

**SECURITY EDUCATION: SOCIAL STUDIES'  
RESPONSE TO A SOCIO-POLITICAL  
CHALLENGE IN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

Insecurity is a global phenomenon for which nations have turned to the education sector for solution. The Nigerian government, in response to this socio-political challenge, has developed the Security Education Curriculum for the three levels of its basic education programme and is depending on Social Studies teachers and experts to implement the curriculum. This paper notes the three key challenges that this new mandate will pose to these teachers and experts as they respond to this task. This includes a conceptualization of Security Education, the preparation of pre-service and in-service teachers, and the need for teacher education institutions to update their programmes to tackle the challenge of insecurity. The paper, amongst others, recommended that Social Studies Association of Nigeria (SOSAN) should provide a leadership role in the revision of the curricula for Social Studies teacher education programmes in the country and in the development of retraining packages, Mandatory Continuous Professional Development (MCPD) programmes for teachers, and the development

of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in security education (with emergency management and disaster risk reduction education)

Key Words: Security Education, Homeland Security, Security, Education, Social Studies Teacher Education

### Introduction

One of the daunting socio-political challenges of Nigeria as nation at centenary is insecurity. The country, like many nations is faced by a plethora of security challenges. The global nature of insecurity has been underscored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2002), when it noted that the past century has witnessed the most devastating wars in history and an exponential growth in violence between individuals, including youths at school. Unfortunately, despite conflict resolution efforts of international organizations like the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and military interventions, several nations are still experiencing different forms of insecurity.

In Nigeria, there are several internal conflicts leading to insecurity in some parts of the country. The Niger-Delta struggle for resource control, Jos crisis, numerous inter and intra communal crises, youth restiveness, various political crises, the farmers-Fulani herdsman crises, and recently the Boko Haram insurgency are the greatest security challenge since the country returned to democratic governance. The security situation is made worse by armed banditry, different dimensions of violence, terrorism, hostage taking, cultism and the like.

The effect of insecurity on national economy has been grave as lives have been lost, public utilities are destroyed, serious economic losses by individuals, corporate organizations and government; decline in the spate of foreign investments, destruction of property, shutting down or relocation of businesses, human capital flight, and diversion of huge public funds to restore peace in some areas, amongst others. Perhaps the most devastating effect is the general feeling of insecurity or psychological trauma experienced by citizens in some

parts of the country.

In several countries, youths play prominent role or are used to perpetrate and perpetuate these crises. Often, with little or no information, they are misled into triggering, escalating and sustaining these crises. Citizens of many countries are also ill-prepared to manage security situations. It is in this light that the United Nations dedicated 2001 to 2010 as the decade for the promotion of peace and non-violence for children and young adults of the world. The General Assembly of the United Nations, thereafter went on to invite Member States to take necessary steps to ensure that the practice of peace and non-violence, is taught at all levels in their societies, including in educational institutions (Muller, 2002). Countries are now turning to education for solution to the problem of insecurity. As Benavot (2002) noted,

Education has become a universal cure-all, an elixir that, if taken in regular doses according to standardized prescriptions, is hoped to solve a multitude of national woes and societal challenges .... For international educational organizations, national ministries of education, policy analysts and educational experts, schooling has come to be seen as the preferred solution for a host of social problems. (p.52)

The revision or innovation of school curriculum has become a veritable strategy to prepare individuals to manage themselves and their immediate environment in times of insecurity and to identify threats to security. Social Studies is the subject discipline that often accommodates such curricula enrichments because it is one school subject that conveniently deals with emerging issues in society. Tyler (1949) and Taba (1962) had earlier referred to these emergent issues as issues of contemporary life. In Nigeria, such emergent issues as voting and electoral issues, road traffic accidents, traffic regulations, human trafficking, drug abuse, responsible parenthood, family life issues, negative behaviour, popular participation and other contemporary life issues are now included in Social Studies. The opportunity to include security education came during the Presidential Summit on Education in 2011. One of the outcomes was the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the National Policy on Education 2013, in which the basic and post basic education curricula were restructured.

There was a reduction in the number of subjects offered at the basic education level in the National Policy on Education 2013. Lower basic level now has six (6) compulsory subjects and one (1) optional subject; middle basic level has eight (8) compulsory subjects and one (1) optional subject; while the upper basic education level has nine (9) compulsory subjects and one (1) optional subject. To achieve this, some subjects were collapsed as themes and given a new nomenclature. The "new" subjects are Basic Science and Technology, with Basic Science, Basic Technology, Physical and Health Education, and Information Technology as themes; Religion and National Values, with Christian Religious Studies, Islamic Studies, Social Studies, Civic Education, and Security Education as themes; and Pre-Vocational Studies, with Home Economics and Agriculture as themes.

National Values would be taught by Social Studies graduates/teachers. In other words, these teachers would teach Social Studies, Civic Education and Security Education. Security Education is therefore, an innovation in the new 2013 National Policy on Education. A look at the Social Studies teacher education curricula for Colleges of Education and Universities in Nigeria shows that teacher trainees do not have exposure to Security Education courses. The central problem of curriculum study is the gap between our ideas and aspirations and our attempts to operationalize them (Stenhouse, 1975). There are three major issues before Social Studies experts and the Social Studies Association of Nigeria (SOSAN) as the country confronts several security issues facing it. One is how to conceptualize security education. The second is how pre-service and in-service social studies teachers would be prepared for the effective implementation of the new Security Education Curriculum in Nigeria? The third challenge is how tertiary institutions in the country will update their programmes to produce a crop of graduates who will be active participants in the quest to solving the myriad security issues in the country? This paper seeks to address these challenges. But what is Security Education?

### Concept of Security Education

According to Edozie (2014), Security Education may be seen as that cooperative, dynamic and lifelong process through which a society generates knowledge, values and skills for its survival, sustenance,

enlightenment and empowerment against all forms of danger and threats to its wellbeing and coexistence. There are two important terms in the conceptualization of Security Education and these are security and education. A clarification of these terms is germane to the understanding of the concept of Security Education. What then is security and what is education?

Security is an important concept that has received far less scholarly attention than it deserves (Baldwin, 1997; Buzan, 1991; Smoke, 1975). Perhaps, this is why Digeser (1994) described it as a 'neglected concept'. Literature shows that there are four perspectives of security: The military or national security perspective, the cooperative or inter-national security perspective, the global security perspective and the comprehensive or human security perspective.

During the Cold War years, the term security was defined from the military perspective where it was seen as the process and act of effective protection of lives and property in a country. In other words, security was seen from the perspective of national security and was defined as a protective condition which statesmen either try to acquire, or preserve, in order to guard the various components of their polities from either external or internal threats (Baldwin, 1997). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1994) defined national security as security of territory from external aggression, or as protection of national interests in foreign policy, or as global security from the threat of nuclear holocaust. This has been referred to as the classical formulation which sees security as how states use force to manage threats to their territorial integrity, their autonomy, and their domestic political order, primarily from other states. Hence, Baldwin's (1997) notion that security studies during this time was composed mostly of scholars interested in military statecraft.

With the end of the Cold War, the concept of security came under increasing scrutiny from scholars and practitioners alike. There has, therefore, been an extension of this military notion of security to include other notions of security. Nolan (1994) introduced the notion of cooperative security which emphasizes the interdependence of a cluster of nations to protect themselves from threat from either a nation or group of nations. Echeverri (2010) referred to this notion of cooperative security as the international relations theory of

security. Bajpai (2000) faulted these notions as being restricted to the protection and welfare of the state. In his opinion, what is central - or should be central - is the protection and welfare of the individual citizen or human being. To him, therefore, a conception of security that is centred above all on the sanctity of the individual may be called human security.

Another extension of the notion of security was provided in the Report of Stockholm Initiative on Global Security and Governance (1995) which underscored the fact that the concept of global security must be broadened from the traditional focus on the security of states to include the security of people and the security of the planet. This notion had been earlier crystallized by the UNDP Report of 1994 which brought the values dimension to security. The Report lists seven specific values or categories of human security: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security. The Report went further to define these as follows: Economic security refers to an individual's enjoyment of a basic income, either through gainful employment or from a social safety net. Food security refers to an individual's access to food via his or her assets, employment, or income. Health security refers to an individual's freedom from various diseases and debilitating illnesses and his or her access to health care. Environmental security refers to the integrity of land, air and water, which make human habitation possible. Personal security refers to an individual's freedom from crime and violence, especially women and children who are more vulnerable. Community security refers to cultural dignity and to inter-community peace within which an individual lives and grows. Finally, political security refers to protection against human rights violations.

Similarly, Alagappa (1998) introduced the notion of comprehensive security which sees threats to territorial integrity and political order as not just coming from other states but from non-state actors and even natural catastrophes. These non-state actors may include those who control or manipulate the economy of nations, scientists experimenting on chemical and biological warfare, terrorists and ethnic militias, some persons who intellectually manipulate a section all the entirety of a nation against governments.

Francis (2012) aptly summed up the meaning of security thus: Security is generally about the condition of feeling safe from harm or danger, the defense, protection and preservation of core values, and the absence of threats to acquire values. Security is about survival and conditions of human existence.

Unlike security, the conceptualization of education has received considerable attention in the scholarly literature. Therefore, to build the concept of security education, a number of definitions of education would be given. According to Good (1973) education is the aggregate of all the processes by means of which a person develops abilities, skill and other forms of behavior which are of value in the society he lives. Another important definition of education is that given by Habte and Wagaw (1993). To them, education is the mechanism by which a society generates knowledge necessary for its survival and sustenance and transmits this from one generation to another. Yet another definition is that given by Dave and Rajput (1999) who defined education as a process of human enlightenment and empowerment for the achievement of a better and higher quality of life. To Aigbomian and Iyamu (2001), it is the process by means of which an individual is taught what is desirable in the society. Obanya (2004) defined education as the inter-generational transmission of cultural heritage. A number of deductions may be made from these and other definitions. The first is that education is a lifelong process that spans through life. It has to do with transmission of knowledge, values, skills and other forms of behavior from one generation to another. Finally, it predisposes the survival and sustenance of society.

What then is Security Education? This term is hardly defined in literature. Where materials are available, they are used in the sense of Information Technology (IT). For example, the CISCO Security Center (2013) defined security education program as essentially an internal marketing campaign to raise awareness about security risks and promote corresponding good practices across the organization. Following different episodes of shooting in schools in the US and parts of Europe, security awareness training has been emphasized in schools rather than a clear curriculum. In the United States of America, Homeland Security has been mounted as a programme in some universities at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Reese

(2012) and Kahan (2013) have also reported the lack of definition of homeland security. A concise definition of Security Education as an area of study is therefore lacking.

A synthetic definition was proposed by Edozie (2014) after an extensive review of the literature. To him, Security Education may be seen as that cooperative, dynamic and lifelong process through which a society generates knowledge, values and skills for its survival, sustenance, enlightenment and empowerment against all forms of danger and threats to its wellbeing and coexistence. That this process is cooperative shows the complementary role of security education. Aside the formal school system, its content may be learnt personally, or given by different institutions of society and the neighborhood. That it is dynamic shows its responsive nature. This implies that its content and methods can change over time as security challenges change. Again, that it is a lifelong process shows that it builds security consciousness and strategies in the individual all through his/her lifetime. In the context of this study, however, security education is that theme in Nigeria's National Values Curriculum that is aimed at creating in learners the awareness of and appropriate behaviour against threats to their personal and neighbourhood wellbeing and safety.

### Social Studies Teacher Preparation for Security Education

Though teachers are not the only factor in the implementation of curricula innovations, literature is replete with the fact that they are a force that cannot be ignored if an innovation must succeed. Bishop (1985) and McGeown (1980) have also underscored the fact that the disposition and attitude of teachers to any innovation ultimately determines its success or failure. Innovation implementation must take cognizance of teachers because they operationalize the innovation at the classroom level (Waugh & Punch, 1985). Invariably, teachers may or may not support an innovation as conflicting findings exist in literature (Blakemore & Cooksey, 1981; Urevbu, 1997).

In Sierra Leone, the introduction of Social Studies in the school curricula was met with resistance by teachers (Adams, 1970). In his study, he found that the resistance emanated from the imposition of the curriculum without training and adequate preparation to



implement the innovation. Similarly in Nigeria, teachers' negative attitude and resistance to curricula innovation have also been documented in literature. Studies on the introduction of sex education and family planning in different parts of Nigeria by Esen (1984) and Olayinka (1981) have pointed to nervous and negative reactions to the idea of teaching sex education and family planning to adolescents in schools. The major reason usually adduced for this that these will create curiosity, which may lead to experimentation, sexual promiscuity and general moral decay among youths. Contrary to the above, in Nigeria Olaogun (1991) found that teachers were favorably disposed to the new national JSS Social Studies curriculum.

The democratization of South Africa in 1994 changed virtually everything that needed change as far as education was concerned, especially, the school curriculum. The new Curriculum 2005 developed in the later part of the 1990s responded to this change. This was almost crippled by teachers, especially the inadequately prepared black teachers (Robinson, 2002).

Based on these conflicting reports about teachers response to curricula innovation in developing countries, new policies now thread gently, ensuring that provision is made for teachers (Ukaegbu, 1986). This was the case in Mauritania, Uganda, Benin, Burundi and Mali (Weva. 2003) where teachers were not only carried along in the innovation planning but also trained to implement the curricula innovation. Training remains an integral part of curricula reforms and if it is ignored, resistance and negative disposition of teachers would be inevitable.

As Chapman (1997) pointed out, there may be very good reasons why teachers do not implement particular reforms in practice: they may not agree that the problem that the reform is designed to address is in fact a problem or the problem may run counter to their beliefs. Beyond teachers' overall dispositions to innovation is the question Maduwesi (2001) posed: are teachers coping with emergent curriculum issues? According to her, the issue of curriculum overload, overcrowded school timetables, ever-growing variety of subject matter contents, skills, techniques, machinery and equipment, ICT and so on for which teachers are ill-prepared, integration and infusion

of global issues and concerns are some of the emergent curriculum issues with which teachers are contending.

If the introduction of Security Education at different levels of education in Nigeria must succeed, there are lessons to learn from the reported studies and past experiences shared so far. Since teacher preparation at pre-service and in-service levels and capacity building are vital prerequisites for innovation implementation, it becomes imperative to take a look at how tertiary institutions can help in preparing teachers and in generalizing Security Education through its numerous programmes.

For pre-service Social Studies teachers, a review of curriculum at the tertiary level is inevitable. What form will this take? Should aspects of Security Education be infused into the content of existing courses or should new courses be mounted altogether? If the infusion option is taken, will the faculty guarantee the coverage of the new content? If the new course option is preferred, how will these new courses be derived? Does the faculty have the capacity for implementation of the new Security Education courses? Who will lead this curricular revision project?

We start with the last question. It is our position in this paper that SOSAN, as a curriculum development agent will arise to its responsibility in taking the needed leadership position in this project. SOSAN is an academic forum for Social Studies experts, specialists, graduates, and practitioners at all levels of education in Nigeria and should be able to advance solutions to the challenges facing the field. A first step is that the content, pedagogical and technological areas of Security Education in the basic education curriculum be critically looked at. This should be followed by a full assessment of the security situation in and outside Nigeria, thus providing a global picture of the issue of insecurity. The issue curricular linkages with existing and emergent fields must also be addressed. For example, emergency management and disaster risk education and refugee education are now being emphasized by some nations and the United Nations. The idea here is to provide a connect between the basic education curriculum and the curriculum of Social Studies teacher education programmes of Universities and Colleges of Education on one hand, and with global trends and future security challenges on the other

hand.

After these have been done, the issue of infusion and separate course approaches would be addressed. Infusion is used here to mean the addition of relevant aspects of security content to existing Social Studies courses. The separate course approach entails mounting completely new courses on aspects of security education content for pre-service social studies teachers. Both approaches have implications for credit load and personnel. Inter-agency linkages may also be required with the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), National Universities Commission (NUC), National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) and relevant security agencies.

For in-service Social Studies teachers, capacity building workshops would be a veritable option backed by well funded Mandatory Continuous Professional Development (MCPD) programmes in Security Education. The obvious reason for this is that workshop duration is too short to cover the diverse contents of security education. Also, the dynamic nature of Security Education could be managed by a responsive MCPD programme in Security Education. The issue is do we have a data of Social Studies teachers in the country? How will the training needs analysis (TNA) be supported by appropriate agencies? Will SOSAN position itself to take leadership in this project?

Repositioning Teacher Education Institutions for Security Education

One of the major challenges of Social Studies in Nigeria is the perception that everyone can teach the subject. Consequently, an overwhelming number of teachers who teach the subject are *prima facie* unqualified. An unqualified Social Studies teacher is one who does not hold a certificate or a degree in Social Studies Education but finds him/herself teaching the subject at any level. Such teachers may show manifest defects in constructs, incompetence in pedagogy and deficiencies in some content areas. The question is what should be done build their capacities? Aside joining qualified Social Studies teachers in relevant workshops and MCPD programmes, recertification programmes may be organized for them. Another option is to

generalize Security Education for all teacher trainees.

The generalization of Security Education may take three approaches across different programmes of teacher education programmes in Nigeria. The first, approach is to mount it as a General Studies Course. This is intended to create security awareness and sensitization in students across all disciplines. The challenge with this approach is that course allocation may be contested by academic departments and personnel. Also students' engagement and content delivery may not be concentrated enough to achieve the minimum critical mass.

The second approach is to mount a distinct Security Education (with Emergency and Disaster Risk Reduction Education) programme at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. As stated earlier this approach is already being adopted in the United States. The challenge being faced in the USA is how to develop and standardize the Homeland Security Education Curriculum at these levels (Cutrer, 2012; Kiltz, 2012; Ramsay, 2013; Ramsay, Cutrer & Raffel, 2010; Wallace, McLean, Parrish, Soppitt, & Silander, 2012; Ramirez & Rioux, 2012; Winegar, 2008). The approach is like putting the horse before the cart – a model that helps to produce a pool of qualified personnel to drive the programme. Unfortunately, the Nigerian approach is like putting the cart before the horse – the programme was mounted before a consideration was given to the training of personnel.

The third approach is the interdisciplinary approach which requires a comprehensive view of security from several disciplinary perspectives. Here, different disciplines which lay claim to specified aspects of security education content may interface with each other for the purpose of gaining deeper insights, concepts, theories and methods of studying the phenomenon of security. This approach would work well if a Centre is established in institutions. Such Centres should be manned by a board drawn from affected disciplines. From the perspective of curriculum development, this approach manifestly shows that Security Education is an integrated field.

## Conclusion

There is no doubt that in the last 100 years, Nigeria as a nation has been faced by several socio-political challenges. One of such challenges

is that of insecurity. With the turning to the education sector for sustainable solution, Social Studies Education has been thrust with the responsibility of responding to the challenge. By its integrated and responsive nature, Social Studies Education has become a preferred programme to adequately implement the Security Education Curriculum at the basic education level in Nigeria.

To guarantee effective implementation, the need for SOSAN to take up the needed leadership role has been underscored. In particular, a review of Social Studies teacher education curricula in Universities and Colleges of Education has been suggested to prepare pre-service teachers to implement the new curriculum. For in-service teachers, capacity building workshops and MCPD programmes have been proposed. To generally sensitize all teacher trainees, a General Studies Course on security education (with emergency management and disaster risk management education) has also been proposed. Tertiary institutions should not only mount programmes in Security Education but should also give consideration to the establishment of a Centre for Security Education and Emergency/Disaster Risk Reduction Management.

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