

## THE ROLE OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN PROMOTING PEACE AND SECURITY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*This paper argues that peace and security education is a critical factor for sustainable peace, security and national development especially in a region prone to conflict and insecurity. This paper goes on to state that there is clear absence of peace in Nigeria manifesting in various forms of violence – physical, emotional, psychological, structural and cultural violence. This paper posits that education should create a movement of peace activists that are conscious to change the violent situation in Nigeria to culture of peace, characterized by respect for life, liberty, justice, tolerance, solidarity, human-rights and equality between men and women. Also some of the benefits of peace and security education were highlighted. This article hinge on descriptive survey design. About 120 (60 males and 60 females) principals were used from Ebonyi North Education zone Abakaliki. Two research questions and one null hypothesis were used. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. While T-test was used to test the hypothesis. Some recommendations were made such as: poverty which is the major challenge of development and which impacts on other forms of social ills can be eradicated through employment and support to citizens to engage in small scale businesses. The government should enhance the economic, social and political opportunities available to people to make them come out of poverty. This will evolve knowledge improvement, entrepreneurial development across all states of the federation, in organization of co-operatives, and associations.*

**Keywords: Social Studies, Peace and Security Education**

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### Introduction

Scholars like Arase and Iwuo, (2007) have rightly expressed the significance of peace and security of life and property as sine qua non; the pivot of human existence. There seems to be consensus

among scholars that, there is clear linkage between failure in governance, democratization and sustainable development on the other hand and in security and violent conflict on the other hand. (Adebayo, 2004) noted that

unfortunately, Nigeria is located in a region that is bedeviled with conflict and insecurity. It has been documented that West Africa is among the world's most unstable regions. In the last decade, Guinea, Bissau and Senegal, have been embroiled in an interconnected web of conflicts that have seen refugees, rebels and an arm spill across porous borders. Nigeria, Mali, and Niger, have been plagued by internal conflicts that have weakened their capacity to provide security to their citizens.

Democratic efforts have suffered setbacks in Burkina-Faso, Gambia, Guinea and Togo. Among the 15 states that make up ECOWAS today, Nigeria is among the poorest countries in the world. West Africa is also the most coup prone sub-region in Africa; more than half of a successful military coup d'état in Africa since independence, (41 out of about 75), have occurred in West Africa, a sub-region comprising less than a third of the continents states. Arase and Iwuofor (2007).

For the past two decades, conflicts have simmered across borders and Cote d'Ivoire, previously one of the West African's most stable states became embroiled in civil conflict in September 2002; West Africa remains the poorest sub-region, in the world. Democratic reversals have continued in Nigeria, the largest country in the sub-region; the crisis in the Niger Delta degenerated until 2009 that presidential amnesty was granted to the militants in the Niger Delta. Adebajo .A. (2004). Going by Gleditsch's checklist of what constitutes a comprehensive notion of peace and security. These include:

- ❖ Political Security: Freedom from domination and arbitrary government agencies.

- ❖ Economic and Social Security: Freedom from poverty and wants.
- ❖ Cultural Security: Freedom from ethnic and religion domination.
- ❖ Environmental Security: Freedom from environmental destruction and resource security.

In this context therefore, security can be said to imply the ability to protect the core values of a nation from internal and external threats that constitutes danger, to resources and survival of the country and its inhabitants. It is the totality of state security and human security that constitutes what is referred to as national security. National Security is a broad conception which emphasizes that, the state security of the state is not an end in itself; rather it is a means of ensuring the security of its people and other resources. Thus peace and national security are attained when the goals and objectives of state security are geared towards the protection of human security be it political, military, social and economic.

### **Conceptual Clarification**

#### **Social Studies**

Social Studies is a subject that studies man and his unending challenges of life; its contribution to peace and national security goes beyond state and regime survival. The emphasis is directed towards the security of human person, objective of which is to safeguard the vital core of all human lives from critical pervasive threats in such a way that is consistent with long term human fulfillment, (Alkire, 2001).

A fundamental objective of Social

studies education in Nigeria is the desire to integrate the diverse people (ethnic, religion, tribe, tongue etc) of Nigeria through the inculcation of a sense of national consciousness.

Social studies curriculum is therefore specifically prepared to take cognizance of vital changes and challenges in the environment and prepare the learners to meet such changes and challenges (Enoh, 2009). The discussed view above, shows that the educational reform and curriculum reviews currently going on, is a change in the right direction. Thus such curriculum contents otherwise referred to as "the new research frontiers" include: population/family/life-education, drug/aids education, peace studies and conflict resolution education, environmental education etc. these new research frontiers are fused into social studies curriculum, to promote social-learning and create peace and security awareness, zeroing into promotion of human security in Nigeria.

### **Peace**

Like most concepts in social discourse, there is no universal definition of peace. However, peace has been generally defined as the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffer and violence (David, 2006). But this concept has been criticized by many scholars for being inadequate for understanding the meaning and nature of peace (Ibeanu, 2008). Peace is defined as a process involving activities that are directly or indirectly linked to increasing development and reducing conflict, both within specific societies and in the wider international community (Ibeanu, 2006). He points out that there are philosophical, sociological and political

definitions of peace (Hornby, 1993) described it as state of freedom from war freedom from civil disorder. When a nation is living in peace, things will be working well in that nation. Many philosophers see peace as a natural, original, God-given state of human existence.

### **Security**

Like peace, the concept of security has undergone fundamental changes in the last two decades. Security has been defined as the condition or feeling of safety from harm or danger, the defence, protection and preservation of core values and the absence of threats to acquire value (David, 2006). But since the end of the cold war, there is the desirability to shift from a site and elite focused view of security to one that places the individual at the centre of the security equation thereby bringing in the concept of human security which combines elements of national security, economic development and basic human rights (Nicole and Fayemi, 2004). Security means developing that consciousness with a device or measure which provide safety and defence from dangers and attacks on people's lives and properties.

Security can also mean protection of lives and properties of a country, a person or group of persons, building etc against likely attack or destruction.

### **The Concept of Peace Education**

Peace education empowers learners with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to end and injustices and promotes a culture of peace. Human rights education, multicultural education, global citizenship education and conflict resolution education all fall under the scope of peace education and

provide different approaches to the field. Although peace education is highly contextual and often tailored to specific settings or regions, the goal is the same—peace no matter where you are:

There are key principles of peace education which includes:

- A learning environment where both teacher and students teach and learn from one another through equitable dialogue
  - Combining academic study with practical application towards societal transformation.
  - Analyzing issues in a holistic way that accounts for the past, present and future, and includes.
  - Promoting values such as compassion, equality, independence diversity, sustainability and non-violence.
- Kumar, D. (2010)

From the definition of peace and peace education above, peace can then be described as situation when there is order and tranquility between the ways of lives of people from different societies.

### **Peace and Security Education**

Peace and Security Education are a critical factor in producing sustainable peace. Peace and Security Education is a multi-disciplinary enterprise involving political science, sociology, philosophy, psychology, law, history, economics, international relations and development studies. Peace and Security education should challenge the dominant paradigm where decisions on peace and security are monopolized by the state and its institutions such as the arms industry, security agencies and politicians. It should create a movement of peace

activists that will help to create a culture of peace based on the universal values of respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights and equality between men and women ([www.cultureofpeace.ifo](http://www.cultureofpeace.ifo)).

The peace activists so created must be people with values of people. The values of peace include among other things respect for life, sharing with others, rejection of violence, sense of injustice, listening ability and solidarity. The peace activists must be sufficiently angry against injustice and be prepared to take action within organizational context.

Peace and Security Education can make a lot of contribution not just to avoiding violent conflict but in producing a culture of peace characterized by respect for the dignity of the human person, human rights and equality between women and men. It is therefore incontrovertible that peace and security education is a critical fact for sustainable peace and national development. Peace and security education can help to create enabling environment, the people, the organization and the action needed to bring about sustainable peace and development; and this could be achieved through the teaching and learning of Social studies education as contained in its numerous objectives.

### **Roles of Social Studies in Promoting Peace and Security in Nigeria**

Education in Nigeria is viewed as an instrument "per-excellence" for national growth and development. It is conveyed in the National Policy on Education (NPE 2013), as an instrument for change

for the nation as a whole. To end, the NPE (2013) has highlighted five national goals, namely: free and democratic society;

*A just and egalitarian society;*

*A united strong and self-reliant nation*

*A great and dynamic economy and a land*

*Full of bright opportunities for all citizens;*

Those noble goals cannot be achieved under a condition of insecurity. There is no gain saying that, the current state of peace and security in Nigeria is parlous. Social Studies education with its broad aims, objectives and content, has imperative roles to play in creating peace and security awareness among citizens as well as enhance the promotion of peace.

Accordingly, these aims and objectives include:

- ❖ To broaden and improve the basis of education system
- ❖ To encourage, students to develop the spirit of self-reliance and self-sacrifice
- ❖ To make Nigerian youths understand their environment and their relationship with relationship with their physical, economic, social, cultural world etc.
- ❖ To solve political, economic and social problems that faces the country. F. A. Akinlaye, (2003).

Social Studies by its nature is a course of study designed to eradicate or minimize the ills of the society in relation to the needs of the people, world-over and particularly in Nigeria. The major objectives stated above, have been to build virile nations devoid of racism, ethnicity and other vices that can hinder the growth of an atmosphere necessary for the development of citizens who are capable of effective participation in the affairs of the society.

As a core subject taught in schools from primary to Junior secondary schools levels, Social studies with its interdisciplinary nature, has the potential of "catching them young". In that, it prepares the young minds to be effective citizens of the country. The education reforms and curriculum contents earlier mentioned are areas through which Social studies education can promote peace and security awareness, particularly human security. Social studies education is designed to address issues that are today confronting the nation, such education should be actively packed to elicit active involvement and participation of the learner. In doing this, Social studies as a process is geared towards thorough planning of its objectives, contents, teaching strategies such as inquiry, discussion, role play, checklist, questions and evaluation and so that, the outcome of its existence in the school curricula,

can be worthwhile.

The participative consciousness to Social studies teaching spills into activists, issues and trends in one's socio-political environment, thereby making one to contribute directly or indirectly to national peace and security development. Its inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary approach takes cognizance of vital changes and challenges in the environment and prepares the learners to meet such changes and challenges (Enoch, 2009).

Social Studies Education desires every responsible citizen to support the country's most important ideal, the common good which is the general welfare of all individuals and groups within the community. The common good is supported when all citizens become aware that the meaning and purpose of Social studies education in the society, is the intellectual and ethical development of youngsters who will eventually assume responsible adult roles in the society.

**Purpose of the study is to:**

1. Find out the topics fused into social study curriculum that can promote peace and security education.
2. Identify the values contained in the social study curriculum that will promote peace and security education.

Research questions:

1. What are the topics fused into social study curriculum that can promote peace and security education?
2. What are the values that are contained in social study that can promote peace and security education?

**Research Hypothesis:**

**HO:1**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female secondary school principals on the values in social study that can promote peace and security education.

**Methodology:**

The descriptive survey design was used to; with 120 (60 males and 60 females) principals drawn from Abakaliki Education Zone. The data was collected using questionnaire while mean and standard deviation was for the analysis. The mean of 2.50 showed acceptance of the view expressed while mean of below 2.50 showed rejection.

**Results.**

Results of the analyzed data was presented in the table below according to the research questions.

**Research question 1:**

What are the topics fused into social study curriculum that can promote peace and security education?

**Table1:** Mean and Standard deviation of male and female principals on the topics fused into social studies

S/N	Topics fused into social studies that can promote peace and security education	Male Principals(60)		Female Principals (60)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Peace education/study	2.56	1.28	3.10	1.46
2	Conflict resolution	2.61	1.32	2.66	1.30
3	Family life education	3.17	1.42	2.76	1.29
4	Population study	3.46	1.44	3.13	1.40
5	Drug abuse and education	2.76	1.29	2.50	1.63
6	Environmental education	3.12	1.40	2.75	1.81
7	Government and leadership	2.64	1.56	2.56	1.81
8	Intra and inter personal relation	2.51	1.61	3.48	3.46
9	Fundamental human rights	2.81	1.77	2.76	1.29
10	Trade/Commerce	3.42	1.48	2.84	1.74

The data above revealed that the respondents were unanimous in their agreements on topics fused into social study that can promote peace and security education.

**Research question2:**

What are the values contained in social study that can promote and security education?

**Table 2:** Mean and Standard deviation of male and female principals on the values contained in social study that can promote peace and security education.

S/N	Topics fused into social studies that can promote peace and security education.	Male Principals (60)		Female Principals (60)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Non-violent approach to issues	3.17	1.42	2.76	1.29
2	Cooperation and service to the society/nation	3.46	1.44	3.13	1.40
3	Human rights	2.76	1.29	2.50	1.63
4	Environmental education	3.12	1.40	2.75	1.81
5	Government and leadership	2.64	1.56	2.56	1.81
6	Intra and inter personal relation	2.51	1.61	3.48	3.46
7	Fundamental human rights	2.81	1.77	2.76	1.29
8	Trade/Commerce	3.42	1.48	2.84	1.74

Table 2 also showed an overwhelming acceptance of those values as contained in social study that will promote peace and security education in Nigeria with grand mean of 3.55 and standard deviation of 1.34 for male principals and 2.75 with standard deviation of 1.50 for female principals.

**Hypothesis 1:**

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the values contained in social studies.

**Table 3: t-test analysis of mean scores of males and female principals**

Respondents	No	Mean	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Dec.
Male Principals	60	3.55	1.34	118	1.88	1.98	Ho accepted
Female Principal	60	2.75	1.50.				

The data in table three above showed that the calculated values is 1.88 which is less than the critical value of 1.98. Hence, hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the value contained in social study that can promote peace and security education is upheld.

lays less emphasis on cognitive learning promotes the development of high social, emotional, moral, and humanistic standards among our youths. Anti-social tendencies and other behavioral problems are reduced to the barest minimum while positive concepts or qualities are imparted to the youths.

**Discussion:**

The result from table 1 showed that social study is actually a tool for promoting peace and security education because the principals critically viewed those topics fused into social study curriculum content as very vital for the peace and security education. On the other hand, result of table 2 analysis revealed that the values contained in the social studies are capable of promoting peace and security in the nation's secondary schools.

These findings are in agreement with Ibeanu (2006), who stated that Infusing peace concept such as the right attitudes, values and behavioral skills into the school curriculum, will help bring up well-adjusted youth, and renewed interest to develop peace related discipline leads to responsible youths. He further stated that Peace education which

Equally peace Education brings about contentment, mutual cooperation and a life devoid of conflict. In our school it can

- Promote a more humanistic management approach and improve human relations between teacher and student, student and student, teacher and teacher.
- Help develop good attitudes in student and teachers as well as cooperation and mutual respect.
- Help healthy emotional development in students and facilitate socialization through participation in interactive and cooperative learning activities.
- Improve students' discipline, moral behavior and develop creativity both in students and teachers.

- Improve standard of quality teaching and learning (source: education for conflict resolution project, National Institute of Education, Sir Lanka).

Similarly, the findings are in line with Murithl (2001) who describes peace education as a central pillar which improves human relations in the family, schools, work place, countries and across borders Deveci, Yilmaz and Kardag, (2008) who asserted that peace education in the classroom aims at equipping students with the necessary knowledge and attitude through respectful, tolerant, participatory and cooperative technique and methods. Peace education encourages students to shoulder their own responsibility. It is an opportunity to improve the social well-being and responsibilities of both teachers and students. Morton, 2007 believes that peace education builds real self-learning and destroys cultural stereotypes which prevent the development of one's perspective beliefs and assumptions.

### **Conclusion**

As a subject content designed to inculcate work ethics, dedication, honesty, national ideas and values as well as decision-making processes and problem solving: Social studies should be given a compulsory status in the senior secondary level, considering the richness of its content, aims, objectives, methods and evaluation techniques, to help address issues that are inimical to peace and security. An effective Social studies teacher should employ all the above mentioned components enhance the promotion of peace and security. It has been affirmed that only effective and productive citizens, who are products of

Social studies education, would contribute to peace and security development in Nigerian.

### **Recommendation**

The authors therefore recommends that social study should be made a compulsory subject in both SSCE and NECO. Also government at all levels should show commitment and adopt the research report as a ready tool for the teaching of peace education in schools and in the larger society. Workshops/seminars should also be organized in this regard.

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