

REFLECTING ON MALADJUSTMENT OF SECURITY EDUCATION STRUCTURE IN NIGERIA SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY

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Abstract

Philosophical reflection on maladjustment of security education in Nigeria secondary schools that posed a threat to global security was considered but as a remedial stride. It was therapeutic because the modern education for secondary schools in Nigeria failed to adequately address the security needs of the students in Nigeria now that man needs a fundamental shift from the prevailing security architecture to one that would be proportionate to the global security realities. It is based on this notion that, philosophical prescriptive method was adopted to examine the level of maladjustment; it attending consequences and the way forward. These findings were made. The security content was identified as a lone subject for basic education only and located as a component of National Value Education, though grossly inadequate to equip the students to tackle security challenges; emerging gaps were acknowledged, the gaps between the security education contents and the national security realities such as the attending consequences which includes examination malpractice, cultism, juvenile delinquencies and so on. The linkages were captured

as a way forward. Against this background, recommendations were made; these includes interdisciplinary measures be put in place to locate, restructure the security education curriculum to prepare the students to cope with global security challenges be given priority. The curriculum designers should bridge the existing gaps to curtail the consequences emanating from the poor adjustment and make security studies a compulsory subject at the secondary school level in Nigeria.

Key words: Maladjustment, security education structure, senior secondary schools.

Introduction

The spate of insecurity in Nigeria has grown much to affect the country in all ramifications including the educational, economic and international image of the country due to ` daily reporting of killings, kidnapping, cultism, rape, drug abuse, and schools becoming the soft target for the criminals to create fears in the country. The sore security challenges are so daunting that it threatens both human life and the environment from flourishing. To combat the menace of security challenges in Nigeria, it is presumed in this work that the use of force alone cannot be effective. In response to this, the National Council on Education (NEC) approved the new Religion and National Values Curriculum (RNV) which became operational in 2014 for basic educational levels in Nigeria (Iyamu&Edozie, 2015) and now transformed into National Values Education (NVE) curriculum, comprising of Social Studies, Civic Education and Security Education as sub -themes.

Security education was designed to promote value reorientation and enhancement of positive social reengineering of the country, according to Johnson (2017) cited in Urych (2019) noted that, although the subjects were listed under one group but they are distinct and are to be taught separately too. Security education as an educational process according to Urych (2019) has been targeted at “preparing young people and adults to act in situations threatening the peaceful existence of people and the effective functioning of the state”. Iyamu and Edozie (2015) described security education in Nigeria as “an innovation in the new national policy on education of 2013 but lacking a concise definition in available literature as an area of study capable of adequately preparing a student to cope with the security actualities. This claim is affirmed in this work but focus the search light on the exclusion of the high school in the security education scheme as a deliberate act of maladjustment.

Iyamu and Edozie (2015) ascertained that security education concepts were integrated into the Social Studies curriculum in United State of America secondary school many years back, an approach Al-edwan (2016) concluded as the best intention for security education and this is done through its contents; focused on learning values and empowering students' to refuse deviant ideas. While Security Education in Jordan and UnitedState of America was integrated into National Civic Education curriculum and Social Studies respectively, Poland has Security Education as a stand-alone subject offered beyond the secondary school level. The Security Education content in Nigeria for basic education in Nigeria is so scanty, and inadequate to address the security threat and so remained incapable to carry on to the high school in case of Nigeria. The secondary school structurally negated the inclusion of security education content into the secondary school curricula. This negation is either spontaneous or by design and in either ways, there is no justification. In the history of educational policy reforms in Nigeria, there are tendencies for adjustment to address immediate and remote needs of the state and the citizens in recognition of the social changes at the global level.

The paper does not in any sense attempt to address the drift resulting from the odds associated with educational structure and re-structuring but focused on intents and the mode of the adjustment by the actors and proves it maladjustment status having national security in view.

This formed the base on which the work earned its thrust. To expound on these, the appraisal of the current security challenges in Nigeria, direct efforts towards locating security contents in Nigeria secondary school curriculum. It also identify emerging gaps as a product of the negligence; the gap between secondary school security curriculum contents in Nigeria and the Nigeria security realities as well as its attending consequences. In this paper, the researchers devise links as blueprint to overcome the existing gaps that posed danger to security architecture in Nigeria in the light of national security.

Clarification of Terms

There are key concepts that need to be clarified in the context of this paper; attempt is made to explain the concept security education structure, senior secondary school and with the hope of eliminating any existing contradiction and ambiguity inherent in their usage.

Security Education

Security Education may be seen in this work as that cooperative, dynamic and lifelong process through which a society generates knowledge, values and skills for its survival, which a society generates knowledge, values and skills for its survival, sustenance, enlightenment and empowerment against all forms of danger and threats to its wellbeing and coexistence. Aside the formal school system, its content may be learnt personally, or given by different institutions of society and the neighborhood. Therefore its dynamic nature shows its responsive nature. This implies that its content and methods can change over time as security challenges change. Again, that it is a lifelong process shows that builds security consciousness and strategies in the individual all through his/her lifetime. In the context of this study, however, security education is that theme in Nigeria's National Values Curriculum that is aimed at creating in learners the awareness of and appropriate behavior against threats to their personal and neighbourhood wellbeing and safety which by structure and content deliberately exclude senior secondary school level of education in Nigeria.

Secondary School

Secondary school is defined as schooling after elementary school, therefore in the Nigeria that would be basic 1 through basic 9. However, once a student reaches basic 9, they move to senior secondary school 1 to 3 and they are considered to be a high school students. Generally speaking, however, secondary school in many English-speaking countries is equivalent to high school. In Nigeria, high school consists of senior secondary school 1 to 3. It is compulsory education. After a student graduates from high school, he /she will then go on to college, university, army, or enter the workforce.

Appraisal of Current Security Challenges in Nigeria

All around the world, the concern for security have taken the centre stage of local, national and international discourse. The concept of security is therefore mostly not detached as a condition for peace and development. According to International Peace Academy (2004), the ability to provide security based on good governance are essential for sound conflict management, the effect of which provides a safe and secure environment in which to entrench other programming initiatives. In other words, it provides a safe and enabling environment for other important socio-economic, religious and political development. The importance of security to national development in the case of Nigeria cannot be undermined.

Security can be described as the stability and continuity of livelihood, predictability of daily life, protection from crime, and freedom from psychological harm (Al-Edwan, 2016). Similarly, Nwagboso (2012) viewed security as the act of being safe from harm or danger, the

defence, protection and preservation of values, and the absence of threats to acquired values. These definitions are constituent element of the concept of human security or internal security, with fundamental difference from what is often termed as national security, where the focus is on the survival of the state against military threats posed by other state (Stephen, 2006) cited in (Idike, Eme&Okechukwu, 2015). They are however insecurities arising from most internal factors that have great implications and similar threat posed by external forces or other states.

The issue of insecurity in Nigeria is no more a challenge, but a cancerous problem; the regularity of religious, political, communal and ethnic based insurgences, upheavals, conflicts and violence in post-colonial Nigeria has attained endemic proportion. In fact, the description of the trending precarious situation in Nigeria as insecurity is perhaps an understatement. The prevailing terrorist/Islamic fundamentalist threats and attacks, unrelenting kidnappings and assassinations at virtually all societal strata, irrepressible armed robbery muggings as well as structural ethno-religious cum communal conflicts among several other anti-social vices characterised Nigeria. The life threatening activities have cumulated in the creating an insecure and almost uninhabitable atmosphere in Nigeria. Nigeria in recent times has recorded unprecedented security challenges such as Boko Haram Terrorists (BHTs) attacks, militancy, armed robbery, banditry, kidnapping for ransom, Fulani-Herders farmers clashes, cultism among other social vices.

These challenges also vary from one country to the other. Thus, Nigeria's security challenges would definitely differ from those in Egypt, USA or Russia. For instance, in US today, the dangers posed by” weapon possession are perhaps the greatest security challenges confronting the country. Threats, challenges to a country's security may range from low level civil disorder, large scale violence, even armed insurgency or terrorism. These threats are directed against citizens or the organs and infrastructure of the state itself. It is pertinent to note that, security challenges which the Nigerian government has to grapple with are enormous. The failure of the intelligence services to contain the recurring security breaches is a challenge of its kind. These security agencies appear incapable of matching the sophisticated tactics employed by the miscreants. They discharged their duty unprofessionally and unmotivated. One wonders how they can veritably help the Nigerian government in restoring security to the country. In fact, the current trend of violence is imprinting on the psyche of Nigerians that the government security apparatus is incapable of guaranteeing the security and safety of its people.

Another security challenge comes from the judiciary arm of government of the country. In Nigeria, the Judiciary has occasionally compromised cases that concern insecurity and thereby making the law not to act as a deterrent again. This challenge needs to be speedily resolved since many Nigerians have become conditioned to the acts of carnage, brigandage, looting, massacre, butchery and bestiality (Idike, Eme&Okechukwu, 2015). Indecisiveness on issues bothering on insecurity from the part of the Nigerian government is another security challenge. This indecisiveness seemed not to be peculiar to the present Nigerian government but appeared to have been an attitude of every federal government since the first republic. The leaders of this country in one way or the other displayed lack of strong political will to oversee this security problem or it appears to them as clueless if not negligence.(Ogbonnaya&Ehigiamusoe, 2013). Unemployment appears to be the strongest security challenge of the Nigerian government. So alarming is the rate of unemployment in this country. Many Nigerians of whom are in the youth bracket are not gainfully employed. This situation has continually fanned the embers of insecurity in Nigeria to flames. It is observable that, these youths are frustrated by their unemployed state into perpetrating crimes of various degrees.

Another security challenge is the issue of lop-sided development of the country. The issue of lop-sided development of the country is mostly informed as a result of undue attachment to tribes rather than the nation. As Nwadiakor (2011) rightly pointed out, “the deliberate

concentration of Nigeria's capital resources to the development of a few cities in the name of federal and state capitals, culminating in the prevalence of a large population of rural and underdeveloped communities posed a security challenge. The government engaging into negotiation criminals to reach a form of settlement with criminal organizations is unhealthy for the security scheme. The trend is that each time the government reached a compromise with these lawless groups, it became weaker and new groups emerged to use violent means to extract a commitment from government. In a typical behaviour of a nation that thrives on a rent economy, the government has always sought to buy peace and always ended with the peace of the graveyard like the current situation in the Niger Delta where former militants have been transformed into either top level government contractors or emergency crude oil refiners in the creeks or kidnap merchants, despite an amnesty programme that still costs the government billions of Naira every year (Eme&Anyadike, 2012). These challenges ought to be checked partly by the education industry yet some loopholes abounds. One of the loopholes is the unwanted gap in the high school security education content.

Emerging Gaps between Secondary School Security Education Content and National Security Realities

Insecurity can be referred to as a situation of fear or anything that causes fear, harm or has the capability to cause fear or harm to an individual resulting in the inability of people to live a happy peaceful lifestyle. Such issues could be politico-strategic, socio-economic, or ecological in nature; for instance, political instability, poverty, environmental degradation, lack of access to education, discrimination on the basis of gender, diseases and unemployment. The government response whenever there is a major case of insecurity or security lapses by calling for investigations is an index finger proving that security education is her sole responsibility but not an opponent of complementary efforts of other agencies like the family. Whether we agree or not, Nigeria is steadily sliding into a state of unbridled conflict and the education industry is lacking in her efforts towards checking it. One of the shortcomings is the unwanted gap between what is taught and what ought to be taught so as to adequately address the security needs of the learners reflecting the global security realities.

In this regard, the House of Representatives mandated its Committee on Education to liaise with the Universal Basic Education (UBE) to introduce security and intelligence studies in all schools. The motion was entitled: "Urgent need to introduce security and intelligence studies in both public and private secondary schools in Nigeria", (Premium Times, 2014). Mbadiwe cited in the Premium Times noted that issue of security was an essential requirement for the economic development of any country. According to him, this is captured in Section 14(2) (b) of the 1999 Constitution as amended. He said the section stipulates that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government". This claim pointed to the emerging gap in the security education of the country. He argued that intelligence studies in schools in Nigeria was necessary in the face of the current security challenges bedeviling the country. He submitted that the curriculum of senior schools in Nigeria did not have any provision for security and intelligence studies. Based on this submission, the gap can be measured to degree of non-availability of security studies at the high schools. However, we are not contesting this submission but identified the gap that existed between the security education content contained in Civic Education curriculum; a compulsory subject for senior secondary schools in Nigeria and the prevailing security global realities. Civic Education is largely an off-shot of Social Studies but designed to tackle the social needs which security ought to be paramount.

The subject is to teach awkwardly security content capable of preparing the students to cope with the security issues in the country and beyond. In view of the government position that a new Civic Education curriculum be made a compulsory subject for all senior secondary schools in

Nigeria, the notion to checks insecurity seemed primary. Effort has been made to redress the observed inadequacy by teaching the subject as a discipline that brings the reality of everyday societal living to students with the desire to making them acquire the knowledge on security issues, attitude, values and skills. It is intended to make them to be responsible and discipline members of their society. As a result Civic Education is society bound. This requires that, its curriculum reflects the problems, yearning and aspiration of a given society. Therefore, we are of the opinion that, the nature of the global security challenges and aspiration of the society determined the nature of the curriculum and of course, determines the purpose which the curriculum is out to serve.

The Existing Gap and its Attending Consequences

According to Technical Committee on Security (2008), security is conceptualized as the actual or potential freedom and safety from physical/military, political, economic, socio-cultural or psychological danger or attack. That is, it is the protection or defense of people against all kinds of victimisation from external/military attack, economic want, poverty, illiteracy, disease/ill-health, political oppression, social exploitation, criminality. And it is perceived in terms of the generality of the population i.e. the physical, political, economic, and social security of the average citizen rather than that of the government of the day and its officials.

Section 14 (1) b 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 arena, (FRN, 2000) cited in (Adelugba, and Ujomu, 2009). Thye lapses from the government leads to consequences. Some of these consequences include economic instability, political instability, social instability and religious intolerance as a threat to national security.

Linking the Existing Gap as a Way Forward

In an attempt to provide adequate security, the Nigerian government provided 9-year basic education and realigned security studies curriculum as a way of overcoming the existing gap. Illiteracy and innumeracy are forms of insecurity in themselves. So, the first and most immediate contribution of successful basic education and Civic Education curriculum is a direct reduction of one form of deep rooted insecurity. Therefore, it is believed that if Civic Education content is reviewed and taught well, it can be very helpful in guiding individual to live effectively in the society.

One of the viable means of reducing this society's problem is the realignment of the Civic Education curriculum since it treat poverty as a concept too. Poverty is the source of all menace that needs to be reduced to the minimal level. A way of reducing poverty; using education, is the application of the proactive Empowerment Model developed by (Adesina & Adeyemi 2009). According to them, the model seeks to eliminate poverty at its root rather than simply reacting to the manifestation and products of poverty. In model, there are fundamental rethinking of the three major dimensions of empowerment – Social, Economic and Political.

This emphasis is the continuation of poverty reduction programmes of the government and nongovernmental organizations. Education programmes need to be restructured to emphasis pragmatism as against the conventional theoretical acquisition of knowledge. Economic empowerment programmes must be encouraged adequately funded by the government (especially) and non-governmental agencies and gives space in the school curriculum as a way of managing the existing gap(s) in the curriculum. The model emphasises political, citizenship and Moral Education as moral decadence increases at all levels of our society. It could be added here that the model caters for the necessary values which are needed to bring about peace and development to the Nigerian society. These models ought to be captured in the Civic Education.

Another linkage is the involvement of the teachers. The teachers should be conversant not only with the concept of peace education but also with its instructional strategies. This enable these teachers use every opportunity in the instructional process to develop in the learners a culture of security. When enshrined in the Civic Education security content, it will bridge the gap considerably.

Recommendations

In this regard the following recommendations are made: Interactive programme in form of seminars and workshops should be organised security studies' teachers to enable them acquire the pedagogical disposition for implementing the curriculum effectively. Principles and strategies of security related education should be integrated into basic methodology courses taught in teacher training institutions. Security related topics should be taught across all levels and classes in the UBE programmes as a foundation for high schools. Text books for the UBE programme should be reviewed to provide information needed for the appropriate teaching and learning of security issues and it should critically based.

Conclusion

Findings of this study have shown that the security component of education is yet to be effectively implemented in the Nigerian education system. The major problem is that a good number of the teachers do not understand the concepts, issues concept or its objectives, principles and strategies related to security and its thin element for the high schools in Nigeria. This buttresses the need for adequate teacher preparation in this area of study. This is to ensure that these teachers can effectively help learners develop the ability to seek, maintain and protect others and to resolve conflict without creating atmosphere of insecurity. That reason for the existed gap is not properly captured, leave room for further enquiry.

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