

Education, Media and Security: The Case of Nigeria

ODIZURU ITEOGU, A.V. JIBOWO
Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria.

Abstract. Without a carefully organized security system any entity (political or economic) would be in jeopardy. Without security, in its various forms, all developmental efforts would nose-dive into a nullity because security is necessary to safeguard all areas of socio-economic activity. Every developmental paradigm and design must fashion into it the element of security to ensure that all progress is not lost. That is our concern in this paper. That is an analysis of the relevance and promotion of security via education and the mass-media. We would realize that education permeates all sectors of the society. This is important because Nigeria needs to jealously guard and guide her common existence and the material success needed to sustain her in the years ahead.

This paper has revealed that there is a common chord among the different components of socio-economic and political strides that links national security and eternal vigilance by citizens and agencies of state statutorily empowered to so do. These agencies spread across educational and media structures and organs. The citizens, acting in concert individually or as groups ought to join hands with the agencies of government to secure the developmental gains made in Nigeria since our political independence on October 1st, 1960. The promotion of security must receive the greatest official and individual attention to ensure safety for all citizens through the instrumentality of education and effective media-driven enlightenment.

Keywords: Education, Media, Security, Development, Case of Nigeria.

1. Introduction

In recent times, Nigeria has experienced several security challenges, north, south, east and west: insurgency in the north promoting radical and dangerous religious views, militancy and kidnapping in the South-South and the South-East and cattle rustling in the West & North. Hence, security has become a cascade of confusion that governments at all levels have been unable to curtail. As a result, millions of citizens have been displaced from their ancestral homes, with many living in IDP camps for internally displaced persons. The worst of all has been the infamous kidnapping of 276 Secondary School girls from Government Girls' Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State, North East Nigeria. Still counting, it is three (3) years plus (14/4/2013), since that sad episode in Nigeria's history took place. How did Nigeria get into this intractable impasse? How have the "bokoharam" people succeeded in taking that large of children hostage? How could education contribute to the solution? How can the media contribute to the security of the family and of the individual citizens? These and other vital questions shall be addressed, including the interrelatedness among the words education, media and society. The issue of security of the citizens and the nation must be everyone's concern because insecurity knows no race, tribe, religion or gender.

2. Discussion

2.1 What is Security?

In a layman's language, security refers to safety or freedom from every attempt or effort to protect persons and property from attack, molestation or any destructive infiltration into the privacy of others. But this is a partial perspective of what security is or ought to be. In its broad form, security could include other forms of individual security, for example human rights security, job security, food security, etc. Nations need security for citizens and other assets. Odunlami (2005) opines that at the national level, security is also perceived from two angles: the old and the new. The old school of militarist thinking conceives national security from the angle of military response and management of threats". He explains that one of its proponents Lippmann (p. 128) asserts that national security "rises and falls with the ability of a nation to deter an attack or defeat". On the other hand, Maniruzzaman (1982) regards national security from the prism of "protection of minimum core values of any nation, its political independence and territorial integrity" (opcit). It must be added here that the primary duty of a sovereign state is security of the state and its citizens at all times. Some promoters of this view insist that physical security is not enough for overall development. Odunlami (2005: 129) quoting Nwolise says that other variables impinge on national security, such as: socio-economic conditions of the people, human rights records of the government in power, the way power is shared in the country, the way government relates to other countries, the level of commitment of the groups to the task of keeping the nation alive". Against the background of the old school postulations, a new school of thought is developing on the concept of national security. One of its proponents is Robert McNamara formerly of the United Nations Organisation.

The new school of thought sees security as development, and that explains why Odunlami (2005: 129) shares McNamara's view (1968:149) in *The Essence of Security*, published by Harper & Row:

In a modernizing society, security means development. Security is not military force though it may involve it, security is not traditional military activity, though it encompasses it, not military hardware, though it may include it. Security is development and without development, there can be no security".

Put in another way, Adamu (1990) and Nweke (1988) share this view by explaining that security, whether individual, national or regional goes far beyond the activities of military and paramilitary forces. They argue that security extends to "economic self-reliance, social cohesion and political stability" (opcit). In this sense, security reaches every segment of human activity by governments and their agencies, individuals, corporate organizations, NGOS, all professional groups or associations. But what constitutes development, a necessary ingredient for security of each society?

2.2 Some Definitions of Development

Let us consider some definitions put forward by researchers all cited in *New Perspectives in Applied Communication* by des Wilson (2005 124-126):

Inayatullah (1967): Development is change toward patterns of society that allow better realization of human values that allow a society greater control over its environment and over its political destiny and that enables its individuals to gain increased control over themselves.

Kleinyans (1975): development ultimately is not a matter of technology or gross national product, but the growth of a new consciousness, the expansion of the human confidence.

Rogers (1976): development is a widely participatory process for social change in a society, intended to bring about social and material advancement.

Suld and Tyson (1978): development is a historical process through which human beings choose and create their future within the context of their environment to achieve a humanistic and creative society.

Des Wilson (1990): Simply put, development is what society thinks makes its people live richer and better lives.

All of these definitions point to a consideration that development instantly tantamounts to transformation, removing poverty, lessening the disparity between social classes whether in rural or urban areas. Later in this write up, our attention is going to turn to the role of education and the media in ensuring security which is a sine qua non for all types of human development (including mental development, physical development, economic development, political development, rural development, urban development, etc).

2.3 Some Media Theories Vis-à-Vis National Security

In our present society, we need some theories on communication in order to appreciate the role of the media in national security development. We shall consider only two relevant theories in this write-up.

Development media theory: This theory opines that the relevance of the media, as an important component of social transformation is always to ensure the continuous development of the nation's security (Odunlami, P. 101). Clearly, this theory focuses on the major contribution of the media in all spheres (economic, political) of national development. Folarin (1998) lists four key principles of development media theory, namely:

- The media should accept and carry out positive development task based on national policy without prejudices to their traditional functions,
- The media should accept and help in carrying out special development task of national integration, socio-economic modernization, promotion of literacy and cultural creativity.
- The media should identify and give attention to foreign news to link with other countries with similar interests.
- Media workers should fulfill their obligation to defend their rights, in order to safe guard freedom of the press.

Agenda-setting Theory: This theory underlines the need for the media to work with other segments of society to bring about the desired

change at group or individual level. The theory implies that the media sets the agenda or predetermines the direction of public discourse on all issues of relevance to a given society. Folarin (1998) advances the argument that the agenda – setting theory confers the responsibility of sensitizing the public and assisting in shaping the public opinion to assert its right to hold opinion on issues of public concern. The agenda-setting theory has the following features according to Odunlami (2005:103):

- The quality of frequency reporting
- Prominence given to the reports through headline display, ... Timing on radio and television
- The degree of conflict enervated in the reports and
- Cumulative media specific efforts over time.

These two theories (development media theories) seem to support the view that there should be a free access to information needed to enhance development which is an offshoot of security in any nation, Nigeria inclusive. Then, the question arises, how does the media contribute to ensuring national security leading to overall national development?

2.4 Roles of the Media

The roles of the media are numerous. So, only a few will be discussed in this paper. These roles include those suggested by Odunlami (op cit):

- Investigation into all public issues capable of dividing the nation
- Information for society,
- Education/Enlightenment,
- Suggestions through positive criticisms,
- Correction through exposure of unlawful practices which affect society negatively,
- Reformation of society,
- Transmission of Culture and
- Entertainment

In short, the media is traditionally noted for education, entertaining and informing society. The Nigerian media has not failed in this connection. At this juncture, we want to zero in

on the role of education in promoting security for individuals and society.

3. Education and Security in Nigeria

What is the link between education and security in the context of overall development? Earlier, we tried to define security, according to McNamara (1968) as development without which there can be no security. Now, what is education? Before proposing some definitions and theories of education, let us share this view about its relevance. Des Wilson (2005) quoting Okwilagwe (1999) opines that:

The education system of any nation forms the main or central energy source necessary for generating the current that ensures the existence and development of that nation. It brings about, if well directed, self-realization, better human relationship and national efficiency, effective citizenship, National technological development.... (P. 318).

Now, let us consider the point of view of formal education as a planned education system. Formal education is development, and development is only possible in the context of a secure environment. This concept of education sees it as a process which is linked to qualitative education. No wonder Obanya, et al (1985) says that education is development, explaining further that:

Development can be physical (dealing with physical traits only), intellectual (dealing with the intellect or brain) as well as social (dealing with the individual's ability to live in harmony with other people in society (P.4).

This implies that education concerns itself with the all-round development of the individual who in turn is expected to contribute to the overall development of society. As agreed elsewhere, without security, there cannot be any appreciable development in the several sectors of human operations. Furthermore, we believe that there are other types of education. They include informal education which is less consciously planned unlike planned education that is consciously planned. There is also non-formal education, placed between the formal and

informal education. In recent times, other types of education have emerged, for example life-long education, basic education, etc. Life-long education as a concept originated by UNESCO – United Nations Educational Scientific and cultural organization headquartered in Hamburg, Germany. UNESCO has shown much interest in the theory of life-long education. According to this theory, education is tantamount to a never-ending learning to live, a type that ensures we learn more about our society even out of school. The problem with this theory is that there is no limit to what constitutes education. Another concept is basic education which approximates to a minimum level of universal education which is usually compulsory. It is made up of six years in primary education, then three (3) years of junior secondary education. Nigeria practices this type of education.

Back to the relationship among education, media and security for a moment. Let us equate the teacher to the communicator, both of whom create awareness for individuals in their environments. Therefore, we could equate the roles of the school teacher to those of the media communicator. Both professionals almost always share similar goals which include information- gathering and dissemination, information through suggestions towards solving emerging problems. Education and communication act individually or as groups to enhance development of society which is only possible in a situation of security at all levels. This comparative analysis of the roles of education and the media towards national security is very apt at this period of Nigeria's challenged security in the six (6) geopolitical zones of the country.

4. Conclusion

Against the background of the current insurgency by Boko Haram in the North-East Zone (Borno, Adamawa & Yobe States), kidnapping in South-West, the militant activities in the South East & South-South Zones and the rising menace of Fulani (?) herdsmen in all zones of Nigeria, Nigeria's Federal government may consider the teaching of peace, conflict resolution and security studies at the lower

levels of education. This is where social studies or Civics should be made compulsory for students in senior primary schools and throughout the Six (6) years of secondary school education. Also, security studies should form part of the General Studies (GNS) in all tertiary institutions.

In this way, security awareness will be created for students, their parents and teachers. But schools alone cannot carry out this onerous assignment. Professional bodies, social organizations, NGO's, Town Unions and Clubs, etc. should be assisted by the mass media to play their roles in maintaining security for all sectors and elements of the Nigerian society.

Finally, education in the context of national or regional security should be considered as part of the strategies of security enlightenment or security consciousness. Also, it encapsulates the need for public cooperation with government agencies through several avenues, including prompt intelligence – gathering and its quick dissemination. In this way, education equates to awareness-creation by the channels of education-- related activities and media practice, designed to promote the overall security of the nation and her citizens. In recent times, the United States of America has proposed a specialized ICT University for the armed forces, starting with a population of five thousand (5000) soldiers to concentrate on ICT- based security system.

No wonder, Jibowo and Oladunjoye (2003) broached the idea of the link between information-sharing and communication. They opine that “communication is a process of transmitting thoughts, sharing or imparting information or ideas... and linking people (P. 36).

It is in this context that we observe that managers of Education and communication can and do act individually or as groups to enhance development of society which is only possible in a situation of security at all levels. To ensure the success of Nigeria's security measures, there must be a tripartite cooperation among government education agencies, media

organizations and security agencies (military, Para-military and non-military).

References

- Adanmu, A., (1999). Redefining West African Security, Paper Presented at the Seminar on Global Changes and Challenges to Sub-Regional Maritime Security, NITA, Lagos, pp. 4-5.
- Des Wilson, (2005). New Perspectives in Communication Application, Ibadan. Stirling – Horden Publishers (Nig.) Ltd. pp. 124-126.
- Folarin Banatunde, (1998). Theories of Mass Communication, Ibadan Stirling Horden Publishers Ltd.
- Jibowo, A.V. and Oladunjoye, S.O.A. (2003). Language and Communication in Teaching, S041 Publishers, Lagos, p. 36.
- Lippman, W., (1998). The Management of National Security Quoted in Imobighe, T. Inaugural Lecture, Edo State University, p. 14.
- Macnamara, R. (1968). The Essence of Security, New York: harper and Row, p. 149.
- Moniruzzaman, T., (1982). The Security of Small States in the World, Canderra Paperson Strategy and Defence pp. 25:2.
- Nweke, A. (1988). Some Critical Remarks on the National Security Question, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos. p. 2.
- Obanya, P.A.I. Okoye, N., Ezewu, E. and Adejumo, D. (1985). Theory and practice of Education, Lagos, Basic Books Publishers p. 4.
- Odunlami, S.O. (2005). Media in Nigeria's Security and Development Vision. Ibadan, Spectrum Books ltd., pp. 101-103, 128-129.
- Voice of America, 14th January, 2017.