

Enhancing Security and Sustainable Development Through Social Studies Education in Nigeria

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Abstract: Nigeria is among the nations that are bedeviled with insecurity. This means that her cities are facing some insecurity challenges such as boko haram insurgency, terrorist attack, kidnapping, assassination, killings robbery, ritualism, gunmen locally called bandits, among others; these have made Nigeria an unsafe place to dwell in. A country that is not secured has positioned development faraway from herself. Insecurity has been affecting the all round development in Nigeria be it social, economic, education, religion, political development and this needs urgent attention. This paper seeks to examine the issue of security and sustainable development and the influence social studies wields in ensuring its realization. It also examined the objectives of social studies in relation to the national policy of education with a view to molding the behavior of the citizens that is devoid of all social vices. Recommendation was made to the effect that if the needed development has to be witnessed Nigeria government must be ready with political will and make the needed equipment available to fight insecurity.

Keywords: Security, Sustainable Development, Insecurity, Social Studies, Education

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I. Introduction

The word “security” has become a household word in our country Nigeria. In fact, all attention of both the federal Government, the state and local government, religious leaders, Community leaders and entire citizens of the country both at home and the Diaspora is on the problem of insecurity. As a burning issue, quite a number of seminars and conferences at international, national and state Fora have been organized specifically to address this sensitive issue called security.

Presently, insecurity transverses the length and breadth of Nigeria and this has created fear in the heart of all citizens in the country. The most worrisome part of this is not only that there are hoodlums, bandits, Boko Haram insurgents etc. in the society but that the security agents appear helpless in the face of terrorists and bandits armed with sophisticated weapons. They keep on shedding the blood of innocent people on daily basis. Nigeria has become a country where citizens cannot travel out at will or from one place to another because of fear of insecurity. The most recent insecurity are the activities of the herdsmen, kidnapping and killing innocent people. There are challenges in the country today when it comes to security issues, a situation where farmers can no longer go to their farms, worshippers cannot go to their place of worship, citizen can no longer sleep in their houses with their two eyes closed without the fear of terrorists and kidnappers. Peace and security is very important to any country as it is the key to stability and sustainable development. As a result of these problems, foreigners are afraid to come to establish industries and this has great adverse effect on the country economy. It was on this background that this paper was based to examine how Social Studies as a subject can be of help to curb insecurity problems in our country.

What is security?

Security could be defined as the assurance of peace that a citizen has or possess while living in a place at a stipulated period of time and is guaranteed constitutionally. Webster’s Dictionary of the (2004) defines security as the state of being secured. Specifically, it is freedom from danger, risk, poverty or apprehension. National Security cannot be viewed in any other way but in a societal systems context and within that context is the entire society. The security of a nation is as important as having air to breathe to keep life going. The life that is not secured is just like a strayed chicken, a ready prey in the hand of a hawk. Security may come in diverse forms. It could be economical, Educational, political social and in religion segments. It is economical when the various economic institutions are benchmarked by common and stable rules, indexes and variables that is recognized by International best practices. Educational when the sector is in order and when the system is

running smoothly. Politically, the peaceful transition of governments and honest disposition by the players enhances stability. It is also social when the government institutions perform their various functions in enforcing inalienable rights of the citizens and it is religious when the two major religions are having peaceful co-existence between the followers.

According to (Ogaba, 2010) security over human and properties of a nation is all about freedom from danger and threat of any kinds and from any quarters, the power to protect the values, right and the well-being of the entire citizen of the nation.

It is also mean safety from internal danger and external aggression or attack of the people which can affect their day to day activities be it social, economical, political and their religion.

The Prevalence of Insecurity

The rate at which insecurity ravages our country beats the imagination of every right thinking persons in the society. This has attracted the concern of various commentators with a view to inviting the attention of the concerned authorities to find possible solution to the problem. "There is insecurity of life, the police gets provoked and the people took to protest, the kind of dimension of violence that we witness every time, there is a breakdown of law and order, it is a threat to life and danger to the society" (Oladesin 2011).

The above quotation clearly expresses the security situation of this country. It is akin to what is currently going on and ravaging life in the middle belt of Nigeria with the activities of the herdsmen killing thousands of farmers, North East and west with the attacks of bandits, Boko Haram and Kidnappers. Also South west, South South and South East were not spared out from the hands of Fulani herdsmen, kidnappers. There is no day that the men of the underworld or unknown gunmen will not shed the blood of innocent people in the country both old and young, male and female. What is more, reasons for the incessant violence and breakdown of law and order were ably covered by Oladesin (2011). In the following way "you are only certain of a momentary security because of the incessant terror unleashed on the nation by some dissidents, unscrupulous and disgruntled elements known as Boko-Haram. The sect made its presence known in 2004 in Yobe state and by 2011, it made its presence known to the global community by bombing the United Nations headquarters in Abuja. In the recent years, it has attacked hundreds of buildings and killed many innocent Nigerians. In all parts of the country and recently, the Nigerian security and intelligence has been flawed. Nigerians know very little about the group's origin and philosophy, since over ten years after it came into existence, and in spite of the calamity which the group has caused, the government seems not to know how to clip the group's wings as their activities has cover all the nooks and crannies of the country. There is no safe place in Nigeria.

The alarming rate at which innocent blood is being shed presumably for ritual purposes and the nefarious activities of these Boko-Haram bombers, hired assassin and other evil trends perpetrators in our country leave much to be desired. Before our country can be developed, there must be peaceful co-existence of all the citizens, strong security network at all levels.

Reasons Advanced for Insecurity in the Country

There is bound to be insecurity when leaders tend to use coercive measures to suppress the will of the people. When leaders decided without articulating and aggregating enough opinions before a crucial decision is made, people get disgruntled. When this happens, it generates vented anger on the part of the governed; the result is insecurity to life and property, as people are pushed to the wall, violence results in the process. This definitely hampers investment and deters development. Ignoring the opinion of the people is the act of insensitivity on the part of the government. A very good example is the issue of subsidy removal, privatization of NEPA, and closure of borders to mention but a few. People came out to protest the action, because they were not carried along before the government implements the policy, more so, in a democratic system. This is a clear insensitivity on the part of government.

A lot of the violence is not of deep grass root origin. When government embarks on policy that affects the people's income negatively and refuses to listen to their complaints, the result is violent reaction. The leadership should realize that nowadays people are capable of reacting and causing instability which can affect development, investment and peace of the society. Wholesomeness and transparency in government are of utmost importance.

Succinctly, the following could be advanced as some of the reasons for insecurity in the country among others:

- Lack of clear, appropriate and meaningful policy on land and revenue allocation;
- Ineffective security network as in porous borders;
- Lack of wholesomeness and transparency;
- Suppression of peoples will;
- Non participatory nature of governance;
- Insensitivity of the government to the plight of the citizens;
- Bad leadership

- Unemployment
- Poverty.

Security and Development

There is no country that could develop in the absence of security. Security will necessarily be the bottom line for harmony; where citizens in a given geographical entity will see themselves as one and work towards its progress and development.

Peace could be seen as the opposite of conflict and where there is conflict development is estranged. This is so, in that conflict drives away investors because nobody would like to invest his money where there is insecurity and unstable economy.

Wikipedia (2007) defines peace as the absence of violence and the presence of justice. Peace can equally be defined as a state of tranquility or quiet, as freedom from civil disturbance, as state of security or order within a community as provided for by law or custom. It is a period of mutual concord between government and the governance that embrace harmony in personal relations.

Encarta (2006) in Adebayo (2010) ascribed the following meanings to peace.

- (a) Freedom from war
- (b) The end state of war
- (c) Tranquility, a calm quiet state free from disturbance
- (d) A state of harmony, free from conflict or disagreement
- (e) A state of mental calm, security or devoid of anxiety
- (f) A treaty agreeing to end hostility.
- (g) Law and order, a state devoid of violence, crime and other forms of disturbance.

Adebayo (2010) groups peace into five directions. these are;

- Psychological: this gives individual mental calmness, mental security devoid of anxiety.
- Political peace: This is peace in politics. It includes existence of harmony among the three tiers of government, political justice and observance and maintenance of fundamental human rights of citizens.
- Economic peace: this deals with existence of free economy, industrial harmony.
- Social peace: this is characterized by existence of harmony in the social Institution, family, social groups, culture etc. and
- Environmental peace: this is that peace that exists between man and nature.

The peace of the nation has been threatened as a result of the following factors as highlighted by Adebayo (2010).

- Artificial partition
- Ethnic consciousness and identity
- Religious consciousness
- Inequality and inequality in the distribution of national wealth.
- Negative politics, poverty, bad government, corruption among others. When all these are present in any country there is bound to be insecurity.

Barber (1987) defines “sustainability” as the ability to maintain desired social values, traditional institutions, cultures or other social characteristics”. According to the world food programme (WFP) sustainability means “to allow for future generations”. This requires that we preserve our remaining resources and heal or rehabilitate resources that have however been treated carelessly in the past. Peace and security that will heal the nation insecurity have been handled carelessly. In all these, the government of a nation is obliged to ensure the peaceful existence flowing from the theory of social contract, inability to abide by the contract will automatically breed insecurity.

Hindrances on Development

Development connotes different things to different people but the fact remains that it usually cuts across the totality of human existence such as social, economic, political, education, cultural, religious changes or transformation from lower estate to a higher or better state. Walter Rodney, (1986) as quoted in Olaniyi (2005) opines that development is a process of increasing the ability, capacity and capabilities of people to exploit the resources of their environment so as to satisfy their needs at any given time. On the other hand, Fasiku (2011) opined that development indicates a positive change within the society. she stressed further that at individual level, development implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom creativity, self discipline responsibility and material wellbeing, equitable distribution of opportunities, provision of health, education, housing and other essential services, good governance and democracy, acquisition and usage of knowledge, generated both locally and externally. Development is a sine-qua-non for the well being when it is totally appreciated at the national level.

Development will definitely be hindered where there is no security for the investment that is expected to serve as tonic for the economic growth of a nation; where the investors are not safe and are consistently being warned to desist from traveling to some parts of Nigeria. Of recent, the united state department of state warned U.S citizen of the risk of traveling to Nigeria especially Niger Delta, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, delta and rivers, the southern eastern states of Nigeria, Edo, Imo, the city of Jos in Plateau, Bauchi and Borno states in north east because of the risks of being kidnapped, robbed and other armed attacks in these areas.

Economic activities are being paralyzed as a result of the incessant violence being unleashed in some parts of this country. This attracted the attention of the president to the effect that he declared a state of emergency in fifteen local government areas in the state of Borno, Niger, Plateau and Yobe in response to the activities of terrorist groups. On January 6, gunmen killed more than a dozen worshippers at a church in Jinefa-Yola, Adamawa state on December 31st, 2011. Take for instance the attack of worshippers in Owoon June 5 2022 where about 40 people were killed by unknown gunmen.

Indiscriminate attack by the unscrupulous group called Boko Haram is another factor that frightens individuals and companies away from affected areas where the activities of these criminals are more prevalent. This can never aid development because when people flee the areas, economic activities suffer. The following attacks attest to this assertion. The group attacked religious gathering in Gombe State and Mubi-Adamawa on January 5, killing 28 people, assailants threw an explosion device into an Arabic-Koranme school in Sapele delta state in December, injuring seven people. On December 25, 2011 another suicide bomber detonated a car bomb outside StTheresa's catholic church in the town of Mandilla on the outskirts of Abuja, killing at least 35 people while more than 80 were injured. This same sect also attacked churches in Jos city, plateau state, and Gadaka, Yobe state. another event took place on august 26, 2011 when a suicide bomber detonated a vehicle bomb explosive device at the United Nations headquarters in Abuja killing 25 people and injured more than 120 individuals and there were two car bombs in downtown Abuja during independence day celebration, killing ten and wounding many others in Owo, Ondo State.

Development could only be enhanced and sustained in the atmosphere of peace. Where peace is absent as a result of violence and insecurity of life and properties, money spent by way of investment will always go down the drain. All the areas which had experienced one form of violence or the other had recorded a reduction in their market capacities thereby affecting their economic activities adversely. (source: <http://www.glpbalfocus.ng>).

The Role of Social Studies Education in Enhancing National Security in Nigeria

According to Kissock (1981), Social Studies is a programme of study which enables the society to instill in students, knowledge, skill, attitude and action considered important concerning the relationship which human being has with each other, their world and themselves. According to the above definition, it is clear that social studies as a programme of studies makes man and his attendant problems the central focus. According to Azike (2007) Social Studies was conceived to not only correct the drift experienced in the Nigerian society but to create path to peace and harmony through inter-ethnic interaction, good governance, stability and economic progress. Social Studies is expected to help solve the Social problems confronting the Nigerians society by borrowing concepts, ideas and context from other social sciences and applying them in a holistic and integrated manners (ogunsaya1984). Aderalegbe (1980) submits that the subject is the totality of experiences a student goes through having been exposed to such a course based on man's interminable problems in chosen environment with a full knowledge of the variable factors that aid its normal interaction with his environment.

Social Studies education emerged purposely for developing effective citizenship skills among learners and addressing social problem as concerned by the society where it was introduced. Its teaching and learning are meant inter-alia to foster many things, create superlative awareness for every citizen about his or her environment with a view to making him or her respond positively and rewardingly to its challenges.

Social studies education teaches the core values needed in the society, with the sole aim of making a citizen develop his personality and thereby make him responsible adult in the society.

As the needs of a society are usually epitomized in the country's philosophy of education and national objectives which are changeable, Uche (1980) and Azide (2007) spelt out core area of social studies.

- i. citizenship
- ii. humanistic education
- iii. intellectual education
- iv. valued education

The totality of this philosophy is based on the interaction of the individual into a sound and effective citizen. Ogungbemi (1998) and Azide (2007) highlighted the objectives derived from the national objective as a way to flesh up the importance of social studies education, these are:

- The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity.

- The inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigeria society.
- The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around: and
- The acquisition of appropriate skills and development of mental, physical and social abilities and competences, as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of the society.

The summary of the four objectives is that during the course of teaching social studies, the social studies teachers should always lay more emphasis on the needs to be a good citizen, develop positive attitude, towards their fellow human being, environment and develop good inter personal relationship and show interest in working for the welfare of others and the entire society. Also, the students will acquire the value of education which will enable them to appreciate their right, duties, and obligations to the various levels of government which will thus make them better citizens.

Social Studies Education as a problem solving subject encourages egalitarian society and in this aspect ensures all round national development where there are equal opportunities. Social studies help young people to learn about their own place in their social, cultural and physical world and their own place in that world. It provides a context where young people can understand the structure and processes of our society and apply their knowledge and skills to make informed personal and social policy decision and to adapt to changing social political and economic condition.

Security threats both at the local, state and national level is no doubts a prevalent or predominant problem, presently in the country that need more urgent attention. It is against the backdrop of the above mentioned national problems that we submit that social studies education is one of the antidotes to alleviate or solve the insecurity problem in our dear land. This is so in that those that are involved in insecurity are mostly the youth being used as field soldiers. This group needs proper education. This is not far from the truth in that all the evil perpetrators that are involved in all these criminal acts, that threatens the security of the nation such as armed robbery, hoodlums, kidnappers, ritualism, hire assassins, and the most recent, and deadly, suicide bombing are youth of the ages between 19-30 years. One could see that the youths are at the centre of social studies curriculum, if it is welltaught by social studies experts. The youth need to understand the right away to respect elders, those in position of authority, and develop a sense of belonging to understand, appreciate and promote the cultural heritage of the community at large and more importantly, respect for human lives (Fafunwa 2004).

II. Conclusion

The paper has been able to show how Social Studies Education can help to enhance national Security. Insecurity is a bane that has not assisted the development of the country and is one of the social problems that social studies through its objectives is out to solve. Efforts has been made through the paper to list out the objectives of social studies in line with national policy on education as a means through which the social menace of insecurity could be curbed. There will be equal opportunities for all and a nation where this is held so high will definitely bring to the fore the values expected of every citizen for meaningful contributions to national development. The teaching of Social Studies Education therefore will promote tolerance, social interaction and mutual co-existence of the people within the country irrespective of their tribe, religion and political party. Equally, it will provide an answer to so many social problems ravaging our country in which insecurity plays a major role.

III. Recommendations

Social studies education as veritable tool in solving social problems will definitely pave way to sustainable development. The development of man the central focus of Social Studies Education will underscore a multiplier effect to every sector of the society. This is well domiciled in Social Studies Education and it will continue to perform its roles in achieving national education policy objective. It is therefore recommended that:

- (1) Efforts must be made by the government to solve the problems of lack of specialist and experienced Social Studies Education teachers by recruiting more Social Studies Specialist teachers who have the full knowledge of the subject to teach it all educational level;
- (2) The curriculum planners should revisit Social Studies Education curriculum and extend it to senior secondary school level so that the categories of students that fall under the group will benefit and thereby correct their attitude and behavior towards others and their society.
- (3) The subject Social Studies Education should be made compulsory to all pupils in the nursery and primary school level, junior and senior secondary schools and should be included in all tertiary institutions general Studies courses.
- (4) More important adequate learning and teaching material should be provided for both the teachers and the students.
- (5) Government must see that they make the code of conduct assessable to its entire citizens.

- (6) There should be public enlightenment programme for the need to entrench unity in diversity.
- (7) The security agents should be alert to, their duties and if need be, equip them with modern security materials.
- (8) Effort should be made to put in place a social scheme whereby the youth within the bracket ages that are vulnerable could be taken care of in term of their immediate basic needs.

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