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SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

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Abstract

Meaningful social, economic and political development can only be achieved in an atmosphere of peace and security where all agents of development co-exist in harmony. Nigeria as a nation is beclouded with multifarious problems such as kidnapping, robbery, ritual killing, rape, drug addiction, bribery and corruption. This problem brought about backwardness in all ramifications to sustainable national development. As a result of this existing situation this write up try to examine how knowledge acquired in social studies could be used as a veritable instrument in solving problem of national insecurity in Nigeria. The purpose of this paper therefore is to examine the roles social studies education could play in producing good citizens who could assist in no small measure in tackling this complex problem of national insecurity in Nigeria. This paper also examines the roles of citizens in promoting national security, the consequences of insecurity and also the remedy to the problems of national insecurity in the country.

Keywords: Social Studies; Education; National Security

Introduction

Meaningful social, economic and political development can only be achieved in an atmosphere of peace and security, where all agents of development co-exist in harmony. National security involves effective policing and careful watch against elements that could breach peace or anything that can jeopardize the social economic and political development in Nigeria. National security, therefore, means the process and act of effective protection of lives and property in a country.

The term social studies has no one accepted meaning. Thus people have defined it differently. Adaralegbe (1975) defined social studies as the study of man in his environment. He added that it is the study of how man influence and is influenced by his physical, social, economic, political, psychological, cultural, scientific and technological environment. It is the study of interrelationships between man and his environment. Kissoock (1981) reported that social studies is a programme of study which a society uses to instill in the students the knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions. It considers importance of the relationships human beings have with each other, their world and them. Osakwe (2009) noted that social studies is a contemporary and environmentally focused field of study and therefore provides the learner with requisite knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and competencies to contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's national development.

Security, as a concept, is derived from the Latin word *Securus*, meaning to be safe, freedom from anxiety or fear to be emotionally secure, affording grounds to be confident. It has been defined as: "The conduction or feeling of safety from harm or danger, the defense, protection and observation of core values and the absence of threats to acquired values" (David, 2006). Security is a social contract between the state and its citizens, in which the former is expected to protect, defend and provide for the later in the public area. (Arisi, 2011).

Nigeria as a nation has been beclouded with problems of insecurity mostly in this recent time such as cultism, armed robbery, kidnapping, prostitution, money laundering, embezzlement of public fund, advance fee fraud (419), assassination/murders, thuggery/touting, election and rigging. The consequence of insecurity is that the country does not experience meaningful development. There is always political instability and survival of the fittest. Section 14 (1) of chapter 2, of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria captures the importance of security when it states that security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government.

In Nigeria, the peace and security situation has deteriorated in the last two decade, especially after the last general election in 2011. In the Niger Delta region, Shell Producing Development Company (SPDC in 2011 for example pointed out that the area in relation to their operations, was characterized by heavily armed and well organized gangs, called "Freedom Fighters". They have genuine agitation against the criminal neglect of the oil producing areas by the oil development companies, the states and the federal government. Okiro (2008), Etim (2009), Adesina and Ujomu (2008) and Odah (2009) have all observed the unpalatable state of security of the Nigeria Nation which is highly lamentable. There are also the destructive demonstrations of militancy in the Niger Delta region of the country. Yusuf and Onifade (2009) noted that violence has been observed in the Niger Delta region, where upward of one hundred thousand barrels of oil per day is stolen, costing the country about one hundred billion dollars lost at revenue. The foreign oil workers are being kidnapped on a daily basis and setting fire to offshore oil. The above

picture points out clearly that the country is faced with a lot of security challenges. The following questions will guide this write up:

- (1) What are the factors responsible for insecurity in Nigeria?
- (2) What are the consequences of insecurity in Nigeria?
- (3) How can social studies be used to secure sustainable peace and security in Nigeria?
- (4) What should be the roles of citizens in maintaining national security in Nigeria?

Dimensions of Security

There are seven Dimensions of security, call it human security, from the macro perspective.

They are:

- **Economic Security**

This is the condition of having stable income or other resources to support a standard of living now, and in foreseeable future. It includes; Probable continued solvency, employment security or job security. Economic security tends to include the broader effect of a society's production levels and monetary support, for non-working citizens.

- **Food Security**

This refers to availability of food and ones access to it. A household is considered food secured when its occupants do not live in hunger or fear of starvation. Food security exists when all people at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

- **Health Security**

This is a policy area in which national security and public health concerns overlap. It is the awareness of being secure that health is good and if not, there are ways to obtain care to return to good health. It aims to guarantee a minimum protection from disease and unhealthy lifestyle.

- **Environmental Security**

This examines threats posed by environmental events and trends to individuals, communities or nations. It may focus on the impact of human conflict and international relations on the environment, or on how environmental problems cross state borders.

- **Personal Security**

This is the feeling of being secured having a personal or residential security system or being aware of your surroundings.

- **Community Security/National Security**

This deals with putting people in the lead and helping them to improve their experience of safety and security. It is also about making sure that every member/citizen of the community/nation is in safety in order to avoid danger.

- **Political Security (UNDP 1994)**

This houses/comprises of both economic and environmental security, which deals with maintaining the stable economy of the society and securing the environment. As such, political security seeks to ensure the safety of the economy and its environment.

Human security is not concerned with weapons – it is concerned with human life and dignity (UNDP 1995):
Human security is defined as:

An – encompassing condition in which people and communities live in freedom, peace and safety, enjoy the protection of vital freedoms. It means protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations, building on their strengths and aspirations. It also means creating systems that give people the building blocks, dignity and livelihood, have access to resources and basic necessities of life and inhabit on environment which is not detrimental to their health and well being. It means protecting different freedom from fear and freedom to take action on one's own behalf.

National security, therefore, means the process and act of effective protection of lives and property in a country. National security involves effective policing and careful watch against elements that could breach peace or anything that can jeopardize the social economic and political development in the country. Odedele (2010). National security is the requirement to maintain the survival of the state through the use of economic, diplomacy, power projection and political power.

Factors Responsible For Insecurity in Nigeria

There are numerous factors posing as threats to security challenges in Nigeria.

They are summarized as follows:

- **Crime-Crime against the individual and against the state**

This occurs when the rules of the society are broken with impunity. The rate of crime in Nigeria is at an alarming rate. The issue of robbery, rape, murder, smuggling, drug peddling, money laundering, counterfeiting of currency, child abuse, human trafficking, kidnapping and embezzlement of fund has become the order of the day. These have created fear in the mind of many Nigeria, and as such, made the country insecure for her citizens.

- **Selfishness:**

This arises when an individual constantly thinks of himself or herself before others, especially, when one is holding a public office. Our political leaders and host of others holding important offices are self centered. They are not representing the interest of the masses. Selfishness has deprived people of employment and admission into higher institutions. Majority of Nigerians, especially the young school leavers have involved themselves in one evil, or the other, thereby causing a lot of insecurity in the country.

- **Disobedience**

Disobedience as one of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria is evident in our homes, schools and society in general. Majority of the Nigerian youth are hard hardened and as such, go against the rules of the society, thereby indulging in activities such as; robbery and cultism which brings insecurity to the society, and making it uncomfortable for its citizens.

- **Favouritism**

The issues of ethnicity have done more harm than good to the Nigeria nation. Some able qualified men and women, boys and girls which are liable to work roam around with no job because they have nobody at the helm of affairs, and because people in position to give out jobs, are busy looking for those which there are of the same ethnicity, in order to render job.

- **Bad Leadership**

Bad leadership brings the animalistic tendencies in the followers. The issue of bad leadership has led to unemployment, violation of human rights, marginalization, and unequal development. It is expected that a leader should place the national interest first before him, but today the reverse is the case. The leaders are not concerned about one Nigeria, but ethnicity and statism have become the order of the day. The leaders are only interested in favouring their states and ethnic groups to the detriment of others. This issue of bad leadership has led to massive youth unemployment violation of human right, marginalization and unequal development. These have led Nigerian citizens into ugly situation that is not favourable to the development of the country.

Consequences of Poor Security

- People are always in perpetual fear and heart-break.
- No meaningful development can be achieved.
- Life is short and brutish.
- It causes political instability.
- It causes increase in crime and criminal activities.
- It leads to the disrespect of rule of law.

Factors Fostering Security

1. Good governance transparency, accountability holding government accountable for its actions: the government's ability to be committed to its duties and to the good works of the society which will be beneficial to every member of the society will go along away to foster security in the country. They should be honest and upright in the discharge of their duties and also accountable to the people under him. It should treat everyone equally, irrespective of tribe or religion.
2. Maintenance of justice and fair play: The leaders are expected to set good example for its citizens to follow. They should administer equal justice to everyone irrespective of their position in the society, and not trade someone for the other.
3. Formation of police/community relations committees/ community policing: The policy/community relations should work as team to protect and secure lives and properties of Nigerian people. If there are able to avoid fowl play or favouring one at the detriment of another, the country will be secure and a peaceable place to live in.

4. Quality education/educating against clashes of culture: Quality education should be given to the masses at all levels of education, and as such, the provision of facilities required for the equality education. The finance budgeted for educational sector should not be diverted into another sector but rather be made to be used efficiently for its purpose and also for the betterment of the society.
5. Adequate political awareness: Every citizen is expected to be made aware of the political system existent in the country. The issue of empowerment should be made known to every body, whether rich or poor, employed or unemployed. If this is done, it will help eradicate most of the evil act in the society thereby promoting national security.
6. Establishment of public complaint bureau: The government should try to establish this office so that people can air their view about the activities of the leaders. This will act as a corrective measure to some ill-activities of leaders. If leaders therefore work in accordance with the complaints of its citizens, the country will be a better place, thereby restoring security.
7. Equitable distribution of resources: the resources of the country should be distributed evenly, without attaching any form of favoritism, nepotism or tribalism. When this is done, it will go along way in restoring security to the country.

The role of Social Studies Education

In ensuring national security in Nigeria frequent kidnapping in the east, south – south and some states in the north and Boko Haram menace in the north are major peace and security challenges in Nigeria. Social studies education as a problem solving subject can play a vital role in bringing about sustainable peace and security in Nigeria. UNESCO in its preamble to her 2009 publication stated that “Since war begins in the minds of men, it is the minds of men that defense of peace must be constructed”. Social studies as a contemporary and environmentally focused field of study that provides the learners with requisite knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and competencies can contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's national development. This can be done in changing the mind of the individuals from evil to good, from conflict to resolution of conflict and from war to peacemaker.

Social studies education from its inception in the Nigerian schools has one of its objectives to develop skills and spirit of co-operation as basis for national unity and development. Considering these cardinal objectives of social studies, which social studies has strived to achieve, if it is achieved, Nigeria will be a better and a peaceful place to live. This objective can effectively be achieved through classroom instruction process of social studies education. Skill, knowledge, abilities, attitude, positive behaviour, competencies can be inculcated into Nigerian citizens that will help to enhance national security in Nigeria.

There are attitudes and values which are considered desirable and a good action should possess. These include co-operation, comradeship and togetherness, honesty, integrity, hard-work and fairness. These attitudes and values as stated in the national aims of education could be achieved through the teaching of social studies. If these desirable attitudes and values are effectively taught in social studies, the country will have better citizens who will contribute effectively for the growth and development of the country. The teaching of this desirable attitude religious tolerance, patriotism at all levels of education will also help to produce good citizen who will see the country as their own and work for peace and harmony for the betterment of the country.

Social studies is a discipline that if properly and effectively taught will help to solve social problems facing developing countries like Nigeria while the old norms are eroding without replacement. No nation is self sufficient or can produce all her needs. It therefore becomes important for them to understand themselves and fight for a common goal. Various topics concerning safety and national security are designed and taught through social studies to produce citizens that will promote national and international security. Social studies have been considered to be responsive to the challenges of future life and should be strengthened as a major pedagogical paradigm shift for use to actualize the quest of national development. That is why Enoh (2009) was quite specific in his presentation on education for national development and pointed out that we need to be precise on the aspect of development we are interested and the type of education to make contribution for development. Just like the Biblical injunction of prophet Isaiah who said here I am send me”, so is social studies when it was introduced as a transformative discipline to heal the wounds of Nigerian Civil War and to provide an enabling environment for national development. Social studies education should be reinvigorated and adopted as a millennium pedagogical initiative of addressing issues national security and development.

Through the teaching of social studies, the citizen will develop the spirit of national consciousness. The citizens will identify themselves with the nation by holding the ideas and values of the society. It involves placing the national interest first before the personal ones. If the citizen should place the national interest first before personal ones and have the nation in mind, the country will be secured. The teaching of positive attitudes and appropriate values of honesty, integrity, hard-work, fairness, justice and togetherness which are necessary for national

development should start from then early education. Emphasis on the above concepts by social studies will enable citizens to develop positive attitude towards the country which will help in promoting national security.

Roles of Citizens in Maintaining National Security

National security is national issue and should be treated as such. It is the collected responsibilities of citizens to contribute their quota.

The roles of citizens in maintaining national security are as follows:

1. Developing the sense of patriotism i.e. to put the country above any selfish interest capable of destroying peace and harmony in the country
2. Keeping to the rules and regulations of our country
3. Reporting cases of planned unrest or muting to the security agents
4. Avoidance of negative values that can negate the peaceful co-existence in our fatherland
5. Respect for the constituted authority
6. Citizens should pay their taxes regularly to enable the government to generate the needed revenue to finance national security.

Conclusion

Social studies education is a veritable instrument for integrating national development. Peace and security are fundamental prerequisites to the success and sustainable development of any nation including Nigeria. Social studies education can make immense contributions towards achieving national security in Nigeria through its teaching. The teaching of positive attitudes, appropriate values of honesty, integrity, hard-work, fairness, justice and togetherness which are necessary for national development should start from their early education. We must all identify ourselves with the nation by upholding the ideas and values of the society and also place nation's interest first before personal ones in order to ensure national security in our country Nigeria.

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