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International Digital Organization for Scientific Research

ISSN: 2579-0757

IDOSR JOURNAL OF CURRENT ISSUES IN ARTS AND HUMANITIES 5(1):10-15, 2019.

Education and Leadership for National Security

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines the place of education and leadership for national security. Education is a vital process of social life without which we cannot attain a normal and prosperous life. It is through education that leaders are made and leadership is a purposeful relationship, which occurs episodically among participants, who use their individual skills to influence, and advocate transformational change, that brings about national security. The paper argues that if education becomes our leaders priority, our economy will flourish, there will be employment, poverty reduction and other social vices will be drastically reduced and national security will be attained. The paper discusses the concept of Education, the concept of leadership, the concept of National security and the interplay of education, leadership and National security. Suggestions are made, among which include: that government should monitor the implementation of basic education for all programme with high level of commitment for this will enhance national security etc.

Keywords: Education, Leadership, National security.

INTRODUCTION

Education and leadership are interwoven. Education is an indispensable tool in leadership for national security. In other words the quality of any nation depends to a large extent on the quality of educational attainment. Leadership therefore, is a determinant to the provision of quality education. Good leadership brings about good relationship, motivation, commitment, teamwork and at large national security. Nigerian government however, should strive to make this quality education a reality.

Concept of Education

Education is a vital process of social life. Without education, life will be unbearable. Education brings about positive changes in life. Education is a catalyst that propels both individual and national development and by extension national security.

In line with the above, education in the largest sense, according to [1] is any act or experience that has a formative effective effect on the mind, character or physical ability of any individual while in its technical sense, it is the process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another. One may be of the view that from the onset of civilization, evidence prevails to support the premise, that nurturing has been essential to the preservation of life. Survival of human race, therefore is inextricably interwoven with the development of education. On that note the growth of a child cannot be automatic; it needs certain knowledge and experience. So we have to give the child knowledge and experience before we expect to draw out the best in the child. Hence, education can be looked at as a process of providing desirable knowledge

and experience to the child so as to develop his inner powers to the maximum possible extent. [2] infer that education is more than fostering understanding and an appreciation of emotions and feelings. It is also concerned with change-with how people can act with understanding and sensitivity to improve their lives and those of others. According to them developing an understanding of an experience or a situation is one thing, working out what is good and wanting to do something about it is quite another. For appropriate action to occur there is need to be committed.

In the same vein, education may be seen as a process which means a continuous change that takes place through which a child attains knowledge, skills, attitudes and other activities required for leading a productive life in the society. Based on the factors involved in the educative process, education can be viewed as bi-polar, tri-polar, or multi-polar processes. Education as a bi-polar process, is an end result of the interaction between the educator/teacher and the student. Teacher impacts knowledge to the students' behaviour. [3] believe that education is essentially a bi-polar process and recommend close cooperation and better understanding between teachers and students for achieving the aims of education. As a tri-polar process a good number of educationists believe in it because it involves the interaction between the student, the teacher and the social environment. [4] believes that education is essentially a tri-polar process. This view motivated educationists to consider the societal change and social environment while constructing the curriculum. This process justifies the bilateral relationship between the society and education.

On the other hand, multi-polar process involves coping with the fast changing and competitive nature of the world. Self-learning concept of education is influenced by several factors along with the teacher, student and social environment. Easy access to knowledge due to the technological advancement and the increased acceptance of non-formal

and informal types of education has reduced the importance of teacher and school when compared to the past. Present day education is flexible, more student centered, focus on creativity, than mere spoon feeding by the teacher and depend heavily on technological advancement. From the view points, it is evident that the educative process is neither a bi-polar process nor a tri-polar process but a multi-polar process. Education is the development of those capacities in the individual which will enable him to control his environment and fulfill his possibilities [5].

Concept of Leadership

Leadership is a complex process by which a person influences others to accomplish a mission, task, or objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. A person carries out this process by applying his/her leadership attributes belief, values, ethics, character, knowledge and skills. Leadership is not private reserve of a few charismatic men and women. It is a process ordinary people use when they are bringing forth the best from themselves and others. It is against this background that, [6] defined leadership as a purposeful relationship, which occurs among participants, who use their individual skills to influence, to advocate transformational change. Also, [7] opined that leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individual to achieve a common goal. It is pertinent to note that leadership is inspiring others to pursue a vision within given parameters to the extent that it becomes a shared effort, a shared vision and a shared success [8].

According to [9], there are four primary factors of leadership which include leader, followers, communication and situation.

- **Leader:** As a leader you must have an honest understanding of who you are, what you know, and what you can do. Also, it is the followers, not the leader or someone else who determines if the leader is successful. If they do not trust or lack confidence in their

leader, then they will be uninspired. So, for a leader to be successful you have to convince your followers, not yourself or your superiors, that you are worthy of being followed.

- Followers: Different people require different styles of leadership. For example, a new employee requires more supervision than an experienced employee does. A person who lacks motivation requires a different approach than one with a high degree of motivation. So you must know your people. The fundamental starting point is having a good understanding of human nature, emotions and motivations.
- Communication: This is very essential in human lives. You lead through two-way method of communication, much of it is non-verbal. For instance, when you set an example, that communicates to your people that you would not ask them to perform anything that you would not be willing to do. What and how you communicate either builds or harms the relationship between you and your followers.
- Situation: All situations are different. What you do in one situation will not always work in another. You must use your judgment to decide the best course of action and the leadership style needed for each situation. For example, you may need to confront an employee for inappropriate behaviour, but if the confrontation is too late or too early, too harsh or too weak, then the results may prove ineffective.

Leadership, therefore, plays a vital role in the success of any organization or nation. It is the quality of leadership that dictates the rate of success or development in any organization or nation. This explains why the choice of leadership in any organization or nation is done painstakingly. This is because when there is a mistake in the choice of leadership, such affects the organization or nation adversely.

Concept of National Security

Security is multidimensional in nature and diverse in practice. This diversity leads to difficulty in providing a single and all encompassing definition. This explains why there are various definitions of security. This is because many writers define security according to their perception and from the environment in which they are writing. [10] for instance are of the opinion that security implies a stable relatively predictable environment in which an individual or a group may pursue its ends without disruption or harm and without fear of such disturbance or injury. On the other hand, [11] viewed security in terms of tradition as provision of private services in the protection of people, information and assets for individual safety or community wellness. Security, however maybe expanded to consider national security and the defence of a nation through armed forces or use of force to control a state's citizens.

The concept of national security has often been taken to merely connote the preservation of sovereignty, territorial integrity and internal stability with the focus on the coercive power of the state. In today's complex and interdependent world faced with many nontraditional threats like epidemics, terrorism, climate change, etc. it must however, been seen in a more holistic manner. Such an all encompassing view of national security demands that the determinant of security is not just the coercive elements of state power but its comprehensive national power with the latter being a composite of many factors across all facets of national life. These factors, inclusive of leadership can help develop a national security index which in comparative terms could serve as an indication of the relative security of a country vis-à-vis peers.

[12] described national security as the capability of a nation to overcome the multi-dimensional threats to the apparent well-being of its people and its survival as a nation state at any given time. The author further stated that this can be done through balancing all instruments of state policy through governance and is

extendable to global security by variables external to it.

In the same vein [13] views national security and international security as a shared freedom from fear and want, and freedom to live in dignity. According to them, it implies social and ecological health rather than the absence of risk and is a common right.

Potential causes of national insecurity may include actions by other states (eg military or cyber attack), violent non-state actors (eg terrorist attack-Boko Haram), organized criminal groups such as armed robbers, kidnappers etc, and also the effects of natural disasters (eg flooding, earthquakes [14].

In view of the wide range risks [15] observed that the security of a nation has several dimensions which includes economic security, energy security, physical security, environmental security, food security, boarder security and cyber/internet security. These dimensions correlate closely with elements of national power.

- Economic security is the ability of a nation to maintain and develop the national economy, without which other dimensions of national security cannot be managed.
- Security of energy and natural resources. These resources include water, sources of energy, land and minerals. Availability of adequate natural resources is important for a nation to develop its industry and economic power. For example, during the Persian Gulf war of (1991), Iraq captured Kuwait partly in order to secure access to its oil wells and the reason for the US. Counter invasion was the value of the same wells in its own economy.
- Physical security is primarily associated with managing physical threats and with the military capabilities used for doing so. National security is often understood as the capacity of a nation to mobilize military forces to guarantee its borders and to deter or successfully defend against physical threats including military aggression and

attacks by non-state actors, such as terrorism.

- Environmental/ecological security: This refers to the integrity of ecosystems and biosphere particularly in relation to their capacity to sustain a diversity of life forms (including human life). The security of ecosystems has attracted greater attention as the impact of ecological damage by humans has grown. The degradation of ecosystems including top-soil erosion, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and climate change affect economic security and precipitate mass migration, leading to increased pressure on resources elsewhere.
- Food security is the ability of a nation to provide enough food for her citizens based on their capability in agriculture but unfortunately climate change is affecting global agriculture and food security. Many countries of the world are in abject poverty and hunger, thereby projecting national insecurity.
- Boarder security is a nation ensuring that only authorized human and material resources go out and come into the country. Most of the time it is not so, our borders are always porous and unauthorized goods including arms are usually smuggled into the country. Nigeria for instance.
- Cyber security usually called computer or internet security refers to the security of computing devices such as computers and smart phones, as well as computer networks such as private and public networks and the internet. It concerns the protection of hardware, software, data, people and also the procedures by which systems are accessed, and the field has growing importance due to the increasing reliance on computer systems in most societies. Since unauthorized access to critical civil and military infrastructure is now considered a major threat, cyber space is now recognized as a domain for warfare.

The Interplay of Education, Leadership and National Security

National security depends directly on the strength of a nation's economy. It is clear that economic strength in the era of global competition depends on a nation's educational attainment, most importantly, the proportion of the workforce with post secondary credentials.

National security is inherently a function of the economy, and the economy is inherently a function of educational attainment. Education has historically given all Nigerians both rich and poor opportunity, by allowing individuals to achieve various life dreams. It has also fueled the continued innovation, growth, prosperity and security of this nation. It is through education that most leaders acquire their leadership positions. There

is, therefore, the need to educate the youths for national security. President Bush (2006) in his statement noted. "leadership and national security rest on our commitment to educate and prepare our youth for active engagement in the international community". He further beckoned on schools, teachers, students, parents and community to promote understanding of the nation and cultures by encouraging young people to participate in activities that increase their knowledge of and appreciation for global issues, languages, history, geography, literature and the arts of other countries. It is on this note that the nation's leaders are expected to invest more in education for it is a safeguard to security and economic growth.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Government should monitor the implementation of educational policies with high level of commitment for this will enhance national security
2. Government at all levels should make adequate provision to
- educate the citizens for national security.
3. Leaders should encourage quality education for it enhances economic and guarantees security.

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