. However, 22% of respondents' report moderate to very low impact, highlighting the need for further reinforcement of training strategies.

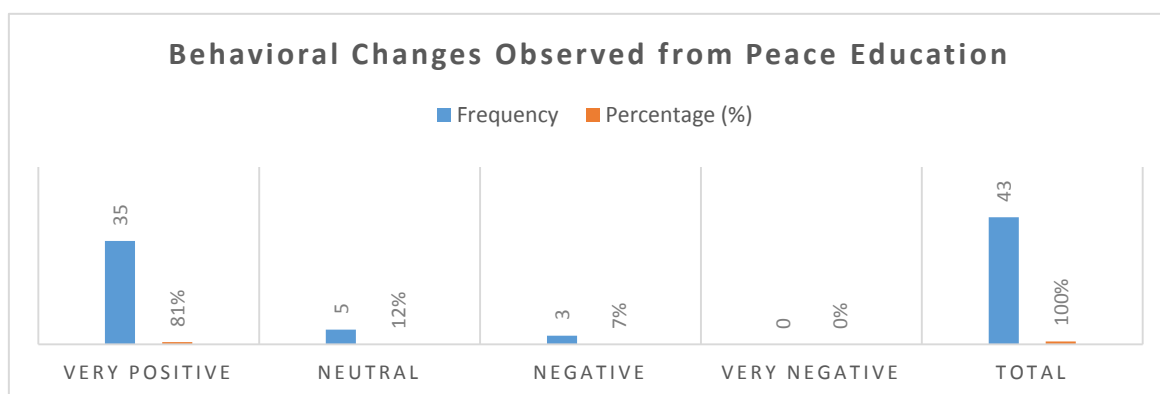


Figure 4: Behavioral Changes Observed from Education

The results show that 81% of respondents perceive positive behavioral changes due to peace education according to UPA's program of *"Whoever wants peace prepares peace"*. This aligns with Freire (1970), who emphasized that education fosters critical consciousness, leading to attitude shifts. However, 19% of respondents (Neutral + Negative) did not notice significant change, suggesting a need for continuous monitoring and feedback mechanisms.

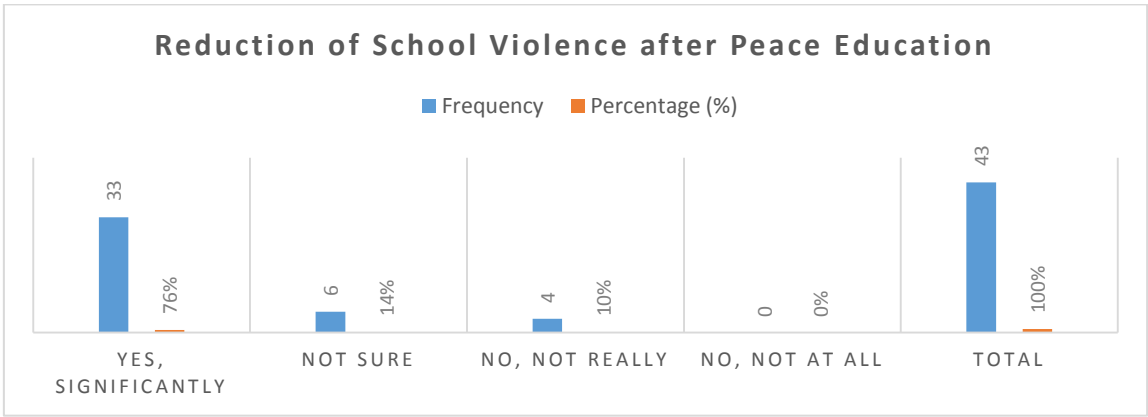


Figure 5: Reduction of School Violence After Peace Education

The results indicate that 76% of respondents believe that school violence has reduced due to peace education from UPA’s program of “*Whoever wants peace prepares peace*”. According to Boulding (2000), peace education is an effective tool for violence reduction in schools. However, 24% are either unsure or believe there has been little change, suggesting that additional interventions may be necessary to sustain long-term impact.

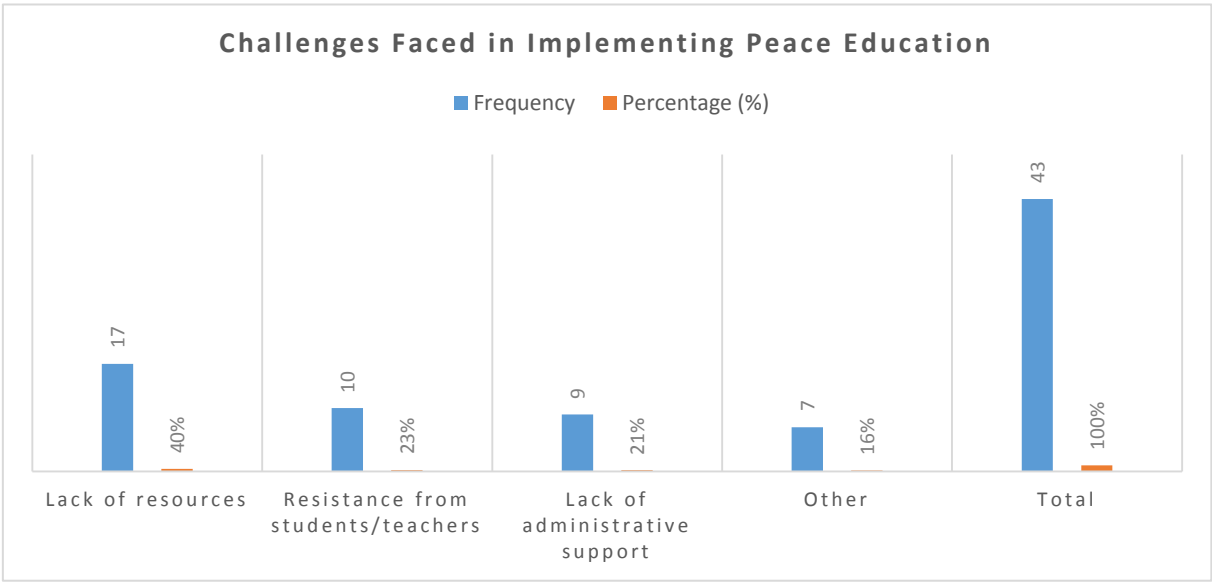


Figure 6: Challenges Faced in Implementing Peace Education

The biggest challenge reported is lack of resources (40%), followed by resistance from students and teachers (23%), and lack of administrative support (21%). These findings are consistent with studies by Salomon & Nevo (2002), which highlight that sustainable peace education requires institutional backing and sufficient funding. Addressing these challenges is crucial to expanding the program’s effectiveness.

The findings indicate that UPA’s program, with the principle of “*Whoever Wants Peace Prepares Peace*” has had a substantial impact on conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Rwandan schools. High levels of awareness (95%) and participation (72%) demonstrate the program’s reach, while 78% of respondents report improved conflict resolution skills. Additionally, 81% acknowledge positive behavioral changes, and 76% confirm a reduction in school violence. However, challenges such as resource limitations (40%) and resistance from some educators and students (23%) need to be addressed for long-term success. Strengthening institutional support, increasing funding, and enhancing engagement strategies will help sustain and expand peace education efforts in Rwanda.

V. Conclusion

This research aimed to assess the effectiveness of the UPA’s peacebuilding program in promoting peace and conflict prevention among youth in Rwanda. The research employed a quantitative methodology using a structured questionnaire, based on a sample of 43 participants selected from a target population of 1511 UPA’s graduates and trained students and teachers across 45 schools. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics, with the results presented in percentages and Figures to identify trends and key findings.

The results indicate that UPA, with its principle of “*Whoever Wants Peace Prepares Peace*” has had a significant impact on the participants’ understanding of peacebuilding and conflict resolution. A substantial percentage of respondents (76%) reported an improved awareness of peace-related concepts, while 72% expressed a greater willingness to engage in nonviolent methods of resolving conflicts. Furthermore, the program’s training of teachers as peace educators was found to be a critical factor in spreading peace education effectively across schools.

However, the study also highlighted certain challenges, such as limited resources for training facilitators and the need for more interactive and practical peacebuilding activities. These factors suggest that while the program has made progress, there is still room for improvement.

Recommendations include increasing resource allocation for program expansion, fostering greater community involvement, and adapting the programme to include more hands-on activities and simulations. Additionally, future research should focus on longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of peace education on participants' behavior and their role in the broader societal context.

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