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Kenya Quaker Secondary School Peace Curriculum Pilot Project: Examining the Role of the Principal in the Successes and Challenges of the Implementation

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KENYA QUAKER SECONDARY SCHOOL PEACE CURRICULUM PILOT PROJECT: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN THE SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES OF THE IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

The development of the *Curriculum for Peace and Conflict Management* for the Quaker secondary schools in Kenya was a response to the effects of the 2007-2008 post-election violence. In the aftermath of the violence, over 1,000 were killed, and thousands of others displaced from their homes. Many people experienced neighbors turning violent on neighbors, even though living side by side for many years. The Quakers, also known as Friends, have been historically known for promoting peace and conflict resolution around the world. However, once the violence settled and order was restored within the country, these Kenyan Quakers realized they were ill-equipped to address the impact of the violence and create a culture of peace within their schools and communities.

The first edition of the *Curriculum for Peace and Conflict Management* was a collaborative effort between George Fox University, a Quaker institution in the United States, and the Kenyan Quaker secondary schools leadership group. Completed in 2011, this curriculum for 9th and 10th graders contains 43 lessons comprised of eight major themes addressing specific Kenyan cultural needs involving peace in society. Those themes are: 1) *Who am I?*; 2) Peace; 3) Virtues that promote peace; 4) Conflict and conflict management; 5) Life skills; 6) Human rights and responsibilities; 7) Peace and health; and 8) Peace and the environment. The primary concepts of the curriculum begin with the theme of *Who Am I?*, then develop into the themes of valuing one another; diversity as a strength; and the uniqueness and contributions of each individual to school and society. All together, the first edition consists of a Teachers' Guide, Resource Guide, and Syllabus.

An article describing the development of this project was first published in the 2012 Journal of Research on Christian Education, volume 21, issue 1.

Purpose of the Study

The development of the peace curriculum had unwavering support from the Quaker secondary schools from the inception of the project and through the completion phase. However, even with strong support, the secondary school leadership group recognized the actual implementation of the curriculum could face some challenges. For example, implementation of such a curriculum would first require support from the school administration, followed by an ongoing commitment within each school in which peace education would become an integral component of the school culture, both short term and long term. Secondly, any type of change effort, even for the better, can present significant challenges to the implementation because of long held traditions within the school community. These traditions can often derail or stop any kind of new initiative, especially in developing countries such as Kenya.

To further assist the Quaker schools with the implementation of the peace curriculum, the Quaker secondary schools leadership team designed specific training workshops in which the purposes, goals, and teaching strategies of the curriculum were clearly explained and

demonstrated. Those schools participating in the training sessions then proceeded to implement the curriculum as appropriate for their individual school communities. A total of 95 out of 240 Quaker secondary schools were represented in this initial training as a pilot program.

As with any new initiative within an organization, ongoing follow-up and training is both necessary and critical in order for that initiative to be successful, especially long-term. The Quakers schools secondary leadership team recognized the need for strategic follow-up and support for this peace curriculum, especially in the early stages of implementation. Early monitoring and evaluation can identify both successes and challenges which in turn can provide further support and direction for the entire project. Since the principals and lead teachers were the participants in the peace curriculum workshops and would also carry out new initiatives in the Kenyan schools, it was important to begin the evaluation process with principals of the schools selected for this study. Therefore, the primary purpose of this study was to interview principals and key staff to find out the specific methods used to implement the peace curriculum in selected pilot schools one year after the training sessions. Through this evaluation process we also hoped to assess the commitment of these same schools in promoting peace education, in addition to gaining more knowledge and insights about the role of the principal in such efforts.

Review of the Literature

Within the Kenyan educational system, curriculum initiatives are dictated from the government and are then carried out in the schools via the school principal and other selected leaders. In the case of the secondary peace curriculum for the Quaker schools, our development team consisting of Americans and Kenyans had sought and gained government approval for this project. Even with this special approval, we realized that the principal was still the gatekeeper for the implementation, especially since this curriculum was not a government mandate. Implementing the peace curriculum in the Quaker secondary schools would add another subject area or additional lessons to existing schedules and would rely on the support of the principal, other key leaders, and teachers. Therefore, it is important to examine theory of change and various styles of leadership and that can provide insight for this particular study regarding the implementation of the peace curriculum.

Cultural Change Theory in Education

Within most any community, the local school has historically served as the place which tends to hold on tightly to the local customs and traditions of its surrounding locale (Hallinger, 2004). Every school has its own unique culture with specific traditions and practices, resulting in a school environment which is either welcoming or hostile to any kind of change initiative (Barth, 2002). Since the middle of the 20th century, schools have notoriously been resistant to most change efforts, especially if the level of support from the surrounding community is lacking. Resistance to change or reform initiatives tends to be even more evident in international settings, where the school is usually more closely tied to the local community and strongly supports and reflects those local cultural traditions and customs. Hallinger (2004) reports that such cultural traditions typically push back against world-wide trends for change. In addition, research shows that change efforts in international settings often take more time and need the right conditions in order to be successful (Fullan, 2000).

Cultural change theory examines a school's capacity for change, focusing on the cultural elements which need to be addressed in order for the change to be successful. Research on cultural change theory within a school environment is complex and contains many variables, one of which is the role of the principal. Historically, the role of the principal has been to provide stability and overall general management to the school and its programs. In the current educational climate of reforms or school improvement initiatives, principals now often find themselves in a tension of either promoting change efforts, or maintaining the cultural norms of the school (Fullan, 2001; Hallinger, 2004). However, the role of the principal is now shifting to that of a change leader (Fullan, 2001), making the leadership of the school, as well as the school's potential to adapt to changes uniquely linked together. Both are needed in order for reforms to successfully take place (Hallinger and Heck, 2013). Unless principals can navigate this new role and adapt and lead change within their schools, proposed change efforts may not be successful (Hallinger, 2004), since s/he is most often the direct link to the success of the school reform or change (Fullan, 2001).

Transformational Leadership in Education

Much has been written in research and other types of literature about the styles of leadership that can produce positive results within an organization. Research on school reform shows that highly successful reforms are often led by principals with the *transformational leadership* style (Bass and Avolio,1994). Principals who employ the characteristics of transformational leadership are viewed as those who:
- Stimulate interest among colleagues and followers to view their work from new perspectives
- Generate awareness of the mission or vision of the team and organization
- Develop colleagues and followers to higher levels of ability and potential, and
- Motivate colleagues and followers to look beyond their own interests toward those that will benefit the group (Bass and Avolio 1994, p. 2)

In addition to the aforementioned qualities, Bass and Avolio (1994) also maintain that transformational leaders exhibit at least one of the following specific traits, also known as the Four I's:
- Idealized influence: set aside their own agendas and are highly professional
- Inspirational motivation: the organization has a clear view of the tasks ahead
- Intellectual stimulation: values multiple perspectives and new ideas without negative feedback
- Individualized consideration: trusts their team to carry out assigned tasks and duties without micro-managing the process. (Bass and Avolio 1994, p. 3)

Other researchers (Leithwood, Janzti, & Steinbach, 1999; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Olsen & Chrispeels, 2009) have further developed the original work of Bass and Avolio (1994) and now identify additional aspects of transformational leadership in light of school reform efforts. Those aspects include: (a) building a school vision, (b) garnering commitment through shared goals, (c) high performance expectations, (d) modeling best practices and important organizational values, (e) providing individualized support, (f) providing intellectual stimulation, (g) building a productive school culture, and (h) establishing structures to foster participation in

decision making (Olsen and Chrispeels, 2009, p. 385). None of these dimensions are more important than the other, but within each, many opportunities abound for a principal to motivate teachers, staff, and other stakeholders toward school improvement and change. Marks and Printy (2003) strongly suggest that transformational leadership is most needed when schools are undergoing significant change or reform. As a result, transformational leadership can become the key that unlocks the capabilities of people already within the school community (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2014, p. 29) and has the most potential of helping an organization move forward toward successful change efforts (Kirby, Paradise, & King, 1992). Transformational leadership then is specifically geared toward advancements in an organization via intentional growth and nurturing of each participant (Kirby et al., 1992) and often challenging people to accomplish more than they believed they were capable of doing (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Collaborative Leadership in Education

Closely linked to transformative leadership in school reform efforts is *collaborative leadership*. Heck and Hallinger (2010) note there are three distinct parts to collaborative leadership; "shared school governance, collaborative decisions, and broad participation in efforts to evaluate the school's academic development" (p. 238). Collaborative leadership goes further than transformative leadership, in that, the shared reform efforts are targeted specifically at improving academic outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 2013; Heck & Hallinger, 2010). Collaborative leadership intentionally brings together the all of the school's key stakeholders from various positions and provides additional opportunities for buy in for the school reform efforts (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). All of the stakeholders, often including community partners, share in the decision-making and are also responsible for the academic outcomes of their efforts. Through this shared process, school reform efforts tend to be more successful with positive outcomes for both teaching and learning (Heck & Hallinger, 2010).

Heck and Hallinger (2010) conducted a study which examined three specific elements: (a) collaborative leadership, (b) a school's capacity for change, and (c) increases in academic achievement in an elementary math class. Results from the study concluded that collaborative leadership was a strong factor in positively shaping the school reform efforts and improvement in the mathematics outcomes. Further, this same study demonstrated that collaborative leadership was instrumental in moving forward the schools reform efforts, especially in the area of capacity building (Heck & Hallinger, 2010). Effective collaborative leadership may provide another way to assist in school reforms and academic improvement brings together stakeholders from both within the school and the community in order to bring about the needed reforms (Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

Summary of the Literature

Existing research literature delineates two main styles of principal leadership which can affect school change efforts. Transformational leadership typically involves the entire school community, creating common goals and vision for the change efforts. Collaborative leadership takes another step and targets change efforts directed at academic improvement. While the type of change efforts coupled with the leadership styles of principals may vary, the level of support from a principal may inhibit any new initiatives or change efforts regardless of the importance or value of the proposed initiatives.

It is through these lenses of leadership styles of principals that I examined the implementation processes of the *Curriculum for Peace and Conflict Management* in the Quaker secondary schools in Kenya.

Methodology

I used a qualitative case study design to evaluate the peace curriculum implementation in selected Quaker secondary schools. I conducted interviews, gathered field notes and artifacts to assemble the data which would answer the following research questions: 1) In what ways did the principals implement the *Curriculum for Peace and Conflict Management* in selected Quaker secondary schools; and 2) How did the leadership role of the principal influence the successes or challenges of the implementation?

School Selection

In order to assess the peace curriculum implementation on a broader level, my Kenyan colleague and I carefully selected schools which we believed would best represent the Quaker secondary schools in Western Kenya who were involved with the peace curriculum training and implementation. My colleague was also the National Coordinator for the Kenyan Quaker schools and also had some prior background knowledge of the schools involved in the peace curriculum training. The schools selected for this study met the following criteria: (a) leaders from the school had participated in the peace curriculum training the year prior and had a year for the implementation; (b) the school was known to have diverse student populations from a variety of tribes and regions within the country; and (c) the school was located in one of the six counties in the region, ensuring that all counties were represented in this study.

Using the pool of 95 potential schools from the peace curriculum training, we selected 14 schools which met the aforementioned criterion. The specific school categorizations were as follows:
- Mixed day school (6);
- Girls' boarding/day school (2);
- Girls' boarding (2);
- Boys' boarding (4);

The schools selected for this study also represented the following school categories in Kenya:
- 9 District schools; usually day only schools with overall student test scores at lower levels
- 4 County schools; usually boarding schools only and with more governmental support and higher student test scores at entrance
- 1 National school; boarding schools only and the highest ranking schools in the country

Participants of Selected Schools

The principals of the selected schools included five females and nine males. Three of the females were principals of day or day/girls' boarding schools, and two led the girls' all boarding schools.

Four of the males led the boys' boarding schools and five led day schools. In the Kenyan education system, either males or females can lead the district level day schools, however, only females may lead girls' boarding schools, and only males can lead boys' boarding schools.

In Kenyan schools, the primary requirement for aspiring school principals is aptitude and ability for leadership, in addition to moving up in the promotion process as a teacher . However, in many cases throughout Kenya, teachers are chosen to enter the principal pipeline because they are a friend of someone already in leadership. Training for principals is limited, often government sponsored workshops or learning from the previous principal. The principals of the schools in this study had a range of 10-20 years experience as a head principal. In addition to leading the school, principals are required to teach at least one period per day in their content specialty. Through this requirement they continue to demonstrate competency as a teacher and hopefully model effective teaching practices to their staff.

The Kenyan education system also requires that secondary school principals have prior teaching experience in at least two content areas, and all must have bachelor's degrees from an accredited university, either domestic or foreign. Only one of the principals in this sampling had her master's degree, and she was already enrolled in a PhD program at one of the Kenyan universities. Two principals were in process of applying to master's programs and the rest had bachelor's degrees.

Procedures

The researchers for this study were the National Coordinator for the Quaker schools, a Kenyan national and trained educator, and myself, an American education professor. Both of us had been involved in the development of the peace curriculum project from its inception and led the ongoing efforts through the completion of the 1st edition of the curriculum, the training workshops, and the implementation processes.

In order to collect the data, we made on site visits to 12 of the 14 schools, and interviewed the two principals of the remaining selected schools. Prior to each school visit, we contacted the school either the night prior to the visit or the morning of the visit and communicated that we were in the area to make a courtesy visit to the school. Our intent with the short notice was to hopefully avoid any special preparations or advanced discussions with school personnel regarding our visit. Other Kenyan leaders involved with this project also suggested this strategy in order to create more of a casual and authentic approach, and to create an atmosphere of collaboration and encouragement with our school visits. We did not want the principals to fear any kind of punishment or reprimands for possibly not meeting expectations with the peace curriculum implementation project.

Each school visit began with a formal meeting in the principal's office, which is a cultural norm and expectation, and ultimately sets the stage for the purpose of the visit. After the formalities of introductions and background conversations were concluded, we were then free to state the official reason for our presence at the school. We were then able to begin our data gathering.

Our interviews began first with the principal, and in most cases he/she then summoned another faculty member or two to join us, often an assistant principal, chaplain, or teacher involved with the peace curriculum work. Each principal readily agreed to share information for research purposes, as well as to help inform others as to effective ways in implementing the peace curriculum.

As we interviewed the principals and other staff members, we followed an interview protocol for qualitative studies, which first asks one question, then follows with additional questions as the interview progresses (Berg, 2012). In this way we could probe deeper to facilitate a greater understanding and meaning of the responses. For each interview, we asked the initial question: Describe how your school is implementing or using the peace curriculum. As the principal explained the process they were using in their school, we could then ask more in-depth questions. The categories and examples of additional questions included:

Implementation process: Which faculty are assigned to teach the curriculum? Have other faculty been trained to teach the peace curriculum? Describe how the faculty support the peace curriculum in the school. What challenges did you have or still have with the implementation process?

Scheduling: When is the peace curriculum scheduled to be taught; Is the curriculum set in the scheduling rotation with other courses; Is the curriculum taught after school or on the week-ends; Is the curriculum offered beyond grades 9 and 10?

School Curriculum considerations: Is the peace curriculum taught as a separate subject? Are the peace curriculum concepts integrated in any other content areas? If so, how?

Other uses of the curriculum: Are you using peace and conflict resolution strategies in other areas of the school? Are you partnering with the community in any way with peace initiatives? Have you used the peace curriculum as a vehicle for any other initiatives?

As my Kenyan colleague and I continued through the interview process, the principals and other staff shared stories and anecdotes related to the peace curriculum initiatives in their school which we then incorporated into our data. We also asked for input regarding improvement to the curriculum itself and the training sessions. Since the peace curriculum was a new program in the Quaker schools, we were also seeking information which would assist further development of the content and modify the training sessions if needed.

In addition to the interviews with the principals and other staff, we also examined additional artifacts that could be related to the peace curriculum effort. Those included: school timetables, faculty teaching assignment logs; various reports about the school and peace related events; school board reports, and any other evidences related to any kind of peace work in the school community. The schools readily shared any other information they had available which related in any way to peace activities.

After we concluded each school visit, my Kenyan colleague and I examined the various data we had gathered according to qualitative research protocols developed by Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2008). First, we organized our notes and debriefed the entire experience. Secondly, we compared our notes and observations to be sure our information was similar. Third, we shared main ideas and asked clarifying questions, again confirming that we had similar information and insights. Fourth, we examined any artifacts and compared those with the

conversation notes. During our debriefing, my Kenyan colleague also provided invaluable cultural insights from the conversations and observations that I as a foreigner may have not noticed. His insights proved very useful in a number of situations as he explained certain cultural behaviors of a few principals which I had no way of observing and understanding.

As we compared our notes from one school visit to the next, we began to note similar themes, patterns, and trends emerge from the stories and information the school personnel had shared with us (Berg, 2012). This process of data analysis helped us to answer the questions: 1) In what ways did the principals implement the *Curriculum for Peace and Conflict Management* in selected Quaker secondary schools; and 2) How did the leadership role of the principal influence the successes or challenges of the implementation?

Findings

In this section I report the different levels of the peace curriculum implementation and comparisons of the implementation between the types of schools. I also relay specific stories from schools which serve as examples for each level of implementation: minimal, medium, or high.

As my Kenyan colleague and I compared and discussed our data regarding the peace curriculum implementation from the schools, three distinct levels implementation emerged: minimal implementation, medium implementation, and high implementation.

- Minimal implementation=minor attempt at implementation, perhaps using some lessons from the curriculum through guidance and counseling sessions; occasional use through guest speakers or other events.

One example of a school with minimal implementation was from a day school on Mt. Elgon near the edge of the forest in a very remote location. This area has been engulfed in much conflict over the years primarily due to land clashes and civil war with rebels coming over the border from neighboring Uganda. Resources are scarce and high poverty remains the norm among the population. Many children have been affected by the unrest and exhibit various sorts of trauma. The principal had been involved with a part of the peace curriculum development and training, but had only used a few lessons and some of the resources for conflict resolution. He admitted that his school and community needed such a resource, but he was often overwhelmed with the daily demands of trying to run the school and meet the never-ending needs of his students and their families. As we left him that day, he promised that he would be more proactive in his use of the peace curriculum and begin teaching it to the 9th grade students first, then adding the 10th grade lessons.

- Medium implementation=intentional use of the curriculum through either Life Skills courses, guidance and counseling sessions, chaplain's talks; progress in implementation but have not yet made it through the entire curriculum.

One example of the medium implementation came from a girls' boarding high school. Emily, the principal, had been to a number of the writing sessions for developing the curriculum. She also had brought other teachers to the training sessions. When she found herself transferred

to another school, she had the opportunity to introduce the peace curriculum to her new school. She began by recruiting the school counselor and chaplain to teach the lessons to the girls. They had almost completed the entire curriculum as written for grades 9 and 10. She already had a vision for future activities and community involvement, but the duties of her new assignment had kept her from moving as quickly with the implementation as she had first hoped.

- High implementation=intentional use of the curriculum through the entire school; creativity in implementation; have trained other teachers to assist with the implementation; have used the entire curriculum; using curriculum as written and suggested for use in the regular school schedule.

One of the boys' boarding schools serves as a model for the peace curriculum implementation at the high level. The principal, Gerald, had only been at his school assignment for almost two years when we conducted our visit. When Gerald first arrived at his new post as principal, he found a culture of apathy from the teachers, undisciplined students, and low academic performance. Gerald had attended the first peace curriculum training we had offered 18 months prior, and realized that this curriculum could assist with the resources and information he needed to transform the school. He sought buy-in for school improvement and accountability from his teachers, and those who resisted the changes, he had them transferred to other schools. Gerald formed a team of teachers to assist with implementing the peace curriculum into all aspects of school life, including the surrounding community.

During our school visit, we also interviewed Benjamin, the new head teacher. As one of the younger teachers in the school, Benjamin shared his story of how the peace curriculum had already made an impact on his life. He told us that prior to the peace curriculum training, he had been an angry young man and full of bitterness because of the post election violence in the country and how the violence had devastated his family. Benjamin realized that he had much to learn and that in order for him to be an effective leader in the school, peace and conflict resolution needed to begin within his own heart. He told us clearly that God had worked within him first so that his life could be a model for others. From that point on, Benjamin collaborated with the principal and his leadership team to integrate the peace curriculum into all areas of the school. Every teacher was trained in the basic concepts of peace education, and at the time of our school visit they were beginning to integrate peace concepts into every subject area the school offered.

Benjamin and his colleagues also created alliances with members in the community. Students from the school were frequently causing disruption in the community and arrests were commonplace. The local elders and the chief became strong allies of the school once again and disruptive students were jailed and punished accordingly for their crimes. According to both Gerald and Benjamin, within a year, student crimes within the community had dropped significantly, and games and other events were now more orderly. Students were counseled on proper and acceptable behaviors, and were now held accountable at school and in the community for those behaviors.

School comparisons of findings

After analyzing our data and categorizing each school according to one of the three levels, 10 of the 14 schools in this study emerged as implementing the peace curriculum at mostly the medium or high levels. Of the remaining schools, three had made minimal progress with plans in place for full implementation, and the remaining one had dropped the ball entirely and had done nothing.

We further analyzed the implementation of the peace curriculum according to the types of schools in the study (See Table 1), and the rank of schools (See Table 2).

Table 1
Types of Schools Levels of Implementation

Mixed Day (6)	Boys boarding (4)	Girls boarding (2)	Girls day/boarding (2)
• Minimal=1 • Medium=2 • High=3	• Medium=2 • High=2	• Minimal=1 • Medium=1	• None=1 • Minimal=1

Table 2
Rank of Schools Levels of Implementation

District Schools (9)	County Schools (4)	National School (1)
• None=1 • Minimum=2 • Medium=2 • High=4	• Minimum=1 • Medium=2 • High=1	• Medium=1

Our findings show that when considering the types of schools, the mixed day schools and boys boarding schools were leading in levels of implementation (Table 1). For the ranks of schools, both district and county schools showed strong implementation in the medium and high levels (Table 2).

Discussion

The result of our findings from this study show that the successes and challenges of the peace curriculum implementation ultimately rested with the principal and the approach s/he took for the implementation process. For every school in this study, the leadership style of the principals either furthered or hindered the overall implementation of the peace the curriculum. This insight aligns with the work of Fullan (2001) who maintains that principals are indeed integral to change efforts within schools.

For the school with the highest level of implementation the principal's leadership role was a key factor in the transformational efforts and the deep systemic changes in the school (Connolly, James & Beals, 2011; Holmes, Clement, & Albright, 2013). This principal had demonstrated characteristics of transformational leadership with his vision and ability to motivate his staff to participate in the planning of the implementation. As a result of his leadership, the entire teaching staff was heavily invested in the totality of the project and implemented peace education into all aspects of the school curriculum. The principal set the

framework with a vision for changing the hostile culture of the school, and all of the stakeholders, including the surrounding community, positively responded to the challenge for school improvement (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Fullan, 2001; Hallinger & Heck, 2010;).

One example from a girls' boarding school illustrated the principal's collaborative leadership style, but her school demonstrated a minimal level of implementation. In this case, the principal was heavily focused on the academic outcomes of the school, which is one of the characteristics of the collaborative leadership style. Because her intent was to raise the test scores in the main subject areas for the entire school, her commitment to the peace curriculum implementation soon took a back seat in her list of priorities. Interestingly, she was one who assisted in the development of the peace curriculum and was a strong supporter of the entire initiative for the Quaker secondary schools in Kenya.

Only one of the schools we had selected for this study had done nothing with the peace curriculum since the training sessions the year prior. This example further illustrates the importance of the role of the principal. When we arrived at the school for our initial visit, the principal was surprised at the purpose for our visit and could not remember going to any training sessions for the peace curriculum. After talking with her for some time and showing her the attendance roster from the training sessions, she remembered she had sent the deputy principal to the training. The principal summoned the deputy principal to her office to inquire about the peace curriculum and the training session. When asked about the training, the deputy principal reported she could not remember anything. After a time, the deputy *suddenly* remembered she had been to the training, but then passed the issue back to the principal and said: "well, I brought the materials back and gave them to you!" As my Kenyan colleague and I debriefed this situation later on that day, he explained the cultural implications of what we had witnessed. First, the principal did not follow up with the deputy principal after the training session. The principal had let the ball drop with the peace curriculum program, which illustrated a lack of follow through of any kind regarding this school initiative. Secondly, the deputy principal showed great disrespect to her principal, also her elder and her boss, in front of guests, especially with a foreigner present. According to my Kenyan colleague, her behavior was culturally unacceptable and could be grounds for dismissal from her post. Ultimately, the students and staff of this school missed a full year of opportunities to engage with the peace curriculum lessons and concepts.

Challenges to implementation

While there were many positive stories of the noticeable results of the peace curriculum, the principals and other school staff noted ongoing challenges associated with the implementation process. One main challenge was with staff turnover. Even though school personnel had received training on the implementation, it was difficult to maintain the teaching momentum of the curriculum if key personnel were either reassigned within the school or transferred from the school. Even if the school was dedicated and committed to implementing this curriculum, losing key personnel often negatively impacted the continuation and momentum of the lessons and other activities associated with the implementation. A number of the principals found it difficult to either find a replacement for the lead teacher of the curriculum, or to teach new teachers about the peace curriculum and its priority in the life of their school. As a result, the peace curriculum program would then lose momentum in the school and become less of a priority.

Time to teach the peace curriculum was reported as another challenge to the implementation. Due to the high-stakes testing in Kenya, the school calendar is already laden with required classes needed in order to complete the syllabus for each subject. Most principals and teachers found it difficult to choose where to include the peace curriculum into a regular teaching rotation. However, most of the day schools and the boys' boarding schools had prioritized the importance of the curriculum to include it in the regular school timetables. Other schools held peace curriculum lessons through after school counseling and advisement meetings which were required weekly for all students. For example, 11 of the 14 schools chose to teach the curriculum one period a week during the guidance and counseling sessions. In this way they could avoid using up precious teaching time during the regular daily schedule.

The final challenge was incorporating the peace curriculum school-wide, especially among the staff. Principals reported that the students were more inclined to accept and embrace the concepts of the curriculum, but faculty and staff were oftentimes not serving as positive role models for the students. The principals noted it would take the commitment and dedication of everyone in the school to promote the changes necessary to instill the values and practice of peace and conflict management. Noted peace education researcher and author Ndura-Ouédraogo, (2010) asserts that in order for peace education efforts to be successful, teachers must also be role models for peace and assist in bringing everyone together for the same purpose.

Successes of implementation

As a result of the data analysis, a number of examples illustrated successes with the peace curriculum implementation. As reported by the principals and staff members, one of the main successes focused on student behavior issues. All schools which had implemented the peace curriculum, regardless of the type of school, reported they had observed positive changes in student behavior. While this information was the perception of the principals and not measured through quantitative means, it was still their belief that teaching students to value one another and resolve differences with intentional peaceful strategies helped to reduce conflicts among the students, boys and girls. For one boys' boarding school with a high level of implementation, the boys' behaviors had calmed down enough that the boys were not sneaking off campus to cause trouble in the community. Additionally, the student body leadership had formed a peer conflict group so they could handle issues themselves without involving the administration. As a result, the dormitory staff reported a reduction in conflicts, and the games and competitions had fewer fights break out since the implementation of the peace curriculum.

Another success linked reduction in behavior issues with the overall academic environment. Principals reported that when the behavioral issues were reduced, the learning environment was much improved and the teachers and students were better able to work through their lessons with fewer disruptions. Students had either learned to solve problems on their own, through peer mediation, or requested help from teachers and staff. The calmer environment was especially important in several of the schools where almost every tribe in the country was represented. The students needed to work together in order to complete the required curriculum, in addition to learning how to live peacefully together in spite of cultural differences. One school reported that they were hearing the students talk about the peace lessons they were learning, indicating some interest and application of the concepts. Another school noted that the

English teacher was noticing information from the peace lessons incorporated into student essays, which is another academic example of application of the concepts.

For several of the day schools, the successes of the peace curriculum implementation was noticed in unexpected ways. Two schools reported that the pregnancy rate had reduced dramatically since the teaching of the peace curriculum. In one school, the principal shared that the year prior to the peace curriculum implementation, there had been 10 pregnancies at the school. The year after the implementation, there were no pregnancies at all. When we probed further about this issue, the principal and his staff conjectured that since the peace curriculum has at its core valuing and respecting all people, students began to view one another through a different lens than just objects to do with as they wished. Girls also tended to recognize their own value and worth to society and realized they had the ability to say no to pressure from boys and behaviors which would impact them for a lifetime.

Conclusion

The results of this study show that efforts to implement the *Curriculum for Peace and Conflict Management* into the Quaker secondary schools in Kenya has had a high level of success so far, especially with day schools and boys' boarding schools. Within these schools the success was primarily due to the intentional leadership of the principal and school-wide participation with the curriculum. This study also supports existing research which shows that principals are integral to cultural change initiatives within schools (Hallinger, 2004; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Leithwood et al., 2014). We have also noted some challenges to the implementation which include: buy-in from staff, lack of time in the teaching schedule, and changes in school staffing.

One limitation of this study was that we only interviewed principals and their selected staff. In order to further gauge the success of the peace curriculum implementation in the Quaker secondary schools, we would need to expand the interview process and include students and other staff members and community members for their perspectives on the peace curriculum efforts. Future research could also include the following: a quantitative study to compare discipline referrals over time after implementation of the peace curriculum at new schools, and a pre and post test of student attitudes regarding the peace curriculum implementation.

The results of this study have also revealed how my Kenyan colleagues and I can make adjustments to the peace curriculum training sessions. The original training sessions were designed to provide an overview on the peace curriculum and strategies for teaching the lessons, but not specific strategies for implementation. Since it is evident that the leadership style, role of the principal, and the school's capacity for change may also be linked to the level of the peace curriculum implementation, we could further develop the training sessions to assist the principals and other leaders in leadership strategies for the implementation process. We could share examples from both the transformational and collaborative leadership models and also provide follow-up support to the principals as they are implementing the curriculum. This process is especially important in a developing country like Kenya where information and resources for principals are greatly limited. The peace curriculum training can then become an additional method for helping principals to improve in their practice and make the needed changes and

improvements to benefit the entire school community (Leithwood, Janzti, & Steinbach, 1999; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Olsen & Chrispeels, 2009).

Even though we were limited by the small sampling of participating schools, this pilot study now provides baseline data we can utilize for continued study on the effects of the peace curriculum implementation. Ongoing support, professional development, and encouragement (Cole, 2004) will be vital to make the necessary cultural changes for effective and long-lasting peace education within the Kenyan Quaker secondary schools. Many of these schools have very similar challenges and needs in education so efforts could be coordinated to address these needs collaboratively through the use of peace education. More training on peace and conflict resolution strategies would be necessary for all school personnel in order to support the peace education efforts.

The findings from this study could also be an encouragement and example to both faith-based schools and secular schools who may be implementing specific curriculum initiatives such as character development or peace and conflict resolution studies. As noted from the research, the leadership style of the principal remains a critical component for such change efforts, especially school-wide (Bass & Avolio,1994; Kirby et al., 1992; Olsen & Chrispeels, 2009). Ongoing follow-up, assessment, and evaluation of such curriculum initiatives can help to insure the continued momentum and success of such initiatives (Cole, 2004).

Finally, we are encouraged by the positive results so far of the *Curriculum for Peace and Conflict Management* implementation in the Quaker secondary schools. We acknowledge we still have much work to do in order to maintain momentum of the peace curriculum implementation within the Quaker secondary schools and understand the role and leadership style of the principal in the process. Dawo and Wagah (2011) strongly advocate for peace education in schools as a vehicle for turning the tide of inappropriate and harmful behaviors. This peace curriculum has the potential to become the vehicle in assisting these Quaker secondary schools and communities to put aside their differences and work together to solve their challenges to improve their communities in Kenya and Africa.

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