

TOWARDS ADDRESSING PATRIOTISM PROBLEM IN NIGERIAN SOCIETY THROUGH VALUE EDUCATION IN SOCIAL STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria as a country is bedevilled with many vices which are currently affecting the realisation of the national objectives of the country despite all the strategies introduced by various government to entrench patriotism and nationalism among the citizens like learning of the national anthem and the pledge by heart as well as giving of national awards to patriotic Nigerians. Patriotism seems to be a mirage in Nigeria, as the moral values which are germane to national development are getting deteriorated on daily basis. In order to curb this challenge, there is need to teach value education through Social Studies so that learners can imbibe patriotism concepts as they grow to become useful and responsible citizens. Even though there are some problems associated with the teaching of values such as the relative nature of value to individual, variability of value due to time, diversity of human society, and prevailing circumstances; Social Studies education is poised towards overcoming these challenges thereby inculcating core values that can entrench patriotism amongst the learners. The paper therefore recommended among others that priority should be given to Social Studies education especially at the formative stage of schooling so that learners can imbibe the spirit of patriotism, and that Social Studies education teachers should focus more on the affective component of the subject area in order to inculcate patriotism among the learners.

Keywords: Overcoming, Challenge, Patriotism, Nigeria, Value Education and Social Studies.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria as a country emerged with a strong aspiration to be a great nation that should become a source of pride to every citizens going by the National objectives formulated as stated in the national policy of education (1981), which has to do with the building of:

- 1) A free and democratic society;
- 2) A just and egalitarian society;
- 3) A united, strong and self-reliant nation;
- 4) A great and dynamic economy;
- 5) A land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens.

The educational system of the country was designed and tailored to achieve these objectives, however, it is necessary to state that these cannot be achieved without the commitment of Nigerians who belief in these objectives, and are committed to the course of nation-building; this calls for patriotism on the part of all Nigerians in order to realise these objectives. Realising that patriotism cannot be imbibed unconsciously by the citizens, the federal government of Nigeria took steps towards inculcating patriotism amongst the citizens; one of such steps is the formulation of the Second National Anthem which reads:

Arise O compatriots, Nigeria's call obey

To serve our father land, with love and strength and faith

The labour of our heroes past shall never be in vain

To serve with heart and might, one nation bound in freedom

Peace and unity.

The essence of teaching it to school children and playing it daily as well as on some special occasion was to deliberately inculcate the spirit of patriotism amongst Nigerians. To entrench it further, Nigeria's pledge was composed to deliberately ensure commitment of Nigerians to the course of Nation-building. As citizens recite the pledge which reads:

I pledge to Nigeria my country,

To be faithful, loyal and honest.

To serve Nigeria with all my strength

To defend her unity, and uphold her honour and glory.

So help me God; they are deliberately taking an oath to be patriotic no matter what they are exposed to. Patriotism imposes a set of obligations on every member of the community to do anything possible that could advance the nation positively even if it require paying the supreme sacrifice.

However, Nigeria as a country seems to be in a state of mess due to lack of patriotism by the citizens in spite of the pledge and the national anthem committed to memory. Many Nigerians are no longer faithful and honest at their duty post, what matter to many Nigerians is what they can gather for themselves even if it is to the detriment of the nation to which they pledge to serve with all their strength. That is why one could hear many confessing that "to serve Nigeria is not by force", or "government property is nobody's property" and often time when a hardworking Nigerian is seen displaying patriotism at one point or the other, many people tend to discourage the zeal of such person by asking "if the job is his/her father's job", which can be attributed to wrong value system. These often results in corrupt tendency been exhibited by Nigerians in business, at work, playing truancy, receiving and giving of bribe, corrupt practices exhibited at different level, embezzlement of public fund, absenteeism, diversion of public property into private use, etc. To address these myriad of problems and issues, Chuks, (2013) observed that "..., the country still can go nowhere until a very strong implants of patriotism is truly entwined into the minds and attitude of each and every Nigerian citizen". Serving the nation even if it means paying the supreme prize should not be the prerogative of Nigerian Army alone but what every Nigerian should embrace as a result of the love of the country.

Examples of patriotic Nigerians that are worthy of being emulated:

Despite the fact that patriotism is a virtue that is so scarce to be seen among Nigerians, there are some good Nigerians that have exhibited patriotism in one way or the other. If such virtue are replicated by other citizens at their duty post, the country would be better for it. Some of these Nigerians as cited by (Omonijo, Oludayo, Eche, & Uche, 2015) include:

Late Dr. Dora Nkem Akunyili, the former Director-General of the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC), who made the eradication of counterfeit drugs and unsafe food, which had been responsible for the untimely death of many innocent Nigerians... a top priority. Obijiofor in the study stated that "Akunyili performed her job with

unparalleled commitment and passion. She was no respecter of people of either high or low social status, or afraid to confront fake drugs business persons to the detriment of her life”.

Secondly, there was the late Brigadier-General Benjamin Adekunle, the civil war hero, who exploited his military expertise, bluntly, in rescuing Nigeria from the brink of the precipice and ensured that the country remained one indivisible entity (Adejumo in Omoniji et al. (2015).

Thirdly, there was the late Chief Anthony Enahoro, who initiated the motion for self-government in the then Western House of Assembly, which eventually led to Nigeria’s independence on 1st October, 1960. Considering His commitment and patriotism, Whiteman in the same study noted that as the chairman of National Democratic Coalition (NADECO), Late Chief Anthony Enahoro confronted the “discredited regime” of Ibrahim Babangida, over the annulment of June 12, 1993 presidential election, believed to have been won by late Chief Moshood Abiola, without compromise, and also fought the “Satanic” administration of Sani Abacha to a standstill.

Also, we have Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, the former chairman, Petroleum Revenue Task Force and also pioneer Executive chairman, Nigeria’s Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) who exhibited much patriotism in discharging his duty. The News Planetario in Omonijo et al. (2015) reported that one notable case was that of the then Inspector-General of the police force, Mr Tafa Balogun, who was convicted, jailed and made to return £150 million under a plea bargain.

In addition, we have Mr. Umoren Etim, an Immigration Officer in the border town in Maiduguri who turned down a bribe of \$450,000 and arrested Charles Taylor (Ogwuonuonu in Omoniji et al. (2015) despite the threat on his job.

Apart from these ones, another personality that showed patriotism in Nigeria that cannot be ignored was Dr Ameyo Adadevoh a physician at First Consultant Medical Centre Obalende, Lagos Nigeria. She is credited with having curbed a wide spread of the Ebola virus in Nigeria by placing the patient Patrick Sawyer, in quarantine despite pressures from the Liberian Government. She tested positive to Ebola disease and later died on 19th August 2014. Commenting on her sacrifice and patriotism, Dr Orenuga in (vanguard, 2014) testified that Dr Adadevoh was ‘the one that stopped late Sawyer when he became violent and was able to stop him. It is unfortunate we lost her. She is a heroine, even in death”.

It is also important to point out some other patriotic and notable Nigerians who received various national awards on the account of their patriotism in October, 2014 as reported in (Ebonylifetv, 2014). These include: Mr Imeh Usuah an honest taxi driver who returned a large amount of money to a customer in his taxi. He was awarded member of the Order of the Federal Republic (MFR); Solomon Dauda a hardworking traffic warden; Michael Onu Chief Steward in the Presidency who has served nine presidents; Pa Michael Akinkunmi the designer of the Nigerian flag who was conferred with the Officer of the Order of the Federal Republic (OFR) and placed on salary for life. The National Award were instituted in 1963 as a means of encouraging the spirit of nationalism and patriotism amongst Nigerians. However, it is important to note that given award to few Nigerians to encourage patriotism amongst the citizen is like a drop of water in an ocean which cannot guarantee the inculcation of such virtues which is very essential to national development, what is needed is a deliberate inculcation of such virtue through value education in social studies education in Nigeria.

What is value education?

Values education became a necessity as a result of so many social vices being exhibited by Nigerians. Some of these anti-social behaviour that manifest among Nigerians in the word of

Enu & Esu (2011), include “corruption, dishonesty, greed, violent crimes, lack of accountability, indiscipline, disrespect to constituted authorities, laziness, low moral courage among many others”. All of these are manifest as a result of wrong values imbibed by Nigerians. This is in agreement with Banks and Clegg in Fraenkel (1968), who opined that “the root of social and personal problems within modern society was value confusion”. It is obvious that the challenges bedeviling the nation is not just economic which can be addressed through economic transformation but that of reconstructing and rebuilding the society’s values system (Enu & Esu, 2011).

Values itself can be seen as a good or worthwhile concept, idea or thing that motivates relationships and binds individuals together within the framework of a society (kazi, 2007). This is similar to the definition given by Bodurin in Enu & Esu (2011) that “values are trait, practices, acts, ideals, beliefs, attitudes, and principles that a group or society considers to be of merit, worthwhile, dear, acceptable and right”. From the foregoing explanation, it is important to point out that for meaningful socio-civic living in the society, there must be total adherence to what the society considered to be worthwhile by all the people that resides in that society, otherwise that society will not be conducive for meaningful development which is a necessary condition for better quality of life for the citizens. Even though values differ between individuals, there are some core values in any society which are essential in inculcating patriotism among the citizens, these core values that we need to imbibe in our youth to promote human life and nation-building as identified by Acha, Kazi and Famwang, and Ezegebe in Kazi (2007) include:

- i. Everyone is his or her brother’s keeper,
- ii. Respect for elders and constituted authorities,
- iii. Freedom of choice,
- iv. Courage to speak the truth,
- v. Hospitality,
- vi. Extended family system,
- vii. Responsibility of bringing up children,
- viii. Chastity,
- ix. Sanctity of life,
- x. Recognition of the father as the head of the family.

Apart from these core values stated above, other modern values that we need to imbibe in our youth for national development as identified by the author include:

- i. Loyalty to Nigeria as a nation;
- ii. Willingness to live together as a people and not minding the divisive concepts like “indigenes”, “settlers”, “hosts”. “guests”, “immigrants”, “sons of the soil”, “daughters of the soil” to name a few which tend to tear the citizens apart;
- iii. Subjugation of local ethnic loyalty to those of the nation as a sovereign state;
- iv. Love of one’s country and rendering selfless service to it;
- v. Placing of the national well-being above personal gains;
- vi. Avoidance of various forms of corruption and examination malpractice;
- vii. Broadmindedness and tolerance with fellow citizens;

- viii. Rational utilization of both human and material resources;
- ix. Consideration for others;
- x. Cooperation with other citizens;
- xi. Change of attitudes from those of traditionalism to modernity, and paying of taxes to name among others.

Closely related to the core or general values stated above are the following dominant values which formed the core values upheld by a larger section of the Nigerian society as identified by Bolarin in Enu & Esu (2011), these are: Detesting laziness, dignity of labour, respect for parent/elders, hospitality, public spiritedness, respect for authority, hard-work, respect for sanctity of life, honesty and truthfulness.

Even though these values are considered to be germane and worthwhile for the development of the society, there is need to inculcate them into the younger members of the society through value education. It is the absence of these core values that can be said to be responsible for most of these social vices such as corruption, greed, dishonesty, mediocrity, intolerance, thuggery, violence and many others (Enu & Esu, 2011), hence the need for value education in Nigeria. Value education as defined by Robb (1998), is

an activity which can take place in any organisation during which people are assisted by others, who may be older, in authority or more experienced, to make explicit those values underlying their own behaviour, to assess the effectiveness of these values and associated behaviour for their own and others long term well-being and to reflect on and acquire other values and behaviour which they themselves realise are more effective for long term well-being of self and others.

In addition to the general definition of values education given above, DeNoble & Hogan, (2014) observed that values “education is used to influence student attitudes and behaviour for the better, or at least in line with what a society would consider appropriate and morally acceptable”.

Purpose of value education

The ultimate purpose of value education is to change behaviour for the enhanced well-being of all. In addition to this ultimate purpose, some other purposes of value education as cited in Robb (1988), are as follows:

To enhance people’s abilities to reflect intelligently on and understand the role of values in human life;

To become more consciously aware of their values, attitudes and feelings

To help people gain sensitivity to values and moral issues, and to provide opportunities for choosing between competing values and for exercising their capacity for moral judgement among others. However, value education is not without its own problems, as explained below:

Problems with value Education

It is important to point out that in as much as value is very important to be imbibed by Nigerian youths, there are some problems inherent in teaching values. Some of these problems as observed by Fraenkel, (1968) and kazi, (2007) are as follows:

Value is relative to individual in that what acts or ideas are intrinsically good or bad will be defined differently by different men at different times. Secondly, what is valued at one time by individual citizens may not be at another time; thirdly, different societies have different

values to things peculiar to their locations; there is always a change in value due to a prevailing circumstances in the community; and the greatest problem of value as observed by Kazi (2007) is that not all the citizens of a community or society can agree with any value or values and interpret it or them in the same way and at the same time.

Besides, Fraenkel (1968) in the same study cited above added that many teachers' regards student values as essentially private concerns that should not be discussed openly, and that parents and other forces in the community often resist having controversial issues discussed and values, of course involve controversy; also, some teachers believe that values must "be caught rather than taught", and question the probability of any program specifically designed for their development; some feel that any attempt on the part of teachers to influence or develop values in students smacks of totalitarianism. Despite all these problems in value, Kazi (2007) opined that:

we have to help young persons to: (a) understand the values and value-systems of our society; (b) learn the sources of some of our cherished values; (c) recognise and deal with value-components of civic and social issues; and (d) form their own value-systems on a national basis. (pp. 45)

It is on this basis that Social Studies Education was identified as a discipline that can effectively inculcate values among the learners. Lending credence to this fact, Fraenkel (1968) observed that:

Indications of value are suggested all the time in the Social Studies: in the problems that are chosen to be discussed, in the manner in which they are discussed, in the historical documents and events that are emphasized, as well as the leaders that are chosen to illustrate the important and the worthy and the unimportant and the unworthy in the affairs of man. (pp.2)

This implies that the essence of Social Studies education revolves around how to inculcate desirable values which are essential to nation-building. Adediran & Onifade, (2013) corroborate this when they opined that "Social Studies is a subject designed and evolved to foster in learners a better understanding of the cultural values that guides the interactions of man with his physical and social environment". In fact, looking at the three major educational objectives formulated by Taba and her associate in 1971, which provide the basis for developing the Social Studies curriculum as cited by Fraenkel (1968), you will discover that values is central to Social studies Education. These are to:

1. help students to develop a number of specified thinking skills,
2. help students acquire, understand, and use a selection of important ideas or elements of knowledge drawn from history and the social sciences (and related areas), and do so through the application of thinking skills on selected content materials,
3. help students to form a number of desired attitudes and values, using the above content and thinking skills as a means of developing these, and examine the attitudes and values which they and others already possess. It is important to note that the third objective place special emphasis upon helping students to develop their own values, and to understand and to analyse others value. Just as Dike in Enu and Esu (2011) asserted that "to prepare for life in a modern society, the citizens should be exposed to qualitative education and acquire good moral values to enable them create human society and to function effectively in the society", no subject area is best positioned to achieve these feat other than Social Studies Education, the broad nature of Social Studies makes it the most

appropriate subject in the school curriculum to meet the cultural values and moral goals of the society (Adediran & Onifade, 2013). Since there is no substitute to Social Studies in inculcating desirable values which would develop young people into citizens with integrity, moral courage, and people that are committed to the advancement of the nation by their action, there is need to highlight how to promote good values in Social studies.

How to promote good values through Social Studies Education

As cited earlier from Fraenkel that indication of values are suggested all the time in Social Studies, the authors opined that there should not be a separate class for teaching or inculcating values to the learners, rather, as each topic progresses and circumstances unfold in the class, lessons on values should be emphasised consciously to the learners. However, Social Studies teachers can use the following suggestions from Kazi, (2007) in developing or promoting values:

- (i) Daily life in the classroom or school where emphases are placed on consideration for others, freedom and equality; independence of thoughts, individual responsibility for one's action; dignity of individuals human beings; and cooperation with one another to achieve the general good of the group;
- (ii) The study of the history and development of Nigerian with emphasis on those areas that inspire the feeling of unity in diversity, civil war, reconstruction and reconciliation;
- (iii) The study of some heroes and heroines of Nigeria whose lives and lifestyles reflect general values worth emulation;
- (iv) The study of the laws, legal and justice systems of Nigeria;
- (v) Cross-cultural studies of the different ethnic groups in Nigeria illustrating their differences in values and the need for the maintenance of those values that are general which will bind all of them together
- (vi) Identifying and knowing the common values of Nigeria as defined and contained in the constitution of the land; courts decisions, and religious sects of the country;
- (vii) Listing the basic human rights as guaranteed to all citizens;
- (viii) Developing feelings of kinship towards human being everywhere;
- (ix) Making decisions that involve choices between competing values; and
- (x) Analysing the meaning of words or concepts in the Nigerian anthem; pledge of allegiance and preamble to the constitutions.

If Social Studies teachers place more emphasis on the value components of the subject area and utilise every situations within the process of teaching and learning in the classroom in addition to the above suggestions, the learners would be able to imbibe good and desirable values which will engender patriotism as well as national development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Nigeria as a country is currently faced with various challenges which ranges from insecurity, insurgency/ terrorism, militancy, kidnapping, corruption, indiscipline and other social vices which can generally be attributed to lack of patriotism due to wrong values system imbibed by the citizens; despite the fact that different strategies have been adopted or been adopted to address this challenge, patriotism seems to be a mirage in Nigeria as the personal interest of

an average Nigerian is always placed above national interest. In order to overcome this challenge, Nigeria need to replicate the few patriotic Nigerians through education. Since the school is a worthy platform for the restoration of our cherished values and at the same time used to change our orientation (Enu & Esu, 2011), Social Studies becomes the tool through which patriotism can be inculcated amongst the learners in order to build a viable nation that is devoid of ethnocentrism, greed, insecurity and other vices that we are currently faced with. The paper therefore recommends that the government should shift attention to education where the younger members of the society can imbibe good values which are essential for developing patriotism among the learners. Secondly, priority should be given to Social Studies education especially at the formative stage so that good values can be inculcated among the learners. In addition, since Social Studies in its nature is endowed with what it takes to inculcate good values which are necessities for patriotism, Social studies teachers should focus more on the affective component of the subject and not just the cognitive which is just for examination purpose.

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