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Social Studies Education as a Panacea for National Security in Nigeria *(Pp. 254-262)*

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Abstract

Nigeria as a Nation is besieged with several national issues such as insecurity of life and property, kidnapping, robbery assassination etc. This problem has brought about retrogressiveness to sustainable national development. Based on this prevailing condition the paper try to examine how the knowledge of social studies education be used as a vehicle in solving problem of national insecurity in Nigeria. The purpose of this paper therefore is to examine the role of social studies education in preparing the young people to be good citizen in a world that is becoming more and more complex. The subject matter of social studies relate directly to the organization and development of human society. Several issues and their corresponding recommendation were made.

Introduction

Nigeria as a nation, is besieged with the problem of insecurity in the recent past, there has been an upsurge of criminal activities such as kidnapping reigning cases of broad day-light robberies, hired assassinations, political sponsored killings, looting of government treasuries by those in government, fraudulent banking activities etc. All these have contributed to the security

problem being witnessed in Nigeria. The resultant effect of this state of insecurity is that, the country is left to drift about, suffering from a lot of brain drains of intellectuals to other more peaceful and secured countries.

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. Seen this way, security is a social contract between the state and its citizens, in which the former is expected to protect, defend and provide for the latter in the public area.

Various people such as Okiro (2008) Etim (2009), Adelugba Adesina and Ujomu (2008) and Odah (2009) have all observed the unpalatable state of security of the Nigeria Nation which is highly lamentable. In addition, there are the destructive demonstrations of militancy in the Niger Delta region of the country. Yusuf Abdulraheem and Onifade Babatunde (2009) noted that violenc 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 billion dollars loss of revenue. The foreign oil workers are being kidnapped on daily basis, setting fire to offshore oil. Installations and bombing of pipelines, Okiro (2008) noted that the militants or the fighters are angry with the oil Companies because they feel that oil Companies are exploiting the regions resources without adequate returns to the Community. Based on the prevailing situation as observed above this paper will try to capture the concepts of social studies education security and examine the role of social studies education in ensuring national security and thereafter recommendations will be made in order to bring about peace and security.

Concepts of Social Studies and Security

Social studies as a discipline is relatively new in Nigeria Secondary Schools. It gained momentum as a school subject from 1977 especially after the introduction of the new National Policy on Education popularly known as the 6-3-3-4 system. It became one of the core subjects for the Senior Secondary programme. Social studies just like other subjects, has been subjected to various definitions by scholars for instance, Adaraleba (1975) noted that social studies is an inter-disciplinary field in which man learns about problems of survival in his environment. He added that it is a study of how man influences and is in turn influenced by his physical, social, political, religious, economic, psychological, cultural, scientific and technological environment. Cross (1958) reported that a committee on social studies in the

United State, in 1916, defined social studies as those whose subject matter relates directly to the organization and development of human society and to man as a member of social groups. Barr, Barth and Shermis (1978) stated that social studies is a study in which student acquire knowledge of citizenship and reflective inquiry. The National Council for social studies, an accredited professional body for social studies in the United State has firmly endorsed this view of citizenship education by pointing out that the objectives of social studies is to prepare young people to be humane, rational, thinking, and participating citizens in a world that is becoming increasingly interdependent.

In United State of America, the focus of social studies is citizenship education, development of skills, fostering international understanding and making personal and public decisions (Jerolimek 1981 and Cleveland 1985). Philips (1974) looks at social studies from the point of problem-solving. According to him, the aim of social studies is to teach students how to think effectively about significant social problems. Dubey, et al (1980) pointing to the nature of social studies, said that social studies is the study of man at home, at work, at workshop, in politics, at play, in the village, in the nation, in fact every where, engaged in his busy programme of living. They also added that social studies is particularly interested in man's problems. It encourages him and helps him to solve social problem.

The definition by Deyoyin in Aina, et al (1982) is similar to that of Dubey, et al. However she was specific on values, attitudes and abilities. She then defined social studies as a study of man in his totality. The study covers, where his culture, his frame of mind and how he relates to others. It focuses on developing the right values, attitudes and abilities which will help the child to get on well with others as he grows up to become a responsible citizen. Kisson (1982) placed an equal stress on knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions in his definition. According to him, social studies is a programme of study which a society uses to instill in students the knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions it considers important concerning the relationship human beings have with each other, their world, and themselves.

Concluding, Osakwe and Itedjere (1993) state that social studies is an integrated and interdisciplinary field of study whose ultimate aim is to produce people who are civically competent. From the foregoing definitions, it is clear that study of social studies was something to do with moulding of characters of youths in the society, inculcation of right values, and attitudes

to the youths and this will go along way in the management of national crises and security.

On the other hand, security according to Yusuf and Babatunde (2009) is the condition which enhances the ability of government, its agencies and its citizens to function without hindrances. Section 14 (1) of chapter 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. Seen this way, “ security is a social contract between the state and its citizens in which the former is expected to protect, defend and provide for the latter in the public area.

National security in a broad sense implies the absence of threat to life, property and socio-economic well being of the people. A proper understanding of security is important for an adequate explanation of the remote causes of breach of peace and security, whether historical, religious, civil, ethnic, economic, social, political etc, that have contributed to the recurring conflicts, which the nation has witnessed over the years resulting in wanton destruction and loss of live and property. Security has implication for individuals, communities and the nation and must be analyzed at these various levels. Certain factors tend to increase the vulnerability of people to insecurity. These include gender, class, age, status, ethnicity, religion, ecology, region etc.

The state exists primarily for the protection of lives and property and ensuring the well being of the people. As such, state-based institutions are specifically charged with the responsibility for the protection of life and property. These institutions are the Police, state security agencies, the military, immigration and prison services.

Nigeria in recent times has witnesses an unprecedented level of insecurity inter-communal and inter-ethnic clashes, religious violence, armed robbery, assassination, murder, gender-based violence and bomb explosion have been on the increase leading to enormous loss f life and property and a general atmosphere of siege and social tension fro the people. The developmental connotation of national security is corroborated by khan (1987). To him, national security is taken to mean the totality of measures instituted by government to protect the territorial integrity and the cherished values, and interest of the people as well as guarantee the freedom of the citizenry from

anxiety, threats to life and property and their safety from natural or man-made disasters.

It is important to state that contemporary thinking about national security has changed and has become more encompassing involving social, political, economic and other forms of the security calculation, culminating in the concern for human security and improvement in the quality of the people. O this end, Ogunbanwo (1997) listed types of security to include economic security, social security, environmental security, food security, the quality of life security and technological security. Finally Imobigheeta (2002) in conceptualizing security observed that the process of development involves the application of national resources human mineral and agricultural for the enrichment of the live of the population. It is the enrichment that constitutes development. It is not only presuppose of the growth in income (economic growth), but also requires improvement in certain indicators health, nutrition, education reduction in certain inequalities in come distribution

For instance in Nigeria amongst many strategies developed to actualize national economic empowerment was centered on security and governance. Such like making government more efficient and effective through public service reforms, monetization, pension reform and local government reform, also governance focusing on national security in all its ramifications and levels, rule of law, fighting corruption and improved transparency.

The Role of Social Studies in Ensuring National Security in Nigeria

National security has been defined to include not only safety devices implored by government for the safety of lives and property in the country but it also includes developmental strategies put forward to actualize effective social, political, economic, technological reforms that will bring about improvement in the quality of the people. To this extent social studies can play a vital or pivotal role in ensuring that the nation attains her national security.

A starting point perhaps is the reality that majority of Nigerians are poor and are ravaged by hunger and starvation, religious disunity, ethnicity and political divides. Social studies as a discipline is geared towards ensuring god citizenship in Nigeria

A cursory look at the social studies curriculum at each level- primary, secondary and tertiary will convince people that the subject is tailored towards ensuring good citizenship education in Nigeria. Social studies as a

discipline afford the pupils, students, and teacher in particular and members of the public in general, the opportunity to know about the positive aspects of our socio-economic and political aspects, factors promoting Unity and Solidarity among the numerous ethnic groups making up Nigeria. Akinlaye (1997) stated that social studies would offer medication and provide for need reforms or changes in society as well as catering for its survival by removing barriers between groups and classes, within society as a result of birth, occupation, language, race and religion and even between generation and tribes man and countrymen and also the schooled and unschooled, the literate and the illiterate, he concluded that social studies education would help to promote peace, co-operation, security and national pride.

It is a common knowledge that our society (Nigeria) today is being plagued by social vices or evils like excessive profiteering, embezzlement, thrift, statism, arms struggles by the youths and other irresponsible behaviors. Social studies can help greatly to educate the youths on the importance of peace and security in our dear nation.

Social studies as a discipline if properly programmed and effectively taught, should help to solve social problems that are facing developing countries like ours (Nigeria) where the old norms are fast losing their grips and no effective substitutes to replace them. No nation is self sufficient or can produce all her needs. It is therefore necessary to understand the relationships existing between one society and another. Various topics concerning safety and national security are designed to produce good citizens that will promote national and international security. It inculcate in students international understanding by emphasizing the essential oneness of the human race to realize the growing interdependence of nation and people.

Social studies places much values on he affective domain in its attempt to promote good citizenship Education in Nigeria. In Nigeria In social studies, for instance, the affective domain deals with the evaluation of the attitude and values hat are developed or behavioral changes that are noticeable in the pupils after a course of study. The affective domain examines the behavioral changes in pupils like respect for elders and other constituted authorities such as parents' government etc, love of industry, dignity of labour and other positive attitudes and values.

The psycho-motor domain in social studies emphasizes the development of skills, both in theory and in practice, in its attempt at ensuring good

citizenship education in Nigeria. In fact, the inter-play of cognitive and affective domain has an effect on the performance of certain skill. These skills include, the skills of sifting information, interpretation, identification recognition, asking and answering questions, manipulation etc. these skills are necessary for safety and national security. This statement agrees with the assertion of Akinlaye (1979) when he stated that social studies involves pupils in purposeful activities based upon observation and investigation of their immediate surroundings including their physical and social environment.

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion, it is now clear that social studies places premium on development and inculcation of right attitude, values, feelings and national consciousness on the youth. Youths that are adequately informed, educated and have acquired basic social skills in the society, cannot be a security threat to the national existence instead, they become, through the help of social studies education, access to security solution in the country. As already highlighted in this paper security varies and as such we have political, social, economic, and safety related security.

The country cannot be adequately secured if there is political instability, economic failures and religious and ethnic disharmony in the country. Therefore in order to be socially, politically and technologically secured, the youth and in deed the members of the public through the help of social studies education, are given the right education, social skills, values and attitudes that will promote national integration, unity and security.

Recommendation

Based on the foregoing analysis, a number of measures seem to suggest themselves in developing a frame work for conflict prevention management and ensuring national security in Nigeria. These include:

1. Using social studies Education teaching to bring about an improved quality of governance in the country. Through social studies education, the increasing irresponsibility of the political class and political leadership in Nigeria can be addressed. Topics like electoral law, political competition, political tolerance and consensus building can be introduced in social studies education. This will solve the problem of political instability and insecurity in the country.

2. There should be need to adopt a more people oriented programmes in the country by our political leaders instead of selfish tendencies of our political leaders.
3. There is need to evolve a new culture of politics which make for tolerance and political accommodation amongst the political class. The survival of democracy in Nigeria is hinged on this. This can be done through the teaching of social studies education in all our schools.
4. Finally, the security sector which comprises the military, the police, the intelligence agencies, and the prisons require some restructuring or reform. These reforms include, commitment to professionalism, welfare of officers, the need to overhaul the laws and regulations guiding the operations of some of the security agencies like the police and combating corruption in the security forces. All security personnel in the country are to be exposed to peace education.

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