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Peace Education: A Panacea for National Security

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Abstract

This paper critically examined Peace Education and National Security. It asserted a strong correlation between peace education and national security. It further assert that youths are the leaders of tomorrow have very significant role to play in driving home the need for national security through education of the citizen since our constitution in its section 5, spelt out the basis for our continuous co-existence as a nation. Discussed in this paper are: Peace, Peace Education, National Security, Peace Education and National Security. However, the paper concluded that reflection on school core curriculum on peace education is imperative to sustainable national security.

Virtually everybody is born helpless, vulnerable and completely dependent on one another for care, protection and survival. The amount of care, attention, training, and enlightenment one received plays a lot of role on a person's life. Peace education and national security can only be attained through favourable conditions and experiences an individual is exposed to throughout ones life time. In Nigeria, the greatest problems facing our country today is the threat to peace and national security. The occurrence of various forms of violence in Nigeria range from Boko Haram insurgency, Ombatse militia, kidnapping, armed robbery, cultism, political thuggery, ethnic and religious crises, child trafficking, sexual assault among others. Today, hardly does one take a look at any of the Nigerian Newspapers headline without seeing one or more issues on a breach of peace and national security. Several government in Nigeria devised different methods to maintain peace in different parts of the country but with little success. In fact, the greater part of 2012 and 2013 national budget was spent on security (Ruwa, 2013). Peace education is vital to ensuring national security. A broader conception of peace education targets to reduce crises, support the transformation of conflicts and advance the peace capabilities of individuals, groups, societies and institutions (Mcniff & Revital, 2003). Peace education dwells on citizen's capacities to learn, develop skills, values

and knowledge and thus helps to establish a global and sustainable culture of peace for national security.

National security is the measures taken by a country to ensure its survival and safety. It equally implies the absence of threat to life, property and socio-economic wellbeing of the people. A nation exists primarily for the protection of lives and property and ensuring the wellbeing of the people. Therefore, state-based institutions have the responsibility for the security of the citizens. Specifically, the police, state intelligence agencies, the military, immigration and prison services are directly shouldered with this responsibility (Ibrahim, 2002).

Nigeria is a nation endowed with numerous resources which when properly harnessed and justifiably distributed would ensure sustainable national security. Hence, Ekwunife (1992) asserted that high increase in the level of corruption in Nigeria seriously threatening the unity, peace and security of the country. Corruption in Nigeria continues to increase from time to time, thereby promoting crimes and violence of different kinds. The adverse effect of it is total fall in the growth of the nation's economy and failure in national security and development policies. No state in this country can ensure sustainable development where violation of human right, regional and sectarian injustice, violence, conflict, crime and general insecurity is the order of the day. This paper is therefore; set to examine those issues that have constituted the constraint to peace in Nigeria and how they can be sustained to ensure national security.

Conceptual Clarifications

Concept of Peace

Peace simply refers to as the absence of violence but absence of violence is not adequate for the understanding the nature of peace (Rusa, 2013). The mere absence of conflicts according to Shaaba (2009) does not suggest automatic peace, because war or conflict is only one form of violence which is physical, open and direct. Moreover, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2006) defines peace as "a situation or period of time in which there is no war or violence in a country or an area". Ibeanu (2006) observed that philosophers are not in agreement as to universally acceptable view of peace. Hence, he contends that Rousseau's position that peace implies the original state of existence in which man was born as "a free agent", "a state of nature" is synonymous with a state of ignorance. For Thomas Hobbes, according to Nwafor (2013), this "state of nature" was marred by frequent conflict and violence, which rendered life "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short". In order to avoid this nasty situation, men decided to surrender their rights to an over-riding force and thereby created a "social contract" for a more peaceful, orderly and progressive life (Sabine and Thorson, 1973).

Therefore, in this paper, peace is not only discussed as a situation of an absence of war or violence, but as an existence of justice and equity for all citizens as the

basis for living together in harmony. In Nigeria, the exponent of peace since independence sought for peace, but all efforts should aim at promoting national unity and removing social inequalities, providing happiness and pleasure, training for vocational competence, producing both middle and high level manpower for economic development, as well as promoting international understanding, public morality, self-realization, public enlightenment and civilized behaviour. Hence, peace negotiations and methods require sound knowledge of education as an essential ingredient for national security and development. Consequently, peace education according to Baldo and Furniss (2008) asserted that, the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring behaviour changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural: to resolve conflict peacefully and to create the conditions conducive for peace and security. Rage (2008) equally asserts that, peace education is the process of acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the attitudes, skills and behaviours to live in harmony with oneself, with others and with the natural environment. In empower people with values and knowledge to love others and as well contribute appears to have failed, probably, their failure can be due to their lack of collective consciousness or feelings of togetherness, conviction and humanistic orientation in pursuit of collective aims and aspiration. It all means that Nigerians need to broaden their knowledge and social interactions to peace education. In this regard, one may ask, what is the significance for peace education? Can it serve as medium for environmental and national security or awareness?

Peace Education what does it Mean?

Education, according to Osokoya (2010) is the "leading out of the inborn power and potentialities of the individuals in the society and the acquisition of skills, aptitudes and competence necessary for self-reliance and for coping with life's problems". This is why Socrates affirm that the role of any education is to help give birth to the innate ideas or opinion of the child. He calls this method dialectics or intellectual midwifery. In nourishing or bringing up, education assists the child to grow to the fullest stage of his/her capability.

In more explicit perspective, Osokoya said in a developing country like Nigeria, education towards a peaceful society that one can boast of a national security is imperative.

National Security

What is security? it mean to be secured? The word "security" is commonly used by people of different tribe or culture to explain the situation or a situation of a person, object, group of persons plan and so on. are Chambers Dictionary (1993) defines security as "the state, feeling or means of being secure, over confidence, protection from espionage, theft, attack etc. Certainly, a pledge, a guarantee, a right conferred on a creditor to make him or her sure of receiving a debt, etc.

Peter (2004) opined that security as an attitude of the mind, a technique which has been evolved to preserve property for its rightful owners. Therefore, the purpose of security in its wider perspective is to protect way of life and for this reason, much time and effort have been devoted over the years to its achievement. National security according to Gold and Zakariyau (2004) is the measures taken by a country to ensure its survival and safety. It is the steps taken to defer attacks from internal and external as well as those taken to ascertain the protection of life and properties of its citizen. As a result of the above discourse, the purpose of national security is to safeguard national values and the most fundamental value of any nation is survival, self preservation and self perpetuation. In view of the above discourse, the national security goal of Nigeria has always been to expel external aggression and prevent internal crisis. In Nigeria, as it is elsewhere, the importance of security cannot be underestimated. It is the main thing that holds all sectors of the nation's parts together – historical, political, economic, social, religious, educational and cultural. The threat, vulnerability or collapse of national security in the country normally jeopardize and endanger both the nation and the citizens resulting into devastating and colossal consequences.

Peace Education and National Security

The concepts "peace education" and national security" were connectively defined as absence of war and a nation's ability to live within secure borders. By the same token, peace education and national security transcend military, it stressed further to the total socio-economic well-being of people embroiled in the complicated pursuit of the optimum development of his innate potentials, all for his maximum self-actualization.

Peace Education: A Panacea for National Security

In the preceding section, we had sufficiently dealt with the explanation of the basic concepts involved in this paper namely: Peace, Peace Education, National Security. Our task here is to examine how peace education is used as a solution for national security. Denga (2006) asserted that peace in institutions learning serve as avenue for knowledge, research and refined culture which certainly promote security and development. Therefore, the higher institutions of learning in Nigeria have shown a continuous and sustained paralysis sadly imposed and continuous strikes action by academic staff, technical staff and students. More so, if we allow strike action to damage our citadel of development, then we have lost the viability for national security as a nation led to unjustified losses of human lives, violation of human rights, regional and sectorial injustice, aggressive tendencies, conflicts, crime, general insecurity and destruction of properties. Nigeria society according to Mbagi and Ebirim (2013) suffers because of situations of violent conflicts, general insecurity and destruction of properties prevalent among her populace. The country

has been wracked by incidents of conflict for years. The pressures of Boko Haram and Niger Delta militancy threat necessitates the brain behind that role of education that will inform people with values and knowledge to love one another and the world at large that will contribute towards a sustainable national security.

In the context of this on-going discourse, national security and progressive development in a state lies in the nature of peace itself and in the fundamental nature to liberate and remove doubt or fear of one another. Therefore, the unifying power of peace creates in the consciousness of the citizen a sense of love and commitment to the welfare of the country. Patriotism as stated by Godwin (2013) is the compelling forces which disposes each citizen to stake his life for the progress of the nation and comply to the national policies.

As a matter of fact, peace education for national security is a prelude for sustained development. Sustainable security will not come by chance. It can only occur when people learn to tolerate and accommodate others, there will be room to improve the quality and quantity of the country's factors of production. Peace education for national security equally enhanced the development of infrastructural facilities base on such as roads, electricity, water, schools, hospital among others to bring about change in the quality of living of the citizens.

Consequently, the harmonious power of peace creates in the mind of the people sense of love and commitment to the welfare of the nation. The compelling power which allows each citizen to take his life for the progress of the country and obey the national policies is equally patriotism. In fact, it is a panacea for national security and enhanced stable economy, encouragement of unity as well as attraction of foreign investors.

Recommendations

Aroused from the insights in the analysis of this paper, these authors feel challenged to recommend as follows:

- Fostering democratic participation, to attempt a culture of peace, there should be promotion of human rights education. Adediran (2013) defined the subject , peace education as "Training dissemination, information and effort aimed at the building of Universal Culture of human rights through imparting of knowledge and skills and moulding of attitude.

Since peace education for national security is analysed as basic necessity for sustainable and progressive development, all educational actors including curriculum developers and implementers should all make it part of core curriculum. Such that it will reduce citizens with negative behaviours like violence, drug abuse, suicide bombing, cultism and other forms of irresponsible living.

There should be understanding and tolerance among ethnic or religious group and others, on this issue of violation of human rights, the government should always regard and respect the rights of citizens bearing in mind that every citizen deserves the right to freedom and equal opportunities and treatment.

There must be structural review of the system that throw up the type of leaders we have today as that, only credible, fair and patriotic leaders pilot the affairs of the people across the group of the nation.

Conclusion

It has been established in this paper that Nigeria is facing serious security challenge ranging from armed robbery attacks, kidnapping and Boko Haram insurgency. There is equally an obvious evidence of massive corruption, unemployment, underemployment and poverty. This cankerworm appears to be an obstacle for national security. Hence, this paper proposed that there is the need to reflect on peace education with the basic principles of tolerance which the beneficiaries will be able to plant the seeds of understanding and sustainable security for the entire nation.

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