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SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES THROUGH CIVIC EDUCATION (NIGERIA PERSPECTIVE)

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Introduction

Nigeria is an oil-rich African country the sixth largest oil producer in the world. In spite of this however, Nigeria's image has been battered for such reasons as corruption, 419, internet-related crimes, etc. Nigeria for example, is one of the most corrupt country in the world and also among the poorest countries in the world.

The other reasons why Nigeria's brand was eroded and needs to be transformed apart from bribery and corruption include: unemployment, poor infrastructural development, over dependence on the oil sector, poor work ethics, increasing citizens dissatisfaction and disaffection with the government, political structures and politicians, corporate and large-scale organizational irresponsibility, inadequate funding of educational,'

Abstract

The development of any nation requires the contribution of its members irrespective of their level. Thus, this paper examines civic education as an instrument for socio-economic transformation in Nigeria. The concept of civic education, socio-economic transformation and the challenge facing the transformation of Nigeria were discussed here. Qualitative document analyses were used as a discipline subject. Recommendations were made that civic education curriculum should encourage some socio-economic skills like independence, honesty, national consciousness, self reliance, self confidence and initiative, resourcefulness for socio-economic transformation. Workshops and seminars should be organized in schools through civic education to establish good accepted norms and

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Values. Students should try and practice the value that they are exposed to through civic education. The paper concluded that, students should be taught about citizenship, civic responsibility, value education and its practices. This will enable them to be good citizens that will contribute towards the transformation of the country through their knowledge on skills, moral values and reasonable judgment. Hence, civic education helps in citizenship training that enhances national development. Also government should be able to improve the nation and transform each sector by establishing the relationship between governance and economic growth.

Keywords: Socio-Economic, Transformation, Civic Education, Third World Country, Citizenship.

health and other key sectors, neglect of the agricultural and non-oil productive/ manufacturing sectors, continued manufacture of poor quality, fake sub-standard goods and services, over dependence on imported goods, poorly regulated capital and financial markets, tribal, ethnic and religious squabbles, homelessness, poverty, hunger, poor maintenance culture, poor planning, lack of security, disregard for human life and property, etc. (Mohammed, 2011). A developing country like Nigeria is country that is poor so to say in terms of environmental management, and whose citizens are mostly agriculturally oriented; want to become advanced socially and economically (Wikipedia, 2013).

For O'Tudor (2009), in the wake of issues of cybercrimes, drug and human trafficking, piracy, money laundering, embezzlement and all forms of corruption like electoral fraud that have marred our national identity, we can not fault the idea of transforming. All these and a lot more have negatively affected the image of Nigeria not only internationally but from within itself by its own very citizens.

Transformation involves major changes and total development in social structure, popular attitudes and national institutions, as well as acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the total eradication of absolute poverty, healthy competition among nations are necessary. Nigeria has the opportunity to create conducive atmosphere for investors and tourists and also guarantee peace and stability of investment, as well as

security of life and value for money that will attract tourists and foreign investments. By so doing, positive transformation agenda is sure.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Civic Education: Civic Education is concerned with the development of values, social norms, skills and democratic ideas in citizens. According to Utulu (2011), Civic Education becomes very relevant since it essentially seeks to introduce learners to the process of democratic socialization by promoting support for democratic behaviours and values among citizens. Similarly, Lawal (2011), sees Civic Education as the educative means in a sovereign state whereby the citizens or individuals become socially and politically aware of their environment, as they are socially integrated into the social milieu, acquire social skills and competence, become social responsible for maximum productivity and development, all in the interest of the state. According to Danladi (2011), Civic Education is about individuals making a difference by impacting on their community or nation and generation for the resolution of social problems.

The name “Civic Education” varies from one society to another, such as Citizenship Education (Britain), Civic Education and society justice (France) or Civic, society and political education (Ireland), but they all emphasizes the making of active, reflective, and constructive citizens. In liberal democracies, the concept of citizenship is the core element of the political system (Usman, 2011). In the context of Nigeria, Civic Education was first introduced by the British Colonists to teach “native” the virtues of good citizenship, particularly, the values of obedience, humanity and submission to constituted authority.

Citizenship: This refers to a legal right bestowed on a person that qualify him/her to be a member of a community or a country who is ready to contribute and participate in any aspect that will bring changes economically, socially, educationally, politically for the development that has to do with increase skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self discipline about total transformation in lives and day to day activities of citizens.

Social-Economic Transformation: Refers to the development of group of individuals in the society to acquire certain skills, abilities, accepted norms and values that will bring major changes in day to day activities, to minimize or stop unemployment, poor quality education through Civic Education.

Transformation connotes improvement and positive change in every aspect of the nation including the character of citizens involve.

Third World Country: Third world country or developing nation is a less developed nation with a low living standard, under developed in terms of industrial base and low human development index (HDI) compare to other countries. These countries have not achieved any significant degree of industrialization relative to their populations, human development, effective health care services and low per capital income. Other features include limited or no education, substantial dependence on agricultural produce with low productivity, high level of unemployment, dualistic economic and technological backwardness (Kintu, 2008). Wikipedia (2012), identified other features as very high rate of population, shorter life span of 51 years as compared with 75 years in developed countries, which translates to lesser percentage of the population being available for labour activities. Despite these consequences, they are able to satisfy their basic need, working for a long hours and earning a little. This is as a result of inadequate opportunities, skills, tools and machines and the use of primitive technology, poor organization and limited physical and human capital inputs.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The methodology used in this paper is qualitative document analysis method. As a result of that the data were derived from the research and analysis of scholars, analyst and practitioners, government documents and recent newspaper and journal articles. This is to say that the primary method of study was an extensive review of available literature for descriptive analysis of the problems facing the Nigerian economy and the role of Civic Education as a way forward. The sources of information were carefully evaluated and analyzed to determine their veracity.

Civic Education as an Instrument For Socio-Economic Transformation

There is no society that is static, and in view of the development we must be gearing towards a state of economic liberation, social re-engineering and political stability. Orungbemi (2010), Medunoye (2008) also saw development of man in the unfolding and full realization of his creative potential, which enabling him to improve his material conditions of living through the use of resources available to him. The human capacity to build, to

decide what to accomplish in order to live successfully is an ultimate task in achieving the socio-economic transformation. The determination in achieving this task is purely on discipline, seriousness and focus that give the direction in achieving the task. Cletus (2011) notes that success in achieving this noble goal will depend mostly on the partnership between the governments of developed and developing countries while the attainment will also require good will and active participation on the part of the private sector and non-governmental organization. Despite the abundant human and natural resources in Nigeria there is prevailing poverty. Only few people are living in luxury while the majority of the citizens living below poverty level. Most of the developing world's have the natural resources which are exported at a cheaper rate, the third world countries are been characterized with technological backwardness, rapidly growing population, political instability, relies much on imported materials and widespread illiteracy.

According to Seers (1971) National development can be defined as a process of solving the problem of unemployment and poverty in a given state. To solve the problem of poverty and inequality, people must possess skills, attitudes, norms and values that would enable them exploit the environment for their benefits. Consequently, discipline, responsibility and material well being of members of the state that brings about total transformation in the lives and activities of the citizens. Civic Education could help in instilling democratic values on the citizens. Accordingly, Mike (2011) opines that Civic Education have the aim of promoting competence of the citizens. Supporting this view Mbaba and Omabe (2012) opined that Civic Education is a vehicle through which desired culture, values and norms of the society are being inculcated to its young ones. Hence Civic Education as an agent of citizenship training could help impact on the youth democratic values like one man one vote, non-violation of election rules, recognizing opposition, voting rationally, defending the nation, participating in election and above all respect to the rule of law and constituted authorities. These when practiced could lead to national development.

More still, Civic Education enhances citizens' knowledge of their fundamental Human Rights and the need to respect the rights of others. The study of Civic Education enables the citizens to internalize the fundamental human rights and respect same towards a better society. The knowledge of rights, duties and obligations among the students (citizens) may help in producing

functional and informed citizens that may contribute to national development (Okeke, 2013).

Nonetheless, Civic Education helps in social reconstruction of the citizens for national development. The dynamic nature of Civic Education lies fundamentally in its utilitarian values for social reconstruction (Tijani, Abdulgaffar & Musa, 2013). According to Imah-Obong (2009) Civic Education inculcates good values to the citizens. The researcher continues that one of the most important trends in Civic Education is the teaching and learning of values. Patriotism is a concept in Civic Education and as well as one of the values that Nigerians advocate. Citizens' love for their country is an important part of citizenship training which Civic Education transmits on the young ones. This very patriotism made Nigerian patriots like Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Awolowo, Sardauna of Sokoto (Ahmadu Bello), Herbert Macaulay among others to fight for Nigerian independence. Civic Education could help reduce the incidence of corruption and corrupt practices to the barest minimum. Civic Education influences the attitudes of the young (citizens) through early inculcation of good value system in them early in life to enhance spirit of nation building (Onifade, 2006). Implied in this is that when the citizens are exposed early to Civic Education, they would imbibe positive values that would reduce corruption tendencies in their manifestations. Moreover, value restoration and building are roles of Civic Education. Umar in Okam (2012) recounted the main values to be promoted as follows: honesty, accountability, cooperation, discipline, industry, self confidence, moral courage and respect for the rule of law and dignity of labour.

Challenges of Transforming Nigeria

The challenges of Nigeria's transformation agenda effort are numerous and they must be faced squarely before the campaign succeeds. Therefore, the campaign of redeeming the battered image of Nigeria should not rest squarely on the government alone. Every one of us must play his own part towards the realization of the goal for a better future for the country. Consequently, the paper identifies the following among others as fundamental to the success of the campaign. It also discusses what each one of them ought to do on its part, thus:

Human Development Challenges: Human resources play an immense role in the success or failure of any organization or nation in terms of capability

and strength of character of the leaders and followers. In Nigeria, most of the problems facing the economy today are a reflection of the lack of investment human capital development and poor management of natural resources because education, which plays a critical role in human development and economic health of the nation, has been neglected for decades. No nation would make any meaningful socio-economic and political stride without skilled technical manpower and viable educational institutions. Instead of being a place for good character formation the schools are today a breeding ground for cultism and other destructive social behaviors. Thus 'values education' that involves 'educating for character', quality graduates, good 'moral values' and civic responsibility and which shape the character of nations has become a thing of the past.

Individuals: Individual citizens should abide by the law, be selfless, patriotic and shun away all forms of corrupt practices. They should shun drug trafficking as well as all forms of cyber crimes. Advance Fee fraud otherwise known as 419 should also be detested by Nigerians from all walks of life. In addition to these, Nigerians should use their religiosity towards doing what is right and should avoid all forms of vices. Nigerians should individually and collectively do all that is necessary to boost the image of their country. When foreigners discover that our country Nigeria is crime free, they will see a reason to invest in our nation and this will bring about development.

Corporate Organizations: Corporate organizations should also do away with all forms of corruption and bribery. Goods and services being churned out by organization or factories should be qualitative and first class. This would do away with the rejection of anything that is Nigerian by not only foreigners but by Nigerians themselves. If quality goods are being produced in Nigeria by the citizens of this nation, Nigeria's image would compete favourably with other countries' images and this will bring about national transformation economically.

The Nigerian Police: No any country whose image is battered and shattered could successfully develop itself without transforming its equally image-battered police. The police should therefore, change their practices such as corruption, injustice, maltreatment of suspects, refusal to file charges within 48 hours of arrest, extra-judicial killings of the citizens of Nigeria. They must always apply the law equally and fairly. This should not be difficult to do taking into consideration, the improved salary package and promotion, which

the men and officers of the Nigeria Police are currently enjoying. For Nigeria Police to be seen as a good one, it should keep crime rates low, come to the aid of defenceless citizens. The reality on the ground is that Nigerians do not trust the Police because of its numerous short comings mentioned above. If transformation agenda will work out, the Nigerian forces should be neutral and impartial in carrying out its functions because they are working for the people and not for any individual.

The Government: The People in government should equally understand that transforming Nigeria starts from the top. It is observed by O'Tudor, 2009 that in Nigeria there is a wide gap between "Nigeria and Nigerian". In other words, leaders are lacking who execute the business of governance with transparency and selflessness. The government of Nigeria over a long period of time has not fulfilled its duties to the people; many of whom remain poor or lack basic infrastructure and necessities. The government should be able to rule with the constitution of the country and not running the autocratic system of government instead of democracy.

Leadership should decisively deal with corruption and corrupt tendencies. EFCC and ICPC must show more resolve to prosecute cases of corruption. They must avoid and be seen to be avoiding discrimination in dealing with cases of corruption. They should pursue cases of politicians with the same vigour they have been pursuing the case of corrupt Bank executives in the country. Corruption should also involve bringing to book those who are killing the citizens of Nigeria in the name of herdsmen and until now, nobody is held responsible even when we them speak. Like the case of Benue, Plateau, and Zamfara states.

The government must also show commitment towards the so much talked about electoral reform with a view to having credible, transparent, free and fair elections in the country. This would no doubt strengthen and consolidate our democracy and in the long term improve our image dramatically and thereby achieving transformation agenda for there cannot be development in the atmosphere of cold war.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Government should organize workshop, seminars, for teachers to acquire more skills on how to train children to have good values towards effective socio-economic transformation in Nigeria.

2. Civic Education should be taught by qualified teachers at all levels of the education system. When qualified teachers teach civic education at all levels of education system, human feeling towards Nigeria may be guaranteed and the nation will develop.
3. Civic Education curriculum package has to be problem-solving in its orientation which must possess retentive and transfer values.
4. Civic Education curriculum should encourage some socio-economic skills like co-operation, interdependence, self reliance, hard working, self confidence and initiatives, resourcefulness, honesty and national consciousness.
5. Civic Education should be made a core subject at senior secondary school level and elective at institutions of higher learning given its importance in citizenship molding for national development.
6. Students should try and practice the values they are exposed to through civic education to ensure sound citizenship manifestation among them in the society.
7. All Nigerians should shun from every act capable of tarnishing the reputation of this country.
8. Peace and Security should be our watch word in order to attract foreign investors.
9. There is established relationship between leadership, governance and economic growth. Therefore, Nigerian government should be able to establish sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

The role and contribution of civic education towards the realization of socio-economic transformation has been clearly spelt out in this paper. The reason for this contention is that Civic Education as an integrated Social Science was designed towards citizenship molding for a better society. If citizens are trained on the values, norms, aspirations and traditions of the society including the understanding of the environment (social and physical) and how they can be manipulated, they are bound to make impact in their lives and the lives of the society members. This suggests that when students are taught about citizenship, civic responsibility, value education and its practical application they learn and abide by them which will help to transform them into citizens with skills, attitudes, competencies, moral values and reason

judgment which will bring about socio-economic transformation in the country. Hence, civic education help in citizenship training that enhances national development. The relevance of good governance cannot be over emphasized if Nigeria is to have a positive change in all phase of life. Nigeria needs leaders who have foresight to explore and exploit the nation's natural resources for the overall development of the country even as the citizens are being molded through Civic Education.

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